

**Hello Richard**

I have spoken with your General Enquiries Team who advise that you are leading the DECC consultation on the above matter.

I have posted the Council's response to the consultation on three previous occasions over the last five days but have received bounce back emails suggesting that the address is inoperable. Below is the Council's comment on the consultation document, please advise if it is possible for this e mail to be taken as received by DECC as the comments of my Council which can then be fed into DECC's considerations. I have also tried to correct the e mail address given in the consultation document by adding "gsi" to the address given in the consultation document.

#### **DECC - CONSULTATION**

**"THE MANAGING RADIOACTIVE WASTE SAFELY (MRWS) -**

**SITING PROCESS FOR A GEOLOGICAL DISPOSAL FACILITY (GDF)"**

#### **MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL RESPONSE**

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1. Do you agree that a test of public support should be taken before the representative authority loses the Right of Withdrawal? If so, what do you think would be the most appropriate means of testing public support, and when should it take place? If you do not agree with the need for such a test, please explain why.

YES – A test of public support is desirable, but the timing of that test is essential. Full details of the proposals should be available to all interested parties. Current proposals appear to stop short of full disclosure e.g. borehole data.

2. Do you agree with the proposed amendments to decision making within the MRWS siting process? If not, how would you modify the proposed phased approach, or, alternatively, what different approach would you propose? Please explain your reasoning.

YES – The proposals follow the Localism Act principles by devolving decision making to the lowest community level.

3. Do you agree with this approach to revising roles in the siting process set out in the White Paper? If not, what alternative approach would you propose and why?

YES - the District Council would embrace the role of decision maker in the MRWS process..

4. Do you agree with this proposed approach to assessing geological suitability as part of the MRWS siting process? If not, what alternative approach would you propose and why?

YES – but detailed examination of local geological strata is essential before removal of any right to withdraw from the process.

5. Do you agree with this proposed approach to planning for a GDF? If not, what alternative approach would you propose and why?

YES – “Learning” process is a valuable opportunity for all partners.

6. Do you agree with this clarification of the inventory for geological disposal – and how this will be communicated with the volunteer host community? If not, what alternative approach would you propose and why?

YES – detailed inventory of waste for disposal is essential. Translation into waste volumes, waste package numbers and transport movements by the NDA as part of the planned information programme will aid clarity.

7. Do you endorse the proposed approach on community benefits associated with a GDF? If not, what alternative approach would you propose and why?

YES - We are supportive of the principle for community benefit to be released before the start of underground operations, and that "engagement benefits" will continue to be available for those communities who chose to engage with NDA on the siting process, and that it is reasonable that funding in the "Focussing stage" may be subject to claw back should the GDF be located elsewhere.

8. Do you agree with the proposed approach to addressing potential socio-economic and environmental effects that might come from hosting a GDF? If not, what alternative approach would you propose and why?

Yes – bringing forward elements which address the potential socio economic and environmental events at an earlier stage is supported by MDC.

9. Do you have any other comments?

MDC are concerned that the earliest possible opportunity for GDF to become operational remains some 30 to 35 years distant. Binding decisions are being made now with regard to the national strategy for the storage of Intermediate Level Waste (ILW). The position should be a comprehensive one which is able to form an overview as to the likeliest location for GDF and to then site and construct ILW stores accordingly. The current approach is ad hoc and may lead to expensive and regretful circumstance when the GDF site is finally constructed.

I enclose the above on behalf of Maldon District Council in response to the DECC recent consultation paper, this response is as agreed and minuted at Planning & Licensing Committee held on 14.11.2012.

**Thank you**

**Phillip Rowson**

**Development & Projects Manager**

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