

30th May 2013

To Whom It May Concern

Managing Radioactive Waste Safety

Thank you for allowing me to comment and express my views on the Governments Managing Radioactive Waste Safety Strategy r

and have recent experience of Shepway District Council's application to gain public consent to apply for Stage Two. As you are aware consultation with the public failed and majority no vote was returned. I was requested my views on the procedures of the application by the NDA and forwarded my comments and was informed that some of the comments would be forwarded on to you in due course by the NDA. Therefore you could possibly already have received some of the points contained in this letter.

Shepway District Council presented their application to the SSG, which was well attended and also held local drop in days at numerous locations throughout Romney Marsh. A great deal of interest was shown but the whole presentation lacked drive, imagination and vision. Please find listed below my comments from my point of view as Chairman of the Dungeness SSG:

- a. It was obviously apparent that there was a great deal of resentment from those attending that local taxpayers were seeing a considerable amount of their money being used to fund this survey. This set the scene immediately as a foundation of resentment against an expenditure of this nature in times of tight budget restraint.
- b. It was apparent that the opposition had seized the PR initiative and won the PR battle from day one. There was talk of, including newspaper articles of a nuclear dump, which included environmental implications. The dump gave the impression as one article stated a vision of 'Fly Tipping' on the Marsh.
- c. Although this was the first public airing of the proposals for seeking approval for stage two I believe the opportunity for the full benefits from stage two was not explained/exploited in sufficient detail. If it had been explained in detail that it was not committing SDC to the scheme but a full and detailed report of the suitability or not of the area would have carried weight. For example a report would have included survey of sea defences, environmental considerations, geological suitability, employment long term and during construction, transport trends and others, all of these findings would have been available to the KCC and SDC for considerations and future use.

In conclusion of the above if the following had been in place a more balanced view would have been presented and a different conclusion possibly arrived at. The lack of support from the NDA/DECC in certain areas placed SDC on the back foot. If funding had been provided for the cost or at the very least some matching funding it would have dispersed a major grievance from the outset.

The DECC/NDA could have provided direct or indirect support for the publicity campaign for which SDC was sadly lacking. SDC lost the PR battle from the outset and required professional assistance badly in this area to counter a very well organised PR against them. In many ways they were cast adrift.

The Governments commitment to geological disposal and voluntarism is accepted and partnership is the accepted way forward. The fact is it has not produced the results to date might mean changes are needed to be made in the approach. The fact remains that there are limited number of sites, which are available for this kind of facility in the UK. It would be useful if the DECC would identify these areas/sites and target their efforts in their direction. This would save a great deal of time, effort and money to eliminate unsuitable sites from the outset.

Once sites/locations throughout the UK had been identified the area should be informed of their suitability and be invited to apply if they are interested. At this point a few minor changes could be introduced. Consider joint funding for local District Councils and also DECC/NDA should be prepared to present a detailed professional presentation of the benefits of stage two at the same sometime.

Both attempts to date have been apposed at County level: in Cumbria the local Districts Councils supported the participation of Stage Four. In Kent from the outset KKC was against any participation and brought pressure to bear at the very beginning for non-participation. Although they did not interfere directly they employed considerable means at their disposal to ensure a no vote. Would it not be possible to be able to obtain by discussion with County Councils an earlier indication of their thoughts to allow the NDA/DECC to have a better indication of the outcome of their final decision.

Currently with the issues of FED and LLW Interim Storage studies in hand I do not feel the time is right to pursue the issue of MRWS. I do believe that there might be a possibility in the future to return to the matter if the climate changes. I hope this is of some use and I would be more than willing to discuss the contents of this letter with you on the telephone or when we next meet.