

① Received 05/12/13

MEMO

GDF siting process

DECC

Whitehall

London SW1A 2FY

2nd Dec 2013

My Response to DECC consultation on Review of the Siting Process for a Geological Disposal Facility.

Question I:

I no longer have any trust in a 'right of withdrawal'. We were reassured at a public meeting last December that if any of the 3 authorities (Copeland, Allerdale or Cumbria DC) voted against continuation of the process it would stop. CCC voted against and within a matter of months the process has restarted with CCC now no part of it! Hence I have no trust in any 'right of withdrawal'.

Public support is a nebulous concept. Friends who were interviewed by the MORI poll assumed that the Lake District National Park would be automatically excluded. Their opinions would have been quite different if they had realized this was not the case. My own 'line in the sand' is the Lake District National Park. I believe absolutely that it should not be touched in any way. Sadly the majority of people in Copeland and Allerdale have no interest in the National Park and are beholden to the nuclear industry for their livelihood. Conversely most people living in Cumbria care passionately for the Park, as

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represented by Cumbria County Council. Moreover, millions of people in Britain and indeed around the world love the Lake district and deserve to be represented. Hence I think that public support should be measured at a very local level (parish) as these are the people directly affected, and at a national level as the Lake district is treasured by millions of people all over Britain. Incidentally my own Parish voted 'No' (94%) with a 72% turnout when all parishioners were polled.

Question 2

I do not agree with the proposed amendments. I do not think District Councils are appropriate to both express an interest and then being responsible for steering the process, decision making and possible withdrawal. An independent and Authoritative body must have ultimate authority to rule on such questions as 'Is the geology of the area suitable for Geological Disposal?'

Question 3 I do not agree. This is much too large an issue affecting so many people and specialities eg. Highways, geology, mining, agriculture for a Borough or District Council. It appears that DECC are engineering the process to gain the outcome they want without due regard for the many and varied expertise required to make the correct choice.

Question 4

Geological suitability is ~~the~~ a key issue. The best geological sites in the country should first be chosen, and then the process of informing the citizens of these areas and allowing them to volunteer should begin.

At public meetings in Cumbria I have heard expert geologists, including one employed by DECC, give their opinions. It is clear that Cumbria is at best, just possible and most likely not possible to be a safe geological site. The process should start by finding the safest sites, not by taking the area where the public are most amenable (Cumbria). ~~and~~ Geological safety should be paramount and the first consideration.

Question 5

The representative authority should not be a district council. Nor should the Secretary of State have the final decision. The issue should be decided by a truly independent body who put safety, not political expediency, as their main priority.

Question 6

It is difficult to answer this question as the details are so vague. It is clear that the repository will be large beyond most peoples comprehension. It is a national problem which should be dealt with nationally, not foisted on one particular area. If Scotland and Wales want no part of this they must find a solution for their own waste.

Question 7

Community benefits should be 'up front' and exactly defined. West Cumbria has been hosting the nations waste for decades without obvious benefit. It is clear that the closer one gets to Sellafield the greater the deprivation and the worse the infrastructure. The most prosperous area of Cumbria (Eden) is the furthest from the surface repository. Cumbrians have every right to be sceptical here.

Question 8

It is immoral to pressurize an economical deprived community to accept a GDF when it is not the safest option. Economic and environmental issues must be kept separate.

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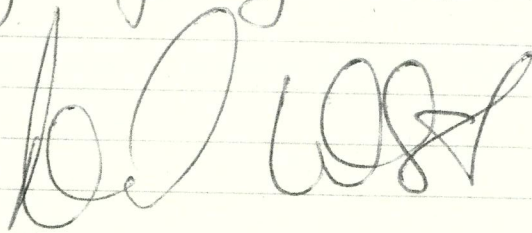
Question 9

The whole document appears designed to allow Copeland Borough Council to reenter the process and control it.

Copeland Council is dependant - beholden to the nuclear industry.

Public safety and the long term stewardship of our national treasures are more important than short term (and probably minimal) economic benefits.

Thank you for your consideration



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