



Department
of Energy &
Climate Change

The Rt Hon Edward Davey MP
Secretary of State

Department of Energy & Climate Change
3 Whitehall Place
London
SW1A 2AW

www.gov.uk/decc

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13 January 2014

Thank you for your letters, delivered to my Department on 3 December 2013.

I appreciate your passion for and loyalty to Cumbria and, whilst I also appreciate your position on the implementation of a geological disposal facility (GDF), I would like to reassure you that our revised proposals for finding a site to host a GDF are not directed at one location. My Department is currently considering responses to a consultation on the process for finding a GDF. This was a national consultation with a truly national set of proposals.

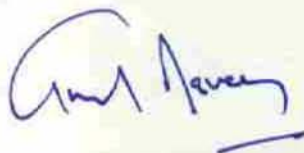
The UK Government is committed to geological disposal as the safest and most effective option for managing the UK's legacy of higher activity radioactive waste. It is vital that we find a long-term solution for the waste generated from more than 50 years of nuclear power generation. But we do not have a specific site in mind for this facility; indeed we are committed to working in partnership with any communities nationwide that might ultimately host a facility.

The current proposals, if they are subsequently implemented, would aim to enable potential host communities from across the country to come forward and find out more about what a GDF could mean for their area. We also want a process that is fair, transparent and appealing to communities nationwide, and one that involves local support for the development as well as a fully robust safety case.

More generally, the Government's stated aim to invest now in building a diverse, low carbon and efficient energy mix includes new nuclear power stations. Alongside renewables and clean oil and gas, nuclear energy is essential if we are to achieve an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Developers of new nuclear power stations must have robust and responsible plans in place for waste disposal. We are satisfied that geological disposal is technically achievable, that a suitable site can be identified and that secure interim storage arrangements will be available until a GDF is ready.

Finally, I will ensure that your letters are considered as part of the consultation analysis and I thank you again for taking the time to write to me.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Edward Davey". The signature is stylized with a large initial 'E' and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

EDWARD DAVEY