

CONSULTATION ON “ GEOLOGICAL DISPOSAL OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE IN WEST CUMBRIA?”

RESPONSES OF TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

Below are copies of the responses from town and parish councils as sent to CALC by the Partnership or councils themselves. *If any are incomplete or not the official version as submitted to the Partnership please send the correct copy to the CALC office.*

Some responses below were submitted on the Partnership’s official Response Form and the paragraph numbers used in the responses refer to topics as follows:

1. Geology
2. Safety, security, environment and planning
3. Impacts
4. Community Benefits package
5. Design and Engineering
6. Inventory
7. Siting Process

For each topic the first question answered is “Do you agree with the Partnership’s Initial Opinions on.....?”

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RESPONSES OF ALLERDALE PARISHES

Above Derwent Parish Council

Adopted Position of
Above Derwent Parish Council

Where we are

MRWS is the “brand name” of the Government’s policy on managing radioactive waste. The policy was set out in the MRWS White Paper of 2008 and its cornerstone is the idea of a Geological Disposal Facility (repository). The Government says that some of the waste that would be put into the repository would remain radioactive for hundreds of thousands of years. The MRWS process has six stages. The last of them is the construction and operation of the repository. In Allerdale and Copeland (which, together with Cumbria County Council, are the only local authorities in Britain to have volunteered to discuss hosting a repository) we are nearing the end of Stage 3. Later this year, the 3 councils will decide whether to move on to Stage 4 or to withdraw. This decision is what the present consultation is about, and ADPC needs to decide what its response to the consultation will be. If the decision is to enter Stage 4, “desk-based” studies will be made to try to identify areas in Allerdale and Copeland that are promising candidates for a repository.

About 25% of the area of the two boroughs has already been declared as unsuitable, but all the area of the National Park that lies inside the boroughs is still “in play”. Stage 4 would take about 4 to 5 years. At the end of that phase, a further decision would be made: whether to enter Stage 5 or to withdraw. Stage 5 would last about 10 years and it would see the start of geological field work, including the drilling of boreholes.

Right of Withdrawal

The Government says that a repository will only be put somewhere where there is a community that has volunteered to have it. An important part of this “voluntarism” approach is the Right of Withdrawal, which can supposedly be exercised up to the point where underground construction is about to begin at the end of Stage 5. Does this mean that, if geologists claimed to have found “suitable geology” under Above Derwent that the people living here could decide that they did not, after all, want to volunteer to have the UK’s radioactive waste buried under their homes and businesses and so withdraw? It is difficult to see how they could. Parish Councils, for example, cannot exercise the Right of Withdrawal: only Allerdale Borough Council or Cumbria County Council could do so. Even if a parish council could exercise the right, it would become increasingly difficult to do so as we proceeded through the MRWS process. It says on pages 93 and 94 of the Partnership’s report that “reasoned justification” would be required. As geological investigations become more detailed and technical during the siting process, this would become an increasingly difficult task for members of the public. Even if they did have the technical expertise to produce such ‘reasoned justification’, it is also made clear on pages 93 and 94 of the report that the Community Siting Partnership (which would advise the Councils) could still reject their reasoned justification if allowing them to withdraw would prevent the repository from going ahead.

The 2008 MRWS White Paper also makes it clear that, once expensive boreholes had been drilled, a community would find it very difficult to withdraw. Ultimately, the White Paper says that the Government reserves the right to abandon “voluntarism” if the approach looks as though it is not going to deliver a repository site. At present, the 3 Councils could withdraw from MRWS without having to justify themselves. That would no longer be the case in Stages 4 and 5. Moreover, there is no credible mechanism that would allow a parish, or group of parishes, to withdraw unilaterally. To compound the sense of alarm there is no plan B for alternative sites outside Cumbria. West Cumbria would rapidly become ‘locked in’ to the process. Therefore we have no confidence in the Right of Withdrawal.

Geology

Geology is important because the Government admits that the repository will eventually leak. Water flowing through the leaking repository will be contaminated with radioactivity. The geology needs to ensure that as little contamination as possible will reach the surface. The rational way to approach siting is first to look for an area in the UK that has the desired geology and then to tackle the problem of convincing the local population that the repository poses no threat. The opposite approach is taken by the MRWS process: first, find a “nuclear-compliant” community and then look for suitable geology. There is no guarantee that this approach will result in finding a site, but it is guaranteed to require a lot of time and money. It has been argued, particularly by Professor David Smythe, that it is already obvious that nowhere in Cumbria has suitable geology. His argument is based on two observations:

- Cumbria is mountainous
- There is a lot of folding, faulting and other geological complexities

The mountains act like a cistern in the roof of a house. They drive water at high rates through the ground towards the coast and, because of the cistern effect, can drive underground water upwards to the surface. Because of the complexity of the geology it is very difficult to predict where groundwater will carry contaminants from a leaking repository. We agree with Professor Smythe’s view that it is a waste of time and money to look at an area with unsuitable geology when it is known that other places exist where the geology is more promising. We are also concerned that Government wants to accelerate the pace of MRWS. Originally, the target was that the repository should receive its first waste in 2040. Recently, the responsible minister has expressed the aspiration to bring this forward to 2029. Given that there is no plan B, the temptation would exist to “make do” with geology that had shortcomings.

Planning and National Park

It is not clear how a planning application for the repository would be determined. The Partnership Report (P. 42) says “much could change in the 15 years before an application could occur”. However, it seems likely that it would not be the LDNPA who would determine the application, but a body such as the new Major

Infrastructure Planning Unit (MIPU): a QUANJGO that would advise the responsible minister, who would make the decision. The Partnership says that the current planning regime may rule out putting the surface facilities within the National Park. However, it is not definitely ruled out, and so a surface

facility in the Park is a possible outcome of continuing with the MRW process. We think that a 1km² industrial complex with its road and rail links would be disastrous for the affected part of the National Park's landscape and its tourism and agricultural industries. Any thoughts of achieving World Heritage status to boost our tourist industry will be finished.

In addition the underground repository would expand if a decision is made to accommodate new waste. In Finland the area required for 12,000 tons of uranium is approximately 1 mile square, rising by 0.2 miles square for each additional 3,000 tons. Nowhere does the Partnership's report suggest that putting the underground facilities under the National Park might be unacceptable. Would it matter if this happened? It is not clear. Would people want to visit an area when they knew that a large quantity of nuclear waste was buried under the hotel, B & B, campsite or cottage they may have chosen? They could always go instead to parts of the Lake District remote from the repository. Would the image of Lake District agricultural produce be damaged by an association between what the Partnership calls the "Lake District brand" and nuclear waste?

What is clearer is that borehole investigations in Stage 5 would probably require a substantial number of sites in open country. They would be heavy-duty rigs and tracks would need to be driven to allow heavy equipment to be transported to the sites. They would require generators to run. They would be noisy and visually intrusive. It might be argued that the disruption caused by stage 5 might only last for 10 years or so. But it is not clear whether any lasting surface structures (such as ventilation shafts) would remain to intrude into the National Park landscape. We conclude that the potential risks to the National Park, which is an international asset, are such that we should proceed no further with the MRWS process.

Impacts and Benefits

It is estimated that the repository would directly employ an average of 550 people over a period of 140 years. In the early years, up to 1,000 people would be directly employed. Government estimates that between 1 and 1.5 jobs would be indirectly created for every one directly employed in the repository. There is no legal way to guarantee that these jobs would go to Cumbrians, any more than it was guaranteed that jobs created by the building of the Channel Tunnel (a project of similar size) were given to Kentish people. The direct employment would mainly go where the surface facilities were. There is no doubt that the kind of economic development and employment created would be welcomed by some. Others see Government investment in jobs, road improvements and health screening in return for hosting a nuclear waste dump as 'bribes'. The Partnership has data suggesting that the urban population of West Cumbria is generally in favour of the repository, but that rural communities are more sceptical. The Partnership is also aware that the repository would commit the host community to a "nuclear future for many generations to come". It expresses the concern that the repository would result in an economic nuclear monoculture in West Cumbria.

The fact is the West Coast Business Cluster is working with the Nuclear Industry Association (NIA) to promote Cumbria as a nuclear hub.

Safety

The Government's recent request for acceleration in making a waste facility available by 2029 could potentially jeopardise the need for careful management. The NDA arresponding by looking at ways to increase resources allocated to the program, undertake more work in parallel, and transfer technology from more advanced programs overseas.

The original planned date to bring an underground waste disposal facility into service was 2040 and was based on the time it took for other countries to select the proper site and technology to permanently dispose of the most dangerous nuclear waste. Sweden took 31 years, France, 32 and Finland, 37.

It is clear that a lot of scientific and technical problems have not yet been solved. Therefore the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) has a research programme that is running alongside the search for a site. One problem to which there is not yet an answer is gas. It is now known that a large amount of hydrogen will be generated by a repository. It would be a problem particularly once the repository closes and is backfilled. Where should it go? If it is vented to the surface, the vents defeat the object of sealing the repository to prevent radioactivity from reaching the surface. If it is allowed to build up, what are the consequences? The hydrogen would not itself be radioactive (though it can explode). However, another gas, methane, is likely to be formed and this would be strongly radioactive. Again, simple and fault-free geology is required to keep it underground. That is not the kind of geology that exists in West Cumbria. We conclude that, given the local geology, the problem of gas generation is of particular concern.

Conclusions

We believe that "West Cumbria" should now withdraw from the MRWS process because:

- We have no confidence in the Right of Withdrawal
- We are convinced by the argument that nowhere in Cumbria has suitable geology
- We believe that it is a waste of time and money to continue the process in Cumbria when there are other, more promising, areas in England
- Continuing the process puts part of the National Park and its tourist and agricultural businesses at risk
- We consider that the potential economic benefits to Cumbria do not justify searching for a site in unsuitable geology or spoiling part of a national park
- We have concerns that Government's aspiration to accelerate the MRWS process will lead to corner-cutting
- We have concerns about safety, particularly gas emissions
- There is insufficient information about additional waste and the inherent increased risk
- Far too little information is available on impacts for the community to make a meaningful Decision to Participate.

Adopted Position of Above Derwent Parish Council
by unanimous resolution no. 245-11/12
15th February 2012

Geology

1.1 No

1.2

Criterion a. We are not completely confident about the integrity of the BGS screening survey, even within the very limited scope set for it. It is difficult to understand why the survey has not screened out the areas of north Allerdale where explorations for oil have been taking place. Although commercially exploitable reserves have not yet been proven, it cannot be inferred that they will never be. Even if they never are, there is no sound reason to suppose that future generations would not repeat the “mistake” and thereby run the risk of inadvertent penetration. Given the extremely long periods of time (“hundreds of thousands of years” according to the MRWS White Paper P. 27) for which some of the contents of the repository would remain hazardous, we can have no idea of the way that society might change during that period. There can be no guarantee that civilisation will be as advanced in several thousand years (let alone several hundred thousand years) as it is now: civilisations have risen and fallen many times in history. There can be no guarantee that records of the location of the repository will still exist in thousands of years or, if they do, that they will be comprehensible to people living at that time. The geological signs that have led current geologists to consider it worthwhile to look for oil in Cumbria may tempt future geologists to repeat the explorations. The “natural resources” exclusion criterion was intended to exclude areas that “might be the focus of exploration and/or exploitation in the distant future”. It has been incorrectly interpreted as “proven oil field” in this case.

Criterion b. As stated above, we believe that more of West Cumbria should have been excluded by the BGS survey than has been. We have the following further reservations about what has not been screened out:

1. The Chapman et al (1986) paper on geological settings suitable for a repository shows that there are areas in England where promising geology exists, but none of it is in West Cumbria. It is irrational to focus the search for a site exclusively on an area of apparently suboptimal geology while ignoring areas of apparently more suitable geology.
2. Specifically, the geology of West Cumbria is faulted, folded, unpredictable and characterised by a hydrogeological gradient that is unsuitable for siting a repository. The probability of encountering insurmountable problems, or of escalating development costs, in such an area is higher than in areas of geology that are consistent with Chapman et al’s criteria.
3. About 75% of the area not screened out by the BGS lies within the Lake District National Park. We are not confident that damage to the tourism and agriculture industries in the affected part of the Park can be avoided and we believe that the area of Allerdale and Copeland available for siting should be further reduced by excluding the National Park from consideration either for surface or underground facilities.
4. The criteria given to the BGS for their screening exercise were too narrow. They did not include, for example, the possibility of geothermal energy. Hence, though the Eskdale granites are a promising area for geothermal energy, they have not been screened out. There can again be no guarantee that future generations will not be tempted to explore this possibility, The

attractiveness of such sources of energy is likely to increase as fossil fuels are exhausted during the next few hundred years.

Safety, security, environment and planning

2.1 No

2.2

Regulatory Regime

The documents attached to Chapter 5 reveal a number of regulatory bodies and sub-divisions with a complex structure and some areas where responsibilities are not easily discernible. For example Document 47 reveals that in relation to road transport of dangerous goods the DfT looks at the safety of the vehicles used and of the packaging of what is being transported. NDA is not responsible for providing roads, but is responsible for considering issues relating to roads and bridges when preparing a safety case. The responsibility otherwise for the infrastructure "lies elsewhere". Roads are referred to also as a Planning issue, but whilst planners can regulate they cannot initiate provision. Cumbria County Council states that it prefers transporting waste by rail; there is no analysis of regulation relating to rail transport.

Document 47 relates that some members of the Partnership expressed their increasing concern about the complexities and ambiguity regarding the issues that had been discussed including the lack of clarity about how all of the aspects of regulation which apply to aspects of MRWS will fit together with other areas, most importantly planning and the potential use of the Infrastructure Planning Commission. The Office of Nuclear Regulation has been set up to provide some co-ordination between and oversight of these bodies.

It seems that the Partnership has not fully mastered the current situation, and therefore has not been able to produce a clear summary of the existing set-up. A clear understanding of this is essential before any meaningful evaluation of its efficacy can be attained and therefore it is not possible for us to share the Partnership's confidence that the necessary regulatory system exists.

The uncertainty we perceive in relation to the current situation is of course increased when turning to a consideration of future changes to be made to the present system.

We note the statement that "The regulators agreed that they regulate against set standards so they cannot refuse a permit if a developer can demonstrate it meets the regulators' standards." On the other hand there is a statement that "Responses to the consultation are taken into account in the Environment Agency's decision on whether to grant an environmental permit". We have not been able to reconcile these two statements.

We note that the Partnership thought it important to put a formal request to the regulators to give written reassurance on their commitment to engaging positively with a potential Community Siting Partnership. We cannot find confirmation that this was obtained.

The Partnership was concerned about communication between regulators and the public. An account was received from the Environment Agency as to

ways in which it did this, but we cannot find any verification that this actually happens.

Planning

Given that the majority of the area of investigation not excluded by the BGS survey falls within the National Park we are surprised not to see more analysis of the planning regime of a National Park. First it should be acknowledged that the National Park has particular statutory duties contained in the National Parks Act 1949 and the Environment Act 1995. These are to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and promote opportunities for the public to understand and enjoy the special qualities of the Park. In a case of conflict of interests (such as economic development) priority has to be given to conservation and enhancement of natural beauty etc as above. These are overriding statutory duties, but additionally the Park has its own strategic plans and frameworks, with priorities carefully defined, including references to limited amounts of economic development. Further since the Park is supported by tax-payers money and is for the benefit of the nation, there is surprisingly little evidence of attempts to obtain the views of the world outside West Cumbria.

There should be a clear statement, not a passing reference, to the fact that a surface facility would not be placed in the National Park. Digging boreholes to test for underground geology would also be too intrusive an activity – the Park is very compact and every square metre is precious to the 15 million visitors who come each year. To imagine the effect of digging a group of boreholes in one valley, or on one fellside is to understand what outrage there would be on the part of the national public, and what a disaster this would be for the tourist industry.

Little attention appears to have been paid to the principle of Localism, which will have profound effects on planning decisions in the countryside.

For these reasons we cannot share your confidence that all is satisfactory.

Safety and Security

1. Extracts from the document- Developing a Prospective Site Licence Company, to Implement Geological Disposal, highlights the immaturity of the RWMD current capability. The document provides key findings after a two day inspection visit on 1-2 March 2011 by the Environment Agency, Health and Safety Executive and Department for Transport who are the principal regulators for the implementation of geological disposal. Until the Partnership offers documentary evidence that the following findings have been addressed, we provide these and further example below, as evidence the RWMD has not got suitable capability or sufficient mature processes in place to protect residents, workforce and the environment, as believed by the Partnership Governance

'We (the regulators) believe that the ability of RWMD to establish and demonstrate appropriate governance arrangements is vital to the future success of the organisation. Considerable effort has been put into establishing the management arrangements to support this, but the Board needs to work effectively to demonstrate a clear high-level commitment to nuclear safety and the environment. To ensure the appropriate culture is developed, the Board should take this forward by establishing proper

challenge to the organisational performance with respect to nuclear safety and the environment.'

Management of Safety and Environment

'We (the regulators) found that staff, at Board and other levels in the organisation do not fully recognise the work being done now for nuclear safety and environment, and that RWMD currently lacks assurance arrangements that provide proper understanding and control of this. As mentioned previously, safety and environment management arrangements within RWMD other than for the LoC process focus on the conventional aspects of safety and environment. The organisation needs to develop its management arrangements into a nuclear safety and environment management system, that recognises and controls the impacts of its work on nuclear safety and environment performance (albeit the effect itself may only be realised some years in the future). A culture that recognises the key importance of nuclear safety and environment needs to be developed across the organisation. Provision should be made for suitable review and scrutiny of arrangements to assure RWMD that nuclear safety and environment performance is being appropriately managed and optimised where possible. '

2. Additional evidence is shown in Document 161, Peer Review of RWMD's DSSC, Summary Report on the Peer Review of NDA RWMD's Generic Disposal System Safety Case which state: 'The peer review panel considers, however, that further work would be needed to resolve several issues concerning the approach taken to the PCSA (post closure safety assessment) calculations, the inclusion and exclusion of certain processes in the PCSA models, the representation of the barriers in the disposal system, and the traceability of the data used. Given this, RWMD should not place too much emphasis on the current PCSA results when assessing waste packaging proposals.'

3. Document 1, NWAA Issues Register. We believe it would be more effective in raising public perception that safety issues are being 'worked on' if the full issues register was 'live' and published on a regular basis. As it stands, no issues appear to have been worked on since the register was first issued and published.

4. Document NDA/RWMD/038, Geological Disposal Criticality safety status report, Dec 2010, page v states 'for the waste material: We have detailed knowledge of the inventory of radioactive wastes and materials'. We challenge this statement based on the following regulators finding and recommendation relating to the geological disposal of higher active radioactive waste, Regulatory review of the generic disposal system safety case, issue 1 Dec 2011. One of the regulator's findings and recommendations states 'a wider exploration of waste inventory uncertainty might be desirable in the future.' Within multiple documents there are reference to a variety of inventories, with or without uranium & plutonium & spent fuel, with or without new build, with or without submarine or sludge waste. To ensure proper waste inventory control is in place allowing all relevant issues to be considered, we would expect either the regulators to mandate, or the auditors to raise a major non-compliance on the reestablishment of a radioactive waste management inventory and change control process.

5. In the same document the NDA/RWMD's statement regarding 'modelling of the consequences' does not seem to include the risk of a terrorist attack which is still a major concern to Government. Cumbria CC, Allerdale and

Copeland BC, appear not to be concerned they are potentially subjecting its communities to risks of the highest possible magnitude, by accommodating both nuclear reactors and a nuclear repository within the same county.

Impacts

3.1 No

3.2

1. The following extract is taken from the Public Consultation document, Page 64 –

6.2 Criterion a) 'confident that appropriate possibilities exist to assess and manage environmental, social and economic impacts appropriately if they occur'. This is a primary example of the casual and unprofessional manner in which the Partnership has produced the public consultation document. The programme is a 'green field' project of the highest risk with regards to the longer term consequences, ever undertaken in the UK. The use of such words offered on page 3 as 'for information' provides no confidence that the Partnership understands the scope and scale of managing the environmental, social and economic impacts which will occur.

2. The following extract is taken from the Public Consultation document, page 55 and supporting document 27, references 'generic impacts'. A recent paper 'Scoping for SEA in The Netherlands: generic or tailor made' provides clarity in ensuring the adoption of the 'generic approach' is reasonable and appropriate. From the experience in the Netherlands it is clear that for screening and scoping, generic guidelines 'whilst being a good starting point, will typically not be sufficient'.

3. Document 163, and 'The NDA Generic Strategic Environment Assessment, Environment and Sustainability' is based on the Government's - A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environments Assessment Directive Sept 2005, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (John Prescott). This is used as an initial guideline by the NDA. Can the Partnership assume this guideline is still current in applying European Directive 2001/42/EC, and is this document sanctioned by the current deputy prime minister Nick Clegg?

4. The following extract is taken from the Public Consultation document, Page 60

6.3 Our initial opinions on direct impacts, states 'can be put in place during the next stage of the MRWS process to assess and mitigate any negative impacts'. This statement is incorrect. The NDA in using the government's guidelines, to initiate the Quality Assurance Checklist, defines mitigation as 'Measures envisaged to prevent, reduce, and offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the plan or programme'.

5. Sustainability assessment scoping (which appears to shape the format of the NDA's 'Appendix A, Schedule of potential impacts to be assessed', offers levels of measurement lower than is standard. For example – the impact 'Air Quality' measures are defined as 'to avoid adverse impacts on air quality',

whereas the standard measure is to ensure 'Air Quality improves'. This lowering of standards continues throughout Appendix A.

Community Benefits

4.1 No

4.2

The "Criterion" you identify is "Whether the Partnership is confident that an appropriate community benefits package can be developed." In order to decide whether you are confident, you say you want to see an "acceptable process in place to secure additional benefits"

Your "Initial Opinion" is that "We have agreed a set of principles with the government as the basis for any future negotiations. However ...uncertainties etc."

We considered the evidence in the Consultation Document and the supporting documents that this Criterion is satisfied. In order to test this we looked for :

1. Your definition of what is appropriate
2. Evidence that what is appropriate would be delivered
3. A definition of an acceptable process
4. Evidence to show that the eventual reality of the process would be like the definition

1. Question 1 Definition of Appropriate

We understand that the 12 Principles are meant to be a step towards defining what a Community Benefit Package should look like. (Principle 1 is merely a comment and should be omitted). Principles 2 to 12 contain requirements by which a package could be judged appropriate or not.

2. Question 2 Evidence to show that the eventual package would conform to the Principles

The Community Benefits Package is entirely in the gift of the government. The Government's response is therefore crucial. This is contained in the attachment to the letter of 7 September 2011 updating its earlier responses, and also referring to the White Paper (s6). We have examined these closely and have no confidence that they evidence any form of clear commitment on the part of the government. We do not therefore share your confidence (if you are confident) that there are good grounds for believing the Principles can be used to secure a suitable CB package, or that in particular your requirement that there should be a justified expectation of long term additional benefits will be fulfilled.

The following passages from the Government's papers lead us to believe that very little can be relied on from these, and that there is plenty of room for this or a future government to escape from the commitments you are seeking, without your being able to hold them to what they have said as what they have said is so indefinite :

White Paper

6.54 and 6.55 lay emphasis on the spin-off benefits which will come to the community. “The community will be keen to know what these are” – this is a statement not a commitment.

6.57 “In addition there may be other benefits which may be commensurate with developing the social and economic wellbeing of a community. “

6.58 “Without wishing to prejudge, the following could be some of the overarching objectives for the investment that a community might benefit from as a result of hosting a facility (training, business, infrastructure, transport, health care, environmental improvement).

6.59 “This list is illustrative : Government does not believe it is sensible to specify what specific mechanisms could be used, or define the nature or level of the benefits. Packages should be developed as discussions progress, taking into account local needs, affordability, and value for money considerations “.

Government’s Response to Principles

In the covering letter the Secretary of State says : “I agree the principles form a basis for negotiations” {NB not a basis for agreement} –“the detail underlying these will need to be explored. We will need to reach an agreement which is mutually satisfactory”.

2 (Government) “agree the need for any agreed community benefits ..should therefore be a consideration in future discussion.”

3. “We expect the net benefits to be an important part of discussions”.

4. (Additionality) “communities will want reassurance that benefits would be additional. We agree the package should relate to benefits in additionof course co-ordinated with wider social and economic programmes,”

8 “any benefits packages should be developed taking into account local needs, affordability and value for money considerations”

Questions 3 and 4 – definition of an acceptable process

You refer to this in 7.3 : “we want to see an acceptable process” You do not refer to it in 7.4 – your Initial Opinions. We did not find any definition of such a process, and consequently no evidence it is likely to come into being.

Summary

Having considered the material provided we do not “feel confident that an appropriate community benefits package can be developed”. Furthermore we are not sure whether the Partnership is confident. You do not say whether you feel confident or not confident. If you were to say you feel confident, then we would not agree with this Opinion. If you were to say you do not feel confident then we would agree.

If you feel confident that the Principles have been agreed by the Government, then we would not agree with this – the Principles are not agreed, but are a basis for negotiation – negotiation could take you anywhere.

We would endorse your expressions of doubt about the uncertainty of the future, and the caution that future negotiations need to be carefully watched.

Our conclusion therefore is that the issues raised in this Chapter do not form a suitable foundation for going further in this process and that we should not move into Stage 4.

Design

5.1 No

5.2

1. Document no. 29: The generic Design Concepts – How they will evolve (2009) has to be read in conjunction with the NDA Report NDA/RWMD/054 Geological Disposal Summary of generic designs, (December 2010). This later document is more current and written with the public in mind. However this document was not offered as reference to the public in helping to answer the Partnership question within the Public consultation document, Chapter 8 Design and engineering.

2. The following extract is taken from the Public Consultation document “The detailed layout and design of the facilities, both above and below-ground would depend on the location and would be tailored to the geographical and specific geological structure at the site in question.” We disagree as the quoted statement from Page 76 is incomplete. The detailed design will be strongly influenced both by the inventory and by the geography/geology.

3. The Partnership has chosen retrievability as a criterion although no reason was given for the choice.

We disagree that sufficient reassurance has been given that retrievability is an option. Most documents refer to the costs of such an undertaking. This infers that only partial retrievability may be built-in if funds are in place to do so. The Partnership could have learned from the 1999 incident in Bure where work was suspended after a fatal accident. An Act was submitted to Parliament which repeated the requirement that any facility should incorporate 'reversibility' (rather than retrievability) at every stage. We suggest the Partnership should read IAEA Nuclear Energy Series Geological Disposal of Radioactive Waste: Technological implications for retrievability. NW-T-1.19

4. The Partnership has not attempted to provide an opinion on engineering and seems to have no opinion on the associated cost. The Partnership requested a review of only 4 of the 101 known critical issues, as provided by the NWAA in presentation. We disagree with the Partnership's initial opinion on engineering, as none has been provided. How can the public feel anything other than confused knowing there are multiple gaps in the Partnership's knowledge. The Partnership continues to give the impression that 'the issue is bound to be solved but at a later stage'.

Inventory

6.1 No

6.2

1. On the question of overseas waste, the Government's statement (Consultation Report, P. 80) falls far short of a commitment.
 2. Despite CoRWM's several statements that their recommendations do not apply to new-build wastes (as noted in Document 94), the Partnership is offering no challenge to the Government's obvious intention to place new-build waste in the repository.
 3. It is clear from DECC's response to Inventory Principle 1 that there could still be important uncertainties about inventory at the end of Stage 5. We believe that the Right of Withdrawal would, by this stage, be very difficult to exercise (see response to Question 7.2), so that a community could become locked in to having the repository without having a firm agreement on inventory.
 4. Inventory Principle 2 does not clarify whether the "veto" was envisaged as a way of giving the community control over inventory during Stage 6, but such control should be an essential requirement. DECC's response neatly side-steps the notion of "veto" and instead points to the Right of Withdrawal. This has expired by Stage 6 and does not, therefore, constitute a way for the community to influence inventory decisions during the operational life of the repository. Instead of a veto, DECC says that "These principles may include ...the circumstances under which decision making bodies may feel the impacts of any change to the inventory to be unacceptable" (emphasis added). So the Government is not committing itself to include such principles; nor is there any commitment that the feelings of the decision making bodies will actually carry any weight in decisions about changes in inventory. This is significantly weaker than a veto. Hence, Inventory Principle 2 provides no credible protection against significant changes in inventory during the operational life of the repository – including a change in the "presumption" about overseas waste. Nor has the Partnership produced any other principle that could provide such protection.
 5. Inventory Principle 3 requests information about significant changes "at the earliest opportunity". DECC's response replaces this with "in a timely way". If DECC's phrase is not intended as a dilution, why have they not used the Partnership's original phrase?
 6. DECC's response to Inventory Principle 6 is extremely weak and commits Government to no action whatsoever.
- Our overall view is that a community would find it very difficult to withdraw once Stage 5 had begun, yet would still be faced with significant uncertainties about inventory. There appears to be no credible mechanism for a community to have any influence on changes in inventory after the start of construction of the repository.

Siting Process

7.1 No

7.2

We consider that the Partnership is proposing a weak and unsatisfactory interpretation of "voluntarism" that has not been forced upon it by any constraints in the MRWS White Paper. The Partnership's 8-page summary leaflet states that "The Government says a repository will only be put somewhere where ... there is a community that has volunteered to have it" (P. 7). We believe that, should "West Cumbria" enter the siting process,

there is a serious danger that a host community, for example, a town or village, would have part or all of the repository forced upon them against their will. Our reasons are:

1. A potential Host Community cannot exercise the Right of Withdrawal: only the 3 Councils can. A councillor representing an unwilling potential Host Community is easily outnumbered by those representing “wider local interests”. Worse, the County council and Allerdale Borough Council have decided that only a small subset of councillors will make the formal decision about entering the siting process. Therefore, there will be potential Host Communities whose councillors do not have a vote in this decision. The Consultation Report gives no reason to believe that this unsatisfactory approach would change in Stages 4 and 5.
2. The decision of the County Council and of Allerdale Borough Council that a subset of councillors will make a formal decision on entering the siting process is neither required by, nor in the spirit of, the MRWS White Paper, where it says (P. 51) that the decision will be made “probably through a full meeting of the council/s”.
3. It is made clear on Pages 93 and 94 of the Consultation Report that a community wishing to withdraw would have to provide “reasoned justification” to the Community Siting Partnership. As the process became increasingly detailed and technical during Stages 4 and 5, this would become increasingly difficult for unresourced potential Host Communities to do. What kind of “volunteering” is it when ‘reasoned justification’ needs to be given for not volunteering?
4. Pages 93 and 94 of the Consultation Report also make clear that, even if reasoned justification were given, the Community Siting Partnership could still recommend that the RoW be not exercised. A potential Host Community in this position is not volunteering: it is being forced to proceed.
5. Page 56 of the MRWS White Paper shows that, once the expense of surface-based investigations had been incurred, a potential Host Community minded to withdraw could be coerced to continue “volunteering”. We have no confidence that a government would permit a Decision Making Body to exercise the RoW once Stage 5 was under way. The Partnership acknowledges this hazard when it states that “the siting process can be sufficiently robust and flexible, at least during Stage 4” (Consultation Report, P. 98). Yet ‘reasoned justification’ is required to avoid proceeding from Stage 4 to Stage 5.
6. The MRWS White Paper (P. 47) makes it clear that the Government reserves the right to abandon voluntarism if it looks as though the approach will not yield a site. A potential Host Community that had acquiesced to Stage 4 investigations but then decides that it wishes to withdraw as the implications of hosting the repository become clearer is therefore open to being “volunteered” by a government that decides to abandon voluntarism.
7. In any assessment of public opinion or “credible local support”, whether by poll or referendum, a potential Host Community is easily outnumbered by the “wider local interests” and can, therefore, be forced to accept a repository. In “West Cumbria”, the coastal urban community, who know that they will not have the waste buried under their homes and businesses because they are located on land screened out by the BGS survey, vastly outnumber those living in rural communities and can force a rural community to host all or part

of the repository. This is of particular concern in light of the potential for separation of the surface and underground parts of the repository. In summary, we find that the notion that a potential Host Community can control whether or not the repository is built in or under its town or village is illusory. This is particularly unfortunate since it is the principle of “voluntarism” that has led to the untenable position where only “West Cumbria”, with its apparently suboptimal geology, is being considered while areas of England with apparently better geology are being ignored. Had geology been put first, we believe that “West Cumbria” would not be a serious candidate at all.

Q.8

We believe that West Cumbria should now withdraw from the MRWS Process. The aim of this decision would be to persuade the Government to reconsider its “voluntarism” approach which, we believe, has led to an untenable position in which the search will be focussed entirely in an area of suboptimal geology. While we are prepared to accept CoRWM’s original conclusion that a GDF represents the “least bad” option for the disposal of the UK’s committed higher-activity waste, we consider that geological suitability is more important than “voluntarism”. Restricting the search to an area where the geology is suboptimal presents the following dangers.

- A higher probability of encountering insurmountable technical problems after substantial time and money has been invested in the search
- An increase in the costs of surface-based investigations required to characterise unpredictable and highly three-dimensional geology
- Decreasing the probability of finding a sufficiently large body of rock to enable a single repository to accommodate the inventory
- Increasing the complexity of the safety case and the number of assumptions underlying it, which would increase the cost and decrease transparency
- Increasing the cost of engineering “workarounds” for deficiencies in the geology
- Increasing the probability that a decision would be made to “make do” with a poor site, especially in light of the Minister’s aspiration to accelerate the opening of the repository to 2029.
- Increasing the uncertainty regarding the extent and location of eventual leaks of radioactivity from the repository, which are described as “inevitable” in the White Paper (P. 27)

The first consideration should be to identify the areas of the UK with the most promising geology. The work of Chapman et al (1986) has already indicated where they are. None of them is in Allerdale or Copeland. It is irresponsible on the part of the Government to preside over a process where West Cumbria is investigated in isolation and areas where the geology promises a higher probability of a high-quality, value-for-money solution are ignored.

It might be objected that giving geology precedence over voluntarism could lead to the eventual Host Community having a repository forced upon it. However, this could easily happen within the current MRWS framework for the following reasons.

- A potential Host Community (as defined in the White Paper) cannot exercise the Right of Withdrawal. Its only route for withdrawal is to persuade the Community siting Partnership to recommend that the Decision Making Bodies allow it to withdraw

- Pages 93 and 94 of the Consultation Report show that a potential Host Community must provide 'reasoned justification' for not volunteering. Once Stage 4 is nearing completion, the technical complexity of the case that would need to be presented as 'reasoned justification' is likely to be beyond the resources of an unwilling potential Host Community
 - Even if a 'reasoned justification' for not volunteering could be presented, Pages 93 and 94 of the Consultation Report show that the potential Host Community's wish not to volunteer can be vetoed by what would doubtless be a well-resourced Community Siting Partnership.
- We conclude that "voluntarism" as set out in the MRWS White Paper is largely illusory and that a more honest and rational approach is to start with the most promising geology.

Q9

A number of our parishioners expressed frustration about the fact that they were being asked to make an important decision at a time when little concrete information is available about the consequences of moving into Stage 4. While the Consultation Report frequently uses phrases such as "at this early stage" and states or implies that we will have more information if we agree to move to a later stage, the view has been frequently expressed by our parishioners that, if "West Cumbria" does make a Decision to Participate, the process will quickly gather momentum and become unstoppable as increasing quantities of money are spent on it. Few appear to have confidence that even the Decision Making Bodies will have any real chance of exercising the RoW by the time that the consequences of hosting the repository have become sufficiently clear.

- We have been surprised by the persistence of the public perception that "West Cumbria" means "the west coast of Cumbria" or even just "Sellafield". It would have been more informative for the Decision Making Bodies (and more in keeping with what most members of the public would probably understand when they hear that the Government wishes to site a repository only where "there is a community that has volunteered to have it" if Question 8 of the current consultation had been "What are your views on whether the area covered by your parish or town council should take part in the search for somewhere to put a repository ...?").
- Some parishioners have said that they cannot understand how we have arrived at a position where part of the Lake District National Park is potentially being offered for investigation as a potential site, at least for the underground facilities (but Page 42 of the Consultation Report fails firmly to rule out even siting the surface facilities in the Park). References to "Lake District brand" and "brand protection" suggest that the National Park is construed by the Partnership mainly as an economic resource. Yet the Sandford Principle, which is a cornerstone of the history of national parks in this country, states that conservation must take precedence over economic development whenever the two conflict.
- We understand the aspiration of communities on the western coastal plain of Cumbria to have a prosperous and vibrant economy. However, the MRWS White Paper states that some of the waste that would be emplaced in a repository would remain hazardous for hundreds of thousands of years (tens of thousands of generations). In this context, an average of 550 repository

jobs (and perhaps 1,000 “spin-off” jobs) for the next six or so generations is insignificant and does not justify the risks of failure that must surely exist in an area of suboptimal geology, especially when geologists have identified better candidates elsewhere in England. “West Cumbria” has become the leading candidate for socio-political reasons, and not for rational scientific ones.

Aikton Parish Council

MRWS was fully discussed at the Aikton Parish Council meeting last night and the following points were of great concern to councillors;

This process puts part of the National Park and its tourist & agricultural business at risk.

Not convinced that Cumbria has suitable geology, are there not far more suitable areas in England?

Do the economic benefits justify searching for a site in unsuitable geology and spoiling part of the national park?

Insufficient information with regards to risk, gas emissions etc.

Can we be confident in the Right of Withdrawal?

Safety, health.

Aspatria Town Council

Aspatria Town Council wishes to strongly object to the proposed building of an underground repository to dispose of radioactive waste in West Cumbria or anywhere in Cumbria.

The council think Cumbria should withdraw from the MRWS process because:

- It has no confidence in the Right of Withdrawal
- It is convinced by the argument that nowhere in Cumbria has suitable geology
- It is a waste of time and money to continue the process in Cumbria when there are other, more promising, areas in England
- Continuing the process puts part of the National Park and its tourist and agricultural businesses at risk
- It considers that the potential economic benefits to Cumbria do not justify searching for a site in unsuitable geology or spoiling part of a national park
- It has concerns that Government’s aspiration to accelerate the MRWS process will lead to corner-cutting

- It is concerned about safety, particularly gas emissions and the future implications for future generations.
- There is insufficient information about additional waste and the inherent increased risk
- Far too little information is available on impacts for the community to make a meaningful Decision to Participate.

Bassenthwaite Parish Council

The Parish Council is unanimous in its rejection of the proposal to bury radioactive waste in West Cumbria.

The Parish Council remains unconvinced that the safety of local residents, the workforce and the environment can be adequately protected.

The repository would be in place for hundreds of years to come. The Parish Council has grave concerns about whether a geological disposal facility could be made safe for this and future generations.

The Parish Council therefore finds the above proposal completely unacceptable.

Blindbothel Parish Council

I refer to the above consultation document which was on the agenda to be discussed by members at the recent Parish Council meeting.

Members decided at the meeting that too little information is available at this stage to make a meaningful decision whether or not to participate in the search for a site.

Blindcrake Parish Council

The Council considered the matter this week.

We are not opposed to the nuclear industry or nuclear storage as such. However we came out against the continued search in west Cumbria on the basis that as there were no others areas involved in the UK then it would be very likely that our area would be found suitable by default.

White the financial inducements were likely to be good, we do not trust Allerdale BC to spend it in the areas directly concerned but they are very likely to use the money in Workington & Maryport.

Boltons Parish Council

MRWS was fully discussed at the Boltons Parish Council meeting last night and we would like to 'object' to this going any further ahead.

We have many concerns some of which we have noted below;

- This process puts part of the National Park and its tourist & agricultural business at risk.
- Not convinced that Cumbria has suitable geology, are there not far more suitable areas in England?
- Do the economic benefits justify searching for a site in unsuitable geology and spoiling part of the national park?
- Insufficient information with regards to risk, gas emissions etc.
- Can we be confident in the Right of Withdrawal?
- Safety, health etc.

Borrowdale Parish Council

Adopted position of the Borrowdale Parish Council (Adopted & Approved by all councillors)

Position currently:

The Managing Radioactive Waste Safely White paper of 2008 set out the government's policy on dealing with radioactive waste. The outcome of this paper is that a Geological Disposal Facility (repository) is the safest way to store this type of waste. By the nature of radioactive waste the half life of some of the substances to be buried in the proposed underground repository would have a half life of tens or even hundreds of thousands of years. The MRWS process was commenced back in 2009, and has six stages. The sixth stage being the building and commencement of operations at the repository. Across England only three councils have volunteered to be part of the siting investigations (Allerdale Borough Council, Copeland Borough Council & Cumbria County Council), the current consultation which this paper is a response to is to decide on if the relevant local authorities should progress to stage 4 (desk based studies) or if they should withdraw. Stage 4 is concerned with desk based studies and trying to identify suitable sites for a nuclear waste repository within the ABC & CBC area. Within the two boroughs some areas have already been deemed as unsuitable for the underground repository by the British Geological Society due to the fact that they house natural resources that humans may wish to access at some point (however the surface facilities could potentially still be built on one of these excluded areas). All the area (ABC & CBC) within the LNDPA boundaries is still potentially a site i.e. it hasn't been excluded. Once stage 4 was completed (which would take a number of years) a further decision would be made on if to enter stage 5 (physical research on potential sites e.g. boreholes) or if to withdraw.

A number of issues of concern have been raised that Borrowdale Parish Council feel are important & would need to be addressed before any decision to continue to stage 4 was made:

Geology

Geology is key, as the substances to be buried in this underground repository are highly dangerous, with a very long half life and they need to be stored securely away from faults and water sources as it is likely that at some point during the storage of this waste that it will leak out of the underground repository (We are talking about building something to contain substances for 10,000 of years, the substances themselves have only been created by man in the last 100 or so the research is not there to support the containment methods for this prolonged period of time). Any water that came into contact with any of this material would be contaminated by radioactivity. Therefore the geology is key, to ensure that as little contamination as possible ever reaches the surface.

Borrowdale Parish Council feel that the most rationale way to have considered this process would be to first look at areas in the UK that have the correct geology and then to try and convince the local areas to host the repository. The MRWS process is using the opposite approach, find a community happy to host it and then look for the correct geology. There is no guarantee that suitable geology will be found.

Professor David Smythe has said that nowhere in Cumbria has suitable geology, because of two observations:

- Cumbria is very mountainous
- There is a lot of faulting, folding & other geological issues

Professor Smythe described it at a recent public meeting held in Keswick that the mountains act like a cistern. The push water at high rates through the ground towards the coast and because of the cistern effect can drive underground water up to the surface. Due to the complexity of the geology it is hard to predict where groundwater will carry contamination from any leakages from a potential repository.

Borrowdale Parish Council agree with the opinion of Professor David Smythe that it is a waste of time & money to look at an area with unsuitable geology when it is know that other places in the UK exist where the geology is more promising. It is also of concern that the government are wanting to fast track the MRWS process, originally the target was for the repository to be open in 2040, they would now like it to open in 2020.

Right of Withdrawal:

Throughout the MRWS process it has been made clear that a repository will only be sited where a community has volunteered to have it, this is the 'voluntarism' approach. A key part of this voluntarism approach is the Right of Withdrawal, which according to the MRWS documentation can be exercised at any point up until the actual underground construction is about to start (end of stage 5).

Q1. Does this mean that if geologist purported to have found suitable geology under Borrowdale Parish Council's area, that people living within the parish could decide that they did not want to volunteer to have an nuclear waste underground repository beneath their homes and so withdraw?

The relevant MRWS documents seem to imply that this is not the case, that in fact Parish Councils can't exercise a right to withdraw, that only ABC, CBC and CCC can do so. These three bodies as the decision making bodies in this process have to make a decision for the greater good, so this seems to prevent a parish council from being able to exercise its right to withdraw. It also appears that the further down the process we go the harder it becomes to exercise the right of withdrawal, pages 93-94 of the partnership's report state that to withdraw 'reasoned justification' would be required. As the further down the process we go, the more detailed & technical geological investigations become, making it harder & harder for parish councils & members of the public to provide the reasoned justification necessary to withdraw. It is also made clear on the same pages of the partnership report that the Community Siting Partnership (which would advise the decision making bodies) could still reject a reasoned justification if by allowing them to withdraw would prevent the repository from going ahead. Borrowdale Parish Council have noted from the 2008 MRWS white paper that it is made clear within this document that once expensive boreholes have been drilled a community would find it very difficult to withdraw.

The MRWS 2008 White Paper further goes on to say that the Government reserves the right to abandon a 'voluntarism' approach, if it seems that by using such an approach a site for a repository would not be found. Currently the 3 decision making bodies (ABC, CBC & CCC) could withdraw now (at the end of stage 3) without having to provide a reasoned justification, if the process is continued with to stages 4 & 5 this would no longer be the case. There is also no mechanism in place to allow a parish, or cluster of parishes to withdraw. Finally there doesn't appear to be any other options for sites outside of Cumbria, raising concern within the Borrowdale Parish Council that the Right to Withdraw may not be as it seems.

Planning & the National Park

At this stage it is not fully clear how a planning application for a repository would be determined, however it seems likely that the LDNPA would not determine the application, but a body such as the Major Infrastructure Planning Unit, would take the decision.

Currently the position is that the current planning regime might rule out putting the surface facilities within the National Park. However it is not definitely ruled out, so to have the whole facility surface & repository within the National Park is a possible outcome of continuing with the MRWS process. A potential large surface facility & the associated infrastructure links we feel could have a disastrous effect on the part of the National Park's landscape and its tourism & farming industries.

Another physical effect of the underground repository is that when it is built the waste from the building of the repository would need to stay on site, forming large pyramid type mountains (A similar volume of waste would come out of this repository as was generated by the building of the channel tunnel). In our opinion it is not clear what effect an underground repository sited within the National Park would have on the tourism market. Would people still want to visit an area if they knew that a large quantity of radioactive waste was buried under the area? Would the image of the Lake District's agricultural produce be damaged?

Something that is clear is that the borehole investigations in Stage 5 would possibly require a number of large sites in open country. This would involve heavy duty rigs and infrastructure may need to be put in place to enable the heavy equipment to be transported to the sites. These investigation sites would be noisy & intrusive.

Borrowdale Parish Council feel that the potential risks to the National Park & its thriving tourism international tourism industry are too great, and as such we should not proceed any further with the MRWS process.

Impacts & Benefits

Based on the partnership documents it is suggested that the repository would directly employ around 550 people over a period of 140 years. During the construction years this might raise to 1000 people directly employed. The government has estimated that between 1-1.5 jobs would be indirectly created for each 1 in the repository. It is impossible legally to make sure that these jobs go to Cumbrians.

It has to be recognised that there is no doubt that the kind of economic development and employment created would be welcomed. However it could be perceived that Government investment in jobs, road improvements and health screening in return for hosting the dump are 'bribes'.

Safety

Borrowdale Parish Council has concern that the government's recent request for acceleration in the opening of the waste facility could jeopardise the need for careful management & safety. The Nuclear Decommissioning Agency are responding by looking at ways to increase resources allocated to the program, undertake more work in parallel, and transfer technology from more advanced programs overseas.

The original planned date of 2040 to bring the underground waste facility into service was based on the time it took other countries to select the proper site & technology to dispose of dangerous nuclear waste. To give a comparison Finland took 37, France took 32 & Sweden took 31 years.

We are concerned that based on the things mentioned above that the issue of safety needs further work before any decision can be made to progress to the next stage.

Conclusions:

Borrowdale Parish Council feels that 'West Cumbria' should withdraw from the MRWS process now because:

- We have no confidence in the right of withdrawal
- There is a strong argument that nowhere in Cumbria has suitable geology
- It is a waste of time & money to continue the process in Cumbria, when there are more suitable areas in England
- If the MRWS process were continued it would risk parts of the National Park & its tourist & agricultural businesses
- The potential economic benefits to Cumbria do not justify searching for a site in unsuitable geology or spoiling part of the national park & its associated industries
- We are concerned that the government's idea of accelerate the MRWS process could lead to corner cutting

- There is too little information available on impacts for the community to make a meaningful decision to continue to be involved in the MRWS process.

Adopted by Borrowdale Parish Council by unanimous resolution.
12th March 2012

Bothel and Threapland Parish Council

I refer to the above consultation document which was on the agenda to be discussed by members at the recent Parish Council meeting.

Members agreed at the meeting in their opinion the area of West Cumbria is geologically unsuitable and believe there are more suitable areas in the UK for a site and feel that the MRWS Partnership should now withdraw from the process of searching for a site.

Bowness-on-Solway Parish Council

The information received to date has been considered carefully by Councillors, and discussed at the March Parish Council Meeting. The Parish Council acknowledges the importance of the nuclear industry to the economy of Cumbria, though the local benefit is considered to be small. However, it is equally aware of the detrimental effects that a repository could have on the landscape, economy and other aspects of the immediate area. Serious concerns were voiced by Councillors over the impact a nuclear repository would have on this Environmentally Sensitive Area.

The Parish Council arrived at the view that it does not wish to object to the search for a repository at this stage of the process. The Council wishes to receive regular updates and reserves its right to object to the proposal at a later stage.

Brigham Parish Council

I have been told to let CALC know that Brigham Parish Council wishes to go to the next stage of the process.

Tony North.

Clerk to Brigham Parish Council

Bromfield Parish Council

MRWS was fully discussed last night at the meeting of Bromfield Parish Council. Councillors would like to state the following;

As a suitable site has been identified in southern England, why would we carry on with this?

Buttermere Parish Council

At a late & hastily called Parish meeting it was decided to respond to the Public Consultation, with the following result.

Tuesday March 14th. Buttermere Parish Council have voted unanimously to recommend withdrawal from continuing with any further investigations into the deep geological disposal of radioactive waste.

I hope that this helps you in your forward planning.

Cockermouth Town Council

At our meeting held on 21 March 2012, Cockermouth Town Council resolved that:-

'The siting of a repository for the geological disposal of radioactive waste in Allerdale be not supported and not taken to the next stage'

Crosscanonby Parish Council

The siting of a repository for the geological disposal of radioactive waste in Allerdale is not supported by Crosscanonby Parish Council and should not be taken to the next stage.

We also believe that "West Cumbria" should now withdraw from the MRWS process because;

- i) We have no confidence in the Right of Withdrawal
- ii) We are convinced by the argument that nowhere in Cumbria has suitable geology
- iii) We believe that it is a waste of time and money to continue the process in Cumbria when there are other, more promising, areas in England
- iv) We consider that the potential economic benefits to Cumbria do not justify searching for a site in unsuitable geology or spoiling part of a national park
- v) We have concerns that Governments aspiration to accelerate the MRWS process will lead to corner-cutting
- vi) We have concerns about safety, particularly gas emissions
- vii) There is insufficient information about additional waste and the inherent increased risk
- viii) Far too little information is available on impacts for the community to make a meaningful decision to participate
- ix) Rail transportation of waste would pass through this parish and is not proven safe.

This is the adopted position of Crosscanonby Parish Council.

Dean Parish Council

On the 27th February 2012 Dean Parish Council held a public meeting in the Kirkstile Community Centre, Dean. The meeting was chaired by the council chairman, Tony Worsley, and the main speaker was Guy Richardson, CALC's representative on the MRWS Partnership. The DVD supplied with the consultation pack was shown to open the meeting, following which Guy Richardson addressed the meeting for approximately 45 minutes, followed by questions from the floor. Guy outlined the process so far, which has reached stage 3 in the process. He expressed the serious doubts that CALC has had about the process, in particular the definition of a 'Host Community' when it comes down to withdrawing from the process.

The main issues which were raised by parishioners who attended were:

1. Have any extensive discussions taken place with other countries who are contemplating, or actually building, nuclear waste repositories (Finland in particular who are the farthest advanced), and are there any plans to visit these countries to learn about their experiences? It was pointed out that the population density of some of these other countries (Scandinavia in particular) is considerably lower than ours.

2. Why do we need to take a decision on whether to proceed with a desk-top geological study - as part of the work has already been done, and as considerable knowledge is available from the Nirex study of the Gosforth area in the 1990s, this could proceed without any commitment to go further, as no major expenditure would be incurred (such as borehole drilling). Concern was expressed that the findings of the Nirex enquiry appear to be completely excluded from the current process.

3. It was agreed that the decision to use this 'voluntarist' approach was purely political, as the Government has not received and is unlikely to receive any volunteers from the geologically suitable parts of the country, eg the south east or Norfolk.

4. Concern was expressed about the long term safety of material currently stored above ground at Sellafield. At the end of the meeting, a show of hands indicated that 2/3rds of those present were in favour of proceeding to the desk top study, and 1/3rd were against. On the 5th March 2012, Dean Parish Council held its regular Council meeting, which was attended by 10 out of 12 councillors, plus our Allerdale Borough and Cumbria County Council representatives, and an open discussion was held on the issue of proceeding to stage 4 (desk top study). The main issues raised at this meeting were:

1. Concern at the democratic process involved, in particular whether decisions taken by the borough and county councils, ostensibly on behalf of the residents of Allerdale and Copeland, would be by the 'Cabinets' or the full councils, and also the effectiveness of the public consultation exercise currently taking place. Doubt was expressed on whether a vote, even if taken by the full council, would be a free one, or whether a 'party line' would take precedence, in which case common sense may not prevail.

2. How realistic the right to withdraw which is enshrined in the consultation document would be, when hidden away in the 'small print' is the following statement (repeated): "in the event of the partnership concluding that the omission

of a potential host community (parish, borough?) would create insurmountable problems for the siting process, then it could recommend the inclusion of the community concerned if this was supported by a full justification and explanation". It was felt that this statement effectively wiped out any chance of 'opting out' by any parish or group of parishes.

3. The huge impact of the construction process on host and surrounding communities was not felt to be fully grasped.

4. It was felt that the further the process moves on, the more momentum it will gain, making it more difficult to pull out at a later stage. The right to withdraw, and by who, at later stages is far from clear. There was a strong view about the difficulty of overcoming government (of any political persuasion) momentum once potential compliant communities had been identified. The original decisions by Allerdale and Copeland, both of which have vested interests arising from their nuclear-centric industry, and the complete absence of a Plan B, make it difficult to imagine that smaller communities (eg Parish Councils), would have any influence on later decisions on whether to proceed.

5. Retrievability was considered an important issue, particularly if alternative means of disposal or recycling/reprocessing are developed in the future.

A vote taken at the end of the discussion resulted in 5 votes in favour of proceeding to stage 4, 6 against proceeding, and 1 abstention.

The importance of individuals making their views known to the partnership by responding prior to the 23rd March 2012 was stressed at both meeting.

Embleton & District Parish Council

At the recent meeting of Embleton and District Parish Council the following question was put to councillors:

Does this Parish Council believe that the Managing Radioactive Waste Safely Project should move forward to Stage 4 of the project, this being desk based studies to ascertain the suitability of the geology of Allerdale for housing an underground repository.

Members of the public were also present at the meeting and engaged with the debate that councillors undertook. A variety of issues and concerns were raised and at the end of the debate the vote was as follows:

Those in favour of the move to Stage 4:	2 councillors
Those opposed to the move to Stage 4:	6 councillors
Abstentions:	1 councillor

The main reasons for not supporting the move to Stage 4 were:

- Concerns for the tourism in the area and the negative impact continuing the MRWS process will have on tourism businesses.
- A belief that there is already enough geological information available that shows Allerdale is not suitable for an underground repository.

The decision of the Parish Council **not** to support the MRWS Project moving to Stage 4 in Allerdale will be relayed to the following organisations:

1. Allerdale Borough Council: whom we will be urging to withdraw from the process.
2. Cumbria County Council
3. Cumbria Association of Local Councils
4. Lake District National Park

Greysouthen Parish Council

With regard to the ongoing debate, consultation and numerous documents/leaflets on this very important subject Greysouthen Parish Council considered the matter in detail at their meeting last night.

Their unanimous decision was that West Cumbria should now withdraw from the MRWS process once and for all. There should be no Stage 3.

In reaching this decision the Parish Council concluded that the geology is neither suitable nor safe with no guarantees that we are not leaving a toxic legacy for the future. There is no confidence in the right of withdrawal particularly if huge sums have already been spent. Furthermore the potential economic benefits are far outweighed by safety and risk concerns. There is no point in wasting more time and money as this area is totally unsuitable.

The Parish Council also wondered if the continuing involvement of CALC is now worthwhile and would support any decision by CALC to withdraw from the consultation process.

I hope this helps in reaching a global decision in this extremely important subject.

Holme East Waver Parish Council

The information provided to date has been considered carefully by Councillors and discussed at the March Parish Council Meeting.

The Parish Council does not wish to object to the search for a repository at this stage of the process. The Council wishes to receive regular updates and reserves its right to object to the proposal at a later stage.

Holme St. Cuthbert Parish Council

At the present time

It is generally accepted that there needs to be a proper plan for the safe disposal of nuclear waste, and it also accepted that, at the current level of

human development and intelligence, the safest way is to bury the waste deep underground. With this waste potentially being dangerous for a hundred thousand years it is vital that the most suitable place possible is found to store it.

The six stage MRWS consultation, now nearing the end of the 3rd stage, has made a fairly low profile attempt at finding out the opinions of the local population and as the consultation moves in to the 4th stage, and more money is invested, it will become progressively more difficult for councils to withdraw from the process.

Right of Withdrawal

The Government says that a repository will only be put somewhere where there is a community that has volunteered to have it. An important part of this “voluntarism” approach is the Right of Withdrawal, which can supposedly be exercised up to the point where underground construction is about to begin at the end of Stage 5. Does this mean that, if geologists claimed to have found “suitable geology” under or near Holme St. Cuthbert that the people living here could decide that they did not, after all, want to volunteer to have the UK’s radioactive waste buried under their homes and businesses and so withdraw? It is difficult to see how they could. Parish Councils, for example, cannot exercise the Right of Withdrawal: only Allerdale Borough Council or Cumbria County Council could do so. Even if a parish council could exercise the right, it would become increasingly difficult to do so as we proceeded through the MRWS process as stated in paragraph 1. . It says on pages 93 and 94 of the Partnership’s report that “reasoned justification” would be required. Members of the public and small parish councils would find it very difficult to produce ‘reasoned justification’ against determined government ‘experts’. Even if they did have the technical expertise to produce such ‘reasoned justification’, it is also made clear on pages 93 and 94 of the report that the Community Siting Partnership (which would advise the Councils) could still reject their reasoned justification if allowing them to withdraw would prevent the repository from going ahead. The 2008 MRWS White Paper also makes it clear that, once expensive boreholes had been drilled, a community would find it very difficult to withdraw.

The government reserves the right to ignore a community’s wishes if they mean that the repository project would have to be abandoned.

Holme St. Cuthbert parish council held a film and discussion evening for residents of the parish. Many queried whether or not the government were sincerely interested in the response to their consultation if they could choose to ignore it at will and override any community’s decisions.

All present at the meeting expressed a desire that the parish council request Allerdale and Cumbria County Council to withdraw from the process now.

Parish council members have also taken every opportunity to speak to residents on other occasions to gauge their feelings concerning the waste

repository and there has been a unanimous decision to request the councils to withdraw.

The 3 councils could still withdraw at this stage but as the process continues, this will become increasingly difficult and there is no way a parish could withdraw by itself.

Holme St. Cuthbert Parish Council therefore has no faith in the Right of Withdrawal

Geology

Geology is important because the Government admits that the repository will eventually leak. Water flowing through the leaking repository will be contaminated with radioactivity. The geology needs to ensure that as little contamination as possible will reach the surface.

The rational way to approach siting is first to look for an area in the UK that has the desired geology and then to tackle the problem of convincing the local population that the repository poses no threat. The opposite approach is taken by the MRWS process: first, find a “nuclear-compliant” community and then look for suitable geology. This is a very unscientific and ultimately expensive way to find a suitable area for a repository.

It has been argued, particularly by Professor David Smythe, who conducted a geological survey of West Cumbria for the government in the 1980s that it is already obvious that nowhere in Cumbria has suitable geology. His argument is based on two observations:

- Cumbria is mountainous
- There is a lot of folding, faulting and other geological complexities

The mountains act like a cistern in the roof of a house. They drive water at high rates through the ground towards the coast and, because of the cistern effect, can drive underground water upwards to the surface. Because of the complexity of the geology it is very difficult to predict where groundwater will carry contaminants from a leaking repository.

We agree with Professor Smythe’s view that it is a waste of time and money to look at an area with unsuitable geology when it is known that other places exist where the geology is more promising, and wonder whether or not the traditional British Government attitude of ‘stuffing unpleasant things’ well away from the home counties in remote areas, regardless of the effect on the communities there, will win the argument yet again.

As there appears to be no other areas being considered, and the Government wish to speed up the whole process, the parish council wonders if the repository will be put in Cumbria regardless of arguments against it, secure in the knowledge that they (the government) will not be around to take the flak if and when things go wrong.

Planning

It is not clear how a planning application for the repository would be determined. The Partnership Report (P. 42) says "much could change in the 15 years before an application could occur". However, it seems likely that it would not be the local authorities who would determine the application, but a body such as the new Major Infrastructure Planning Unit (MIPU): which would advise the responsible minister, who would make the decision. We think that a 1km² industrial complex with its road and rail links would be disastrous for local tourism and agricultural industries. West Cumbria already struggles to attract tourist due to being associated with Sellafield. It is possible, though unable to be proven, that other industries are also deterred by this. A second large nuclear facility would definitely deter many people and businesses from coming to the area. Any thoughts of the nearby LDNP achieving World Heritage status to boost our tourist industry will be finished.

In addition the underground repository would expand if a decision is made to accommodate new waste. Would people want to visit an area when they knew that a large quantity of nuclear waste was buried under the hotel, B & B, campsite or cottage they may have chosen? It is also relevant to ask 'would the image of Cumbrian agricultural produce be damaged by an association between "Cumbrian produce" and nuclear waste?

Stage 5 borehole investigations would probably require a substantial number of sites in open country. They would be heavy-duty rigs and tracks would need to be driven to allow heavy equipment to be transported to the sites. They would require generators to run. They would be noisy and visually intrusive. It might be argued that the disruption caused by stage 5 might only last

for 10 years or so. But it is not clear whether any lasting surface structures (such as ventilation shafts) would remain. Again detrimental to the countryside.

. Impacts and Benefits

The lure of employment is always used to put some unattractive project where people are reluctant to accept it. However the fact that this facility would, as stated in the previous paragraph, deter many businesses coming to the area and destroy tourism means that as many jobs would be lost as gained if this were to go ahead.

Improved infrastructure adjacent to the site i.e. large roads and rail links would in all probability split small communities, and, if previous experience is anything to go by, communities farther away would suffer consequences, but receive none of the benefits. This parish suffered this fate when building work was being done at Sellafield and a great many extremely large heavy vehicles were taking building materials to the site along totally inadequate roads.

The repository would commit the host community to a "nuclear future for many generations to come". Is this the legacy that Allerdale, Copeland and the CCC

wish to leave for future generations? We feel that this repository would result in an economic nuclear monoculture in West Cumbria.

Safety

The Government's wish for acceleration in making a waste facility available by 2029 could potentially jeopardise the need for careful management. The NDA are responding by looking at ways to increase resources allocated to the programme, undertake more work in parallel, and transfer technology from more advanced programs overseas.

The original planned date to bring an underground waste disposal facility into service was 2040 and was based on the time it took for other countries to select the proper site and technology to permanently dispose of the most dangerous nuclear waste. Sweden took 31 years, France, 32 and Finland, 37.

It is clear that a lot of scientific and technical problems have not yet been solved. Therefore the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) has a research programme that is running alongside the search for a site. One problem to which there is not yet an answer is gas. It is now known that a large amount of hydrogen will be generated by a repository. It would be a problem particularly once the repository closes and is backfilled. Where should it go? If it is vented to the surface, the vents defeat the object of sealing the repository to prevent radioactivity from reaching the surface. If it is allowed to build up, what are the consequences?

The hydrogen would not itself be radioactive (though it can explode). However, another gas, methane, is likely to be formed and this would be strongly radioactive. Again, simple and fault-free geology is required to keep it underground. That is not the kind of geology that exists in West Cumbria.

We conclude that, given the local geology, the problem of gas generation is of particular concern.

Conclusions

We believe that "West Cumbria" should now withdraw from the MRWS process because:

- We have no confidence in the Right of Withdrawal in future stages of the process
- We are convinced by the argument that nowhere in Cumbria has suitable geology
- We believe that it is a waste of time and money to continue the process in Cumbria when there are other, more promising, areas in England
- Continuing the process puts west Cumbria and its tourist and agricultural businesses at risk

- We consider that the potential economic benefits to Cumbria do not justify searching for a site in unsuitable geology
- We have concerns that Government's aspiration to accelerate the MRWS process will lead to corner-cutting
- We have concerns about safety, particularly gas emissions
- There is insufficient information about additional waste and the inherent increased risk
- Far too little information is available on impacts for the community to make a meaningful Decision to Participate.

Holme St. Cuthbert Parish Council request that the 3 councils concerned withdraw from this process

Holme St. Cuthbert Parish Council March 2012

Keswick Town Council

Following a debate on the issues surrounding the consultation, Keswick Town Council resolved at its meeting held on Thursday 16th February 2012 to support entering the next stage of the process to find a site for a repository for the UK's higher activity nuclear waste in the Allerdale area, without any commitment to have it.

Kirkbride Parish Council

The information received to date has been considered carefully by Councillors, and discussed at the March Parish Council Meeting. The Parish Council acknowledges the importance of the nuclear industry to the economy of Cumbria, but is equally aware of the detrimental effects that a repository could have on the landscape, economy and other aspects of the immediate area.

The Parish Council arrived at the view that it does not wish to object to the search for a repository at this stage of the process. The Council wishes to receive regular updates and reserves its right to object to the proposal at a later stage.

Lorton Parish Council

At the recent meeting of Lorton Parish Council the following question was put to councillors:

'Does this Parish Council believe that the Managing Radioactive Waste Safely Project should move forward to Stage 4 of the project, this being desk based studies to ascertain the suitability of the geology of Allerdale for housing an underground repository.'

Members of the public were also present at the meeting and engaged with the debate that councillors undertook. A variety of issues and concerns were raised and these included:

- The geological studies to be undertaken during stage 4 would almost certainly prove that the geology of the area was not suitable for a repository, as proven by work undertaken during the Nirex investigations.
- The project as a whole would have some economic benefit to the area though the likelihood of large numbers of new, sustainable jobs being created for local people was remote.
- There is unhappiness about the process as a whole and feel that it should be driven by geology not geography. The areas with the most stable geology in the country should have been identified first and then volunteer communities should have been sought. The deep clays of Norfolk, Oxfordshire and London provide the most suitable geology for a waste repository.
- Although there are further opportunities in the process for withdrawal, it is uncertain whether parish councils or the public will have another opportunity to have their say. It maybe that once into stage 4 the whole process becomes unstoppable.
- The waste created by the massive excavation works would cause massive problems locally.
- Both the tourism and farming industries could be adversely affected by the project.

At the end of the debate the vote was as follows:

Those in favour of the move to Stage 4:	1 councillor
Those opposed to the move to Stage 4:	5 councillors

The decision of Lorton Parish Council **not** to support the MRWS Project moving to Stage 4 in Allerdale will be relayed to the following organisations:

5. Allerdale Borough Council
6. Cumbria County Council

7. Cumbria Association of Local Councils
8. Lake District National Park

Loweswater Parish Council

At the recent meeting of Loweswater Parish Council the following question was put to councillors:

'Does this Parish Council believe that the Managing Radioactive Waste Safely Project should move forward to Stage 4 of the project, this being desk based studies to ascertain the suitability of the geology of Allerdale for housing an underground repository.'

Members of the public were also present at the meeting and engaged with the debate that councillors undertook. A variety of issues and concerns were raised and these included:

- The geological information already available about West Cumbria is some of the most detailed in the country and it is doubtful whether there is a need for further investigations. The geology is already known to be unsuitable for a repository.
- The project as a whole would have some economic benefit to the area though the likelihood of large numbers of new, sustainable jobs being created for local people was remote.
- There is unhappiness about the process as a whole and feel that it should be driven by geology not geography. The areas with the most stable geology in the country should have been identified first and then volunteer communities should have been sought. The deep clays of Norfolk, Oxfordshire and London provide the most suitable geology for a waste repository.
- Although there are further opportunities in the process for withdrawal, it is uncertain whether parish councils or the public will have another opportunity to have their say. It maybe that once into stage 4 the whole process becomes unstoppable.
- The waste created by the massive excavation works would cause massive problems locally.
- Both the tourism and farming industries could be adversely affected by the project. The Lake District is of national importance and nothing should be done that could impact upon the World Heritage application.

At the end of the debate the vote was as follows:

Those in favour of the move to Stage 4:	2 councillors
Those opposed to the move to Stage 4:	4 councillors

The decision of Loweswater Parish Council **not** to support the MRWS Project moving to Stage 4 in Allerdale will be relayed to the following organisations:

9. Allerdale Borough Council
10. Cumbria County Council
11. Cumbria Association of Local Councils
12. Lake District National Park

Maryport Town Council

The Town Council has considered the potential implications of siting an underground nuclear repository in West Cumbria.

The Council do not support moving to the next stage in the process to develop an underground nuclear repository on the following grounds:

There is concern that if the three responsible councils, (Allerdale Borough Council, Copeland Borough Council & Cumbria County Council), agree to move to stage 4, the way the process is designed will make it very difficult to withdraw from the process.

There is concern that the complexity of the geology in the area would make it unsuitable & that the review should focus on areas of the country which have suitable geology, rather than on seeking suitable geology after an area has expressed an interest in hosting this type of facility.

There is concern that the impact of surface sites & the knowledge of the presence of an underground facility would have a negative impact on tourism.

The Council believes that the potential economic benefits are negligible in comparison to the overall negative impact on the area.

There is concern about safety aspects, in particular, the uncertainty about the potential impact of gas emissions & additional waste.

The Council believes that there is too little information available to enable a balanced decision to be made on the Decision to Participate.

Please can you ensure that the Council's concerns in this matter are taken into account.

Papcastle Parish Council

At the Papcastle Parish Council meeting on 6th March 2012 the members voted to move to the next stage of consultation

St John's Castlerigg & Wythburn Parish Council

1.1 – No

1.2

Finding a suitable rock formation that can act as an effective barrier is essential for the construction of a safe disposal facility. So far we have not heard of any area within the county that is suitable. Geological experts have not recommended any such places in Cumbria.

Dr J Dearlove and Prof A Godmundson both stated “The Partnership” can rely on BGS study. The partnership was not originally happy with BGS survey and asked for further clarification. That further work did not use any Cumbria specific data, therefore, it is a fallacy to say BGS work can be relied upon. Prof David Smythe states West Cumbria should be ruled out on geological ...hardly a ringing endorsement of the BGS study!

Dr Dearlove feels it is only Prof Smythe’s personal opinion that the area is not suitable – What is the difference between a personal opinion and a Professional? Surely if a location was suitable, all experts would agree? 20 years ago NIREX deemed that Cumbria was unsuitable to bury nuclear waste hence the above ground storage.

Cumbria has volcanic-fractured fault lines and is subject to earthquakes, as recent as 2010. It is the wettest place in England with continual movement of ground water. Other mountainous countries are providing sites away from these locations, e.g. Sweden, Finland and Switzerland. Radiation and gases could easily return to the surface through the many fractures and faults which are filled with water.

BGS study has not revealed a suitable place so far, thus we believe that if the area were suitable, a ringing endorsement would have been made by now. We need a definite opinion about suitable geology first. Find first then consult, instead of asking the question and then trying to find a place here in Cumbria. It is not fair to tempt us with money while risking the health and lives of everyone in the future.

2.1 – No

2.2

Safety – If the area is not geologically safe, a solution elsewhere needs to be found or surface storage needs to be a stopgap. Area not safe as geology not proved. Only preserved safety. Area on coast not safe 20 years ago. This time we know they are going to look further afield but complex geology we know.

Security – with such a large development security would be a huge problem,

for most of the country. Waste arriving and waiting to be stored.

Environment – Given water pollution seeping through the faulted and fractured land, the perception of the whole area will be changed. Cumbria, the Lake District no longer would become a “World Heritage Site”. National Park at present does not seem to address this problem and consider the consequences.

Planning – Local Planning rules will not be enforced as this is a Government driven scheme. NO local planning policy. Viability of West Cumbria in particular will change.

3.1 – No

3.2

This will impact on the Lake District and Cumbria as a whole. Not just West Cumbria.

A marketing policy for farming and food is to be developed but the fact that this will be needed shows that the impact of the repository will affect the whole area. There is a danger in underestimating people’s perception of Cumbria. For example, after Foot and Mouth in 2001, visitors stayed away and went to other places. Will there be a reduction in the consumption of locally produced food, as the “Cumberland Brand” may not be welcomed.

Land and property prices will fall, West Cumbria is a very small strip, although well populated, part of the country. Infrastructure, for transportation, north and south will be needed because of the high mountains in the middle.

This will make great changes which will impact on the landscape people come to enjoy.

4.1 – No

4.2

As yet the partnership has not said who will benefit. Cost of infrastructure needed. There is insufficient information. There is no trust in going forward to stage four. Questions of ownership and mineral rights. Seems like a bribe for the people of West Cumbria, emphasis on money more than environmental impact on health and safety. Unsafe to rely on the promise of community benefit. Change of government may mean withdrawal of the “promise” of money.

5.1 – No

5.2 - The ability to retrieve and monitor this waste should be a cornerstone of the design. The waste removable if needed.

We are not satisfied that the design addresses the issue of vast quantities of water in region. We have had severe flood episodes in 1985, 1995, 2005 and 2009. The EA now forecast a 20% increase, which will need to be managed.

Developments should have been made to make it possible for nuclear waste to be reused or recycled properly and safely.

Why should West Cumbria collect everyone else's? Statement does not say it will definitely only be England's. Omit?

6.1 – No

6.2 - Partnership tries to reassure us in the document but future changes to government always give rise to questions.

One nuclear issue is that it can be said to be irresponsible to continue to produce waste that you can't deal with. Outside England as well! Omit?

7.1 – No

7.2 - A suitable place in England should have been found first for such a huge project. We feel it is wrong for West Cumbria to volunteer without a suitable site.

It seems a flawed approach to address such a huge question. There are far more suitable areas in England with stable geology.

All other countries have found a suitable site first: - Sweden, Finland, France, Switzerland and USA.

This should not have gone beyond stage two without a suitable site being found and tested.

Canvassed in West Cumbria because they have dealt with nuclear fuels since 1951.

The two councils Copeland and Allerdale receive credible local support but only in this comparatively small area immediately affected. Only two on committee but the huge use of the rest of the country has not been considered. Infrastructure access around the central massif. Financial pressures problems for host community and people did not bother to object earlier. County compliant. Not a good safety record over the years.

Poor record for something so dangerous and not fully understood.

8 – Our conclusion is from the information given that West Cumbria should withdraw.

Right to withdraw later gives no confidence.

Nowhere in Cumbria seems to have the suitable geology.

Need to find somewhere in England first and then consult with community. Not the way it has been done here.

Continuing is disrupting life in Cumbria – farmers, tourists especially as the National Park is such an important part of the county and so close to West Cumbria.

Continuing concerns about safety in this “fractured fault lined” area with so much water – gas and water emissions.

Not enough information about other waste to be stored here – has to arrive from wherever, and “how” a big question. Only narrow coastal strip north and south of Copeland and Allerdale.

The impacts on community have not really been addressed in wider area – considering huge area of fells inaccessible in middle of county.

Seaton Parish Council

At its meeting held on 20 February, 2012, the Parish Council considered the potential implications of siting an underground nuclear repository in West Cumbria.

The Council resolved not to support moving to the next stage in the process to develop an underground nuclear repository on the following grounds:

- 1) The Council are concerned that if the three responsible councils, (Allerdale Borough Council, Copeland Borough Council & Cumbria County Council), agree to move to stage 4, the way the process is designed will make it very difficult to withdraw from the process.
- 2) The Council believes that the complex geology in the area would render it unsuitable & that the review should focus on areas of the country with suitable geology, rather than on seeking suitable geology after an area has expressed an interest in hosting a facility.
- 3) The Council is concerned that the impact of surface sites & the knowledge of the presence of an underground facility would have a negative effect on tourism.
- 4) The Council is of the view that the potential economic benefits are negligible in comparison to the overall negative impact on the area.
- 5) The Council is concerned about safety aspects, in particular, the uncertainty about the potential impact of gas emissions & additional waste.
- 6) The Council believes there is too little information available to enable a balanced decision to be made on the Decision to Participate.

The Council asked that I write to you requesting that you take note of the Council’s concerns in this matter

Thursby Parish Council

The Parish Council unanimously rejects the proposal to bury radioactive waste in West Cumbria.

The Parish Council has considered the reassurances regarding safety for this and future generations but remains unconvinced that the necessary protection of local residents, the workforce and the environment can be guaranteed.

The Parish Council has concluded therefore that given the uncertainties of West Cumbrian geology, the risks of installing a repository in this area are unacceptable.

Underskiddaw Parish Council

Geology

No

1.1 a) You asked yourselves if you were confident in the integrity of the BGS screening survey, and your Initial Opinion was that you were satisfied.

1.2 a) The Parish Council would not dispute that the BGS survey is sound so far as it goes, but it does not go very far. It is a very high level screening survey which only excluded 2 kinds of area : those where coal oil or gas might be found and which might therefore attract mining operations in the future which could break into the Repository; and those where it was necessary to protect exploitable groundwater. Since the study is so limited to say there was no criticism of it is neither here nor there.

1.1 b) You asked yourselves if there were sufficient areas remaining to make further

Progress “worthwhile” {we shall assume you mean “to make it worthwhile investigating if further progress would be possible”}.

In terms of square metres you decided that there was enough land. However about 75% of this area falls within the National Park. In section 5.2 you say that siting a surface facility in the National Park “may be ruled out”. The Parish Council considers this should be ruled out and also that drilling boreholes within the National Park to investigate the underground facility should also be ruled out – in view of the destruction this would cause to the landscape in what is geographically a very small area, and in terms of landscape value a priceless and national asset. Leaving aside the National Park there is a considerably smaller area remaining about which concerns remain as to its suitability.

Safety etc.

Question 2.1 In relation to Safety Security Environment and Planning : No

Question 2.2

Safety and Security

The Parish Council has studied Chapter 5 carefully, including the many quite technical documents annexed to it. While a fully-informed and accurate evaluation of the information provided is beyond the resources of the Parish Council, the overall impression gained is that the endorsement by the peer reviewers of the present safety regime is somewhat lukewarm and qualified,

and the findings in the scientific critique also raise a number of doubts. Even at this stage we would have hoped to be able to feel greater confidence in what is the most significant concern for local people, and in particular our own residents : i.e. that the safety regime is first class.

Environment

There are several Regulatory Bodies – Environment Agency, Health and Safety Executive (with several sub-divisions) ONR, with quite complex responsibilities, and some in the process of being changed. The Dept for Transport also has involvement, NDA will prepare safety cases, and the Planning system also has a regulatory although not an initiatory function. Some members of the Partnership have expressed dismay at the interlocking roles which make it difficult to identify sometimes who is responsible for what. Further more these bodies will have to undergo further change to deal with a major issue such as this.

The Parish Council does not feel that a clear picture has emerged, and therefore it is not possible to be satisfied that the regulatory system is satisfactory or effective, nor is it confident that the system will improve in future, when responsibilities will be vastly enlarged.

The Parish Council notes that the Partnership asked for written reassurance about liaison with a future Partnership in the later Stages, but did not find that this had been obtained.

With regard to Communication, the local experience with the Environment Agency has not been particularly good, and this does not inspire confidence.

Planning

The special requirements of and duties falling on the National Park are given no prominence. By legislation the National Park has a duty to preserve the special environment of the Park – which is why the Park was set up. The Park has to conserve the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the area and this is an overriding duty. There should therefore be no question of the surface facility being placed in the Park or of boreholes being drilled from the surface within the Park while looking for a Repository site. This should be categorically stated.

Impacts

No (the Parish council agrees that there is much uncertainty about the impacts.)

3.1 a) You asked if you were confident that possibilities exist to assess and manage environmental social and economic impacts appropriately if they occur; your opinion was that mostly an acceptable process can be put in place to manage impacts but that you had insufficient evidence to decide whether the “brand” and reputation of the area could be protected and you would decide this before reporting.

3.2 a). Much of your evidence was taken from NDA reports – but NDA is not a disinterested party being itself a waste producer. The perception issue is of great concern to this parish and surrounding ones where tourism is the main industry, and this is not dealt with thoroughly as the research is, you say, incomplete. Presumably the evidence you acquire after the close of the consultation will not therefore be presented to the public for consultation. The Parish Council does not consider this to be convincing. Your table shows that assessments of impacts are only being made at such a high level of generality that there is little to be learnt from them.

3.1 b) & c) You wanted to be confident that the possibility of a Repository fits with the overall direction of the area and your initial opinion was that it was broadly compatible with the economic aspirations of West Cumbria although the long term implications have not yet been fully understood or properly considered.

3.2 b) and c) You note the Vision for West Cumbria which acknowledges that West

Cumbria is now nuclear dependent and likely to suffer economic fall back unless there is nuclear investment : the Vision would therefore be compatible with development of a Repository, which is not to say it is realistic. You estimate up to 1000 people would be employed during the construction period, with indirect employment increasing by 1000 to 1500 jobs. There is no certainty that these jobs would be taken up by Cumbrians – international companies tend not to recruit locally, but the indirect employment could be local. There might be a negative effect on tourism and agriculture and also on property prices. The negative and positive effects are both uncertain. As you say more substantial evidence is required. These considerations are linked to the Community Benefits package.

CB package

No

4.1 You asked yourselves if you were confident that an appropriate community benefits package can be developed. Your initial opinion is that you have agreed a set of principles with the government as the basis for any future negotiations. You say you cannot be certain what the government might agree to in the future, and therefore what the amount and type of benefits might be. You say that future negotiations would need to be carefully managed. You do not say whether you were confident about this or not – therefore the Parish Council finds it difficult to say yes or no. If you feel confident, then the Parish Council would not agree with you. If you do not feel confident then the Parish Council would agree with you.

The Parish Council does not feel confident that a suitable package can be relied upon.

4.2 You defined 12 Principles with which a Community Benefits Package should be compatible. You asked the Government if it agreed with the

Principles. The Government wrote back to say that it agreed that the Principles formed a basis for negotiations. Since the Principles themselves were at a high level of generality, with no detail, for the Government to say that they form a basis for further negotiation is not to promise any adherence to the Principles. The government's reply is worded with extreme caution and is full of phrases like "may" and "might" and "subject to local needs, affordability and value for money considerations." In particular no promises are offered in relation to "additionality". Since this community is entirely dependent on the Government to decide the benefits package to be offered this response from the Government does not inspire confidence.

D&E

No

5.1 You ask yourselves whether you are satisfied that the design concepts being developed are appropriate at this stage. Your Initial Opinions are that you can understand the generic designs being worked on, and they fit your expectations. You say detailed design can only be done in relation to a specific site. You have satisfied yourselves that retrievability is not being ruled out at this stage. You consider the design concepts are appropriate and flexible at this stage given that detailed design issues should not be resolved at this stage.

5.2 You say that the design of the Repository would be tailored to the geography and specific geological structures of the actual site. The Parish Council considers this is another example of looking at things the wrong way round. Amongst the manifold uncertainties one certain starting point is that we have a large body of existing waste here in Cumbria which has to be disposed of safely (i.e., according to government policy, underground). Surely the design should be primarily influenced by the proposed contents. We know now what these are. The design should accommodate these and a search should be made for geology suitable to accommodate the design. If possible the design should allow for future waste produced in the UK. Some uncertainties might be resolved if this approach was adopted.

Inventory

No

6.1 You asked yourselves whether you were satisfied with the proposed Inventory to be stored in the Facility. You say that you understand the difference between baseline and upper inventories and therefore what could go in a Repository, although there are still uncertainties. You believe that satisfactory progress has been made towards agreeing the principles that define the process for changing the inventory, including the influence of the community in this. Overall you think you have received the information you were looking for at this stage.

6.2 You made a list of 6 principles for which you sought government agreement. You seem satisfied with the response. However : Principle 1 ~

you ask for Government to make clear its commitment to agreeing the Inventory: Answer : Decc does not provide this specific commitment. Principle 2 ~ you ask for a mutually acceptable process to be agreed in relation to changing the contents of the Inventory and for a veto on changes in the future: Answer : the Government would expect to develop a process (not a commitment) and “this process might reach decisions based on pre-agreed principles” (not necessarily these 6 Principles however). “These principles should recognise the need to provide a means to safely dispose of the higher activity radioactive waste in the UK which requires geological disposal”. In other words if it needs to be disposed of it will be disposed of. There was no agreement to the veto.

There is reference to the right of withdrawal but changes to the Inventory might occur after the right of withdrawal has lapsed – when waste is already being stored. If it is not possible to obtain a commitment from the government that the local community should always be able to veto the contents of the Repository, then these could be changed at any future time, and the point of having had an agreement about contents in the first place would be lost.

Siting process

No

7.1 You said you wanted to be confident the siting process is robust and flexible enough to meet our needs. Your Initial Opinions are that you “ are confident, at least during Stage 4. No further assurances can be expected from the Government. Everyone is committed to consensus and fairness : however the practical challenges of making voluntarism work should not be underestimated.”

7.2 Concerns centre on how voluntary this process really is. Stage 1 (where councils expressed interest in participating) and the present stage (where the 2 councils who have volunteered to participate decide whether to move into Stage 4) are entirely voluntary : no-one was forced to participate or give reasons for doing so or not doing so. Once the volunteers move into stage 4 the picture changes. Potential Host communities have no right to withdraw – although they would be the actual sites concerned they have no decision making powers. On page 94 you state that if a Host Community wished to withdraw, and if this was based on reasoned justification and demonstrable community support, and if the Partnership decided it could manage without these communities, then the Host Community could be left out. If the Partnership decided it needed that Host community then “it could recommend its inclusion if it could produce a reasoned justification and explanation” – in other words at that point for the Host community the process has become compulsory. During Stage 5, once the expense of Stage 4 had been incurred, withdrawal becomes difficult even for the decision making bodies. The government White Paper states 6.5 “6.5 In the event that at some point in the future, voluntarism and partnership does not look likely to work Government reserves the right to explore other approaches. “

The result is that having volunteered to get into the process West Cumbria might not be able to volunteer to quit it.

A Host Community which finds itself volunteered to host a facility which it had not sought and does not welcome is faced with the problem of acquiring the detailed knowledge necessary to make a reasoned argument against having the facility, and the likelihood that in any opinion poll or referendum or District Council vote it will be outvoted by people living elsewhere.

Question 8

Underskiddaw Parish Council does not wish Allerdale and Copeland Councils to move into Stage 4 or to continue to participate in the process of searching for a site for a Repository.

This decision is based on a close reading of the Consultation Report and of many of the attached documents, discussions in Council Meetings and listening to the views of Parish residents.

The following points are relevant to our decision :

- The process is mis-conceived, and by recommending withdrawal from it we hope that the process will come to an end, and the government will have to start again. It is important to find the best site for the Repository : the best site is the safest: safety depends primarily on geology. Therefore the first consideration should be : where is the best geology. Instead of looking for the best site, the voluntarism principle has produced only a range of sites where the population is willing. Enough is known about the geology of England and Wales, and Cumbria in particular, to be able to say with certainty that there are better areas. The 1986 study recommended suitable sites, none of which was in Cumbria, which were turned down for political reasons. Other countries look for suitable geology first – they are more logical.
- The next stages will cost many millions of pounds : the Council believes that this public money should not be spent as their view is that it is more likely than not that either a second-best site will emerge, or no site will be found. If the former then the money will not have been well spent; if the latter then it will have been totally wasted.
- The Parish Council does not believe that Cumbria should be left to wrestle with this problem alone. They do not believe there is the expertise amongst the decision-makers to engage effectively with the enormous complexity of this task – nor should a decision with national and international consequences be left to relatively small local authorities. There are signs in the documentation of highly trained civil servants running rings round the Partnership as it attempts to extract promises for the future.

- The Parish Council also believes that this process should be stopped at this stage because they do not have faith in the Right of Withdrawal promised to be exercisable up to the end of Stage 5. A close reading of the Report shows that this right is always limited, and as the process goes on it becomes increasingly illusory. The community most affected either by the surface facility or the drilling of boreholes to explore for the underground site (the Host Community) does not have a right of withdrawal. It is the decision making bodies (Allerdale and Copeland) who can withdraw. A small town or village affected by a proposal would be helpless if the remainder of Allerdale wished it to go ahead. This is clear from reading pages 93 to 97. Even the DMB's could be overridden by the government (see White Paper). The expenditure of large sums of money on the forthcoming stages itself creates a momentum for pressing ahead.

Question 9

No response

Waverton Parish Council

Waverton Parish Council wishes to strongly object to the proposed building of an underground repository to dispose of radioactive waste in West Cumbria or anywhere in Cumbria.

The council feel it is important to safeguard the environment for the safety of the next generation of the local population.

If you require any further information, please contact me.

Winscales Parish Council

Consultation on Geological Disposal of Radioactive Waste in West Cumbria
Further to your letter dated 23 January 2012, the members of Winscales Parish Council would like to share their concerns re proposals for a possible repository in West Cumbria.

West Cumbria is a small area which already has its fair share of low level waste repositories. We do not wish the area to become a 'dumping ground'. The impact on both the environment and future generations is also unknown therefore all members of the Parish Council are against any participation in searching for a site in this area.

RESPONSES OF COPELAND PARISHES

Beckermet Parish Council

GEOLOGY

Q 1.1 Do you agree with Partnership?

Partly

Q 1.2 Explain

The work that has been undertaken to date is satisfactory, but the information offered is incredibly limited. Even at this early stage of the process, more could have been revealed. We agree that it does not rule out the remaining 75% of the Copeland/Allerdale area.

The NDA documentation does not indicate how likely it is that progress can be made. It boils down to an assurance that they think it could yield something; without any real supporting facts (e.g. the results of the Longlands Farm investigations, or existing knowledge that is readily available)

It is disappointing that no attempt has been made to indicate what type of geology would be preferred: or what would be the “show stoppers”.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Q 2.1 Agree with Partnership?

Partly

Q 2.2 Set out reasons

Safety Cases are routinely produced in the nuclear industry, and we agree that the organisations involved are capable of constructing such a case. The safety case references do not seem to show a response to potential criticality events. i.e. Will the design cater for such an event occurring, or will it depend upon it never taking place?

The main concern is over the R&D programme, which has made little progress in the 10 years following the NIREX enquiry. The outstanding list of work is huge, there is no valid programme, and no indication of alternative solutions if the answers emerging are not beneficial. Whilst RWMD claims that much would be site specific and hence premature, this does not preclude the need for much to be done now.

IMPACTS

Q 3.1 Agree with Partnership

Yes

Q 3.2 Explain

The chapter gives a comprehensive list of impacts, and acknowledges the areas requiring more attention.

It would be useful to see the word “blight” in the text, and to stress that this could apply to both a community in general; *and to specific individuals- so there needs to be a simple process to deal with individuals, without them having to incur substantial legal costs.*

The chapter is weak on spelling out the huge environmental impacts of the rock removal process; the creation of spoil heaps, the traffic involved, the land needed and the scale of the operation.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Q 4.1 Agree with Partnership?

Partly

Q 4.2 Explain

It would be useful to set out the kind of infrastructure benefits that are envisaged, as there is such a wide divergence of view about what would truly benefit West Cumbria.

The principles are good and appropriate. However, the document says little in 4 areas of concern

- Does the right of withdrawal get progressively more difficult, so that Government could refuse to accept it?
- Does negotiation of the detailed benefits package only occur after agreement to proceed? This would be a ludicrous situation.
- The “host community” is defined elsewhere as being a local village or small town. Whilst a wider area may be impacted to a small degree, there is the potential for such marginal areas to get a disproportionate share of benefits, and for the areas that are really impacted to lose out.
- Other developments are also being considered for the area, particularly a new nuclear station at Moorside. To what extent does the *Localism Act* limit the benefits that might be received?

Satisfactory responses in these 4 areas would be needed before a vote to proceed should be given.

DESIGN AND ENGINEERING

Q 5.1 Agree with Partnership?

Partly

Q 5.2 Explain

This section is at such an early stage that there is really nothing of substance in it. It could, at least, have discussed the anticipated arrangements for dealing with water flows, gases, explosion hazard, criticality, etc.

The 'ideal' design could have been spelled out more, particularly the flow of water and radionuclides that would be tolerable. Then, the arrangements for responding to unexpected events. E.g. what if a future ground movement opened up new pathways back to the surface?

There is no indication of the extent of monitoring that is foreseen, nor of the period during which the waste could be retrieved.

INVENTORY

Q 6.1 Agree with Partnership?

No

Q 6.2 Explain

The 6 principles represent a reasonable way forward.

You also recognise the various potential types of waste, including uranium and plutonium.

The quantity range is as good as you could expect at the moment, although you do not give much explanation of the spoil that would have to be extracted, together with the methods, space and location for handling it.

The surface buildings may need to incorporate some treatment facilities to ensure that the waste is fit for the repository. This aspect has not been explored.

In view of discussions on Independence, there is no acknowledgement of the Scottish origin of a significant part of the inventory, and the resulting consequences.

However, the main difficulty comes from the fact that the inventory is much less-well defined than you imply. Some of it is stated as little better than (say) "20 m³ of radioactive sludge". You need to know the actual radionuclides, the associated chemicals (and hence their binding properties, acidity, solubility, fire or explosion characteristics), future intended chemical treatments, encapsulation or packaging, etc. This is connected with the poor state of R&D generally. It may well be that some of the inventory can never go into a repository, and will always need above-ground storage.

THE PROCESS FOR SITING

Q 7.1 Agree with Partnership?

Partly

Q 7.2 Explain

The document recognises the need to change the representation on the *Partnership* to reflect the evolving situation.

However, it is hard to see how the *Decision Making Body* represents the host community, when it comes from such a large area; and many members will be from areas that have already been excluded!! It would allow some areas to jump on to a 'gravy train', regardless of the area really impacted. It is difficult to see how such a body has a democratic mandate in these circumstances, and much more 'say' should be given to residents, perhaps via a referendum or more substantial Parish Council input.

The 7 principles set out are reasonable, but they are very vague, and their *interpretation* could be questioned

1. How are you going to show that there is "confidence and ownership on the part of the host community"? (Principle 1))
2. How will the host community be "empowered"? (P2)
3. You have not spelled out how the "representatives of the host communities will be effectively involved" (P3)
4. How will the outcome be shown to be "consensual"? (P4)
5. There is no indication of what is meant by "equitable outcome" in Principle 6.
6. What is the test of "credible local support" required in principle 7?

The areas where most of the population of West Cumbria lives have already been ruled out. It would seem to be problematic to access the repository via the National Park, so only a fairly small part of Copeland/Allerdale is of prime interest for access:-

- a. The Sellafield area
- b. An area around Millom
- c. An area to the north of Cockermouth, extending to the Silloth area.

If it turns out that Silloth has the best geology, how will the decision to locate be made, as there is then a trade-off against the convenience of access at Sellafield?

OVERALL VIEWS

Q 8 Should Allerdale and Copeland take part in the search?

No, based on the information presented.

The reasons are:

- Much of the language is truly ambiguous, so that it could be interpreted as suggesting a good way ahead; it could also be interpreted otherwise. It should be more specific before any progress can be made.
- The local host community should primarily be within (say) 4 miles of the site(s). There is no acknowledgement of this: indeed, the process

seems to be trying to undermine it. Just how this real host community is to be involved, and give its approval in a consensual manner needs to be spelled out.

- The process is at a very early stage, so a lot of information is not available. Whilst this is understandable for some aspects (detail repository design, actual location, production of safety case, etc), other information could and should have been declared by now. In particular:
 - How the DMB is going to be constituted in the future to prevent the repository being forced on the local host community by other areas that are hardly involved
 - How the host community will have a proper democratic 'say' in the affair. Local support needs to be demonstrated. .
 - How the R&D is going to be programmed, and the processes envisaged for waste treatment. There will be pressure to make some progress with this project, and the temptation to move ahead with insufficient information. Remember the Inspector's comments re Longlands Farm!!
 - What kind of geology would rule out progress, and what would be the response to future ground movements?
 - The principles to ensure safety- regarding gases, explosion, criticality, water flows, etc.
13. There is no mention of UK devolution issues. Perhaps 30% of the waste arose originally from Scottish operations, so how will this be equitably resolved? At some point, the Scottish administration will need to be reconciled.
14. There is no acknowledgement that compensation should also be targeted at individuals who may be impacted, as well as to communities in a more general sense: or what this process might be.
15. Satisfactory answers to question 4.2 need to be obtained.

Q 9 ADDITIONAL COMMENTS.

The need for a National Repository is recognised.

However, the process described is unfair, particularly towards the eventual host community. It seems to seek to draw that community into the process, with minimal 'say' in the matter; and a benefits package to be 'negotiated' only after agreement to host! The local population would not have a direct vote on the matter. Whilst the document talks of 'equity', the process does not seem to be consistent with achieving it.

Cleator Moor Town Council

Cleator Moor Town Council considered the information presented at recent consultation meetings, and discussed the topic at an ordinary meeting of Cleator Moor Town Council, held on 13th March 2012.

Members agreed that a decision to move forward with a repository for radioactive waste was important one for the community, now and in the future. Cleator Moor Town Council decided to support further investigations, with reservations.

They felt at the moment, there was insufficient evidence to dictate whether the package of proposals would be beneficial in the long term for the community. This support is granted on the assurance that withdrawal from the process would be possible at a later date.

Drigg and Carleton Parish Council

Drigg and Carleton Parish Council passed the following resolution at their meeting on 13th March 2012.

The Council support moving into Stage 4 of the consultation process in order to establish sufficient and improved data on which to make further, future decisions. The Council consider that there should be a legal statement from HMG confirming the right of withdrawal from future participation at any future stage; i.e. the right of withdrawal should be enshrined in law.

Egremont Town Council

1.1 Yes

1.2

It would seem that the Partnership's work on geology can only be limited due to no sites being identified.

The amount of land not excluded at this stage again would seem ample for a GDF if one was agreed.

2.1 Yes

2.2

The UK has a long history of nuclear therefore confidence in the regulators is acceptable. The only concern would be the ability of the regulators to regain knowledge on a project that spans many years.

More information on all aspects of safety and environmental impacts would be needed to ensure a community would have confidence in a GDF.

Details on the planning system would need to be known but as this seems to change depending on who is in Government, we understand it is difficult at this moment in time to finalise the details. But communities would want to know how they could influence the planning discussions.

There is some slight concern that the NDA are responsible for developing a safety case as implemented of a GDF and the community would expect these documents to be independently assessed at the appropriate time.

3.1 Yes

3.2

We don't think any more impacts can be identified until site specific work has started.

Recognition of the impacts on different areas need to be understood more fully.

4.1 Yes

4.2

Egremont Town Council only agree because it is so early in the process to go into any details.

Communities would like to be informed and ask to influence any benefits package and recognition of the differing impacts should be replicated in the community benefits package.

5.1 No

5.2

It is difficult not to agree, as we recognise that all things can be considered and generic designs as detailed design work will be site specific.

6.1 Not Sure/Partly

6.2

Egremont Town Council understand that at this stage, details can't be discussed or even known but this is an important area and firmer assurances will be needed from Government. Using the word significant is not detailed enough.

At this stage, we don't think there is further information that can be provided.

7.1 Yes

7.2

As representatives from an area that could be directly or indirectly impacted upon we would want the opportunity to be involved, the ability to influence and represent our communities.

Early discussions, if a decision to participate is taken, would be welcomed.

8

Egremont Town Council recognises the need to find a long term solution for higher activity wastes but feel there is not enough information to make a final decision so we will reserve our judgement until more information is available. However at this stage, we are supportive of the proposed way forward if a decision to participate is taken.

Ennerdale and Kinniside Parish Council

At the recent meeting of Ennerdale & Kinniside Parish Council the following question was put to councillors:

'Does this Parish Council believe that the Managing Radioactive Waste Safely Project should move forward to Stage 4 of the project, this being desk based studies to ascertain the suitability of the geology of Copeland for housing an underground repository.'

A wide ranging debate took place and at the end of the debate the vote was as follows:

Those in favour of the move to Stage 4:	2 councillors
Those opposed to the move to Stage 4:	4 councillors

The reasons for the decision of Ennerdale & Kinniside Parish Council **not** to support the MRWS Project moving to Stage 4 in Copeland are given in the attached document and will be relayed to the following organisations:

Copeland Borough Council

Cumbria County Council

Cumbria Association of Local Councils

Lake District National Park

Gosforth Parish Council

OVERALL SUMMARY

We have no confidence in the MRWS Partnership report for the following reasons:

1. **Geology.** With its steep hydraulic gradients, its faulted and complex geology, and its associated difficulties of rock characterisation West Cumbria is certainly not an obvious first choice for a Repository. The relevance of the suitability or otherwise of the geology rests in providing the general public with the confidence and reassurance that a Repository can be safely sited in West Cumbria **and remain safe over tens of thousands of years**. This confidence and reassurance is absent in the consultation document and the representation of a more positive picture than is implied by the underpinning documentation serves only to emphasise this absence.

2. **Impacts.** We have serious concerns about the impacts of a Repository on West Cumbria. We do not believe that these would be uniform, and it is our opinion that the impacts of siting a Repository would be felt more severely on the less nuclear dependent Allerdale than on Copeland. More seriously we find it difficult to understand how your opinions on the criteria can be expressed with such certainty when the brand protection work which you commissioned has not been completed, and we remain gravely concerned

about the implications of this situation. Direct impacts on any Host Community during construction, which would be enormous in scale and for many years, appear to be totally ignored.

3. The engagement and siting processes. The June 2008 White Paper clearly sets out that Government policy expected a Repository to be delivered by Voluntarism and Partnership Working, through the key mechanism of a Community Siting Partnership. The consultation document represents a radical departure from Government policy and institutes in its place the primacy of the Principal Authorities. This is completely unacceptable. Moreover as a result of this departure from Government policy, we are now faced with the illogical and absurd situation of spending several years attempting to decide whether to make a Decision to Participate in locating a Repository in West Cumbria, without having actually located a suitable site beforehand, and with less than helpful geological indicators.

4. Benefits Packages. We have concerns that early discussions about benefits packages could give the impression of a 'done deal', and the emphasis on benefit packages at this time is misplaced.

5. Retrievability. Retrievability should not be a core part of disposal and we have serious concerns that discussions relating to the retrievability of emplaced waste are illogical and misleading.

OUR OVERALL VIEW IS THAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOW INTERVENE TO TERMINATE THE MRWS PARTNERSHIP AND ASSOCIATED PROCESS, AND IN ITS PLACE INSTITUTE A PROCESS ALONG THE LINES OF THOSE ALREADY USED IN SWEDEN AND FINLAND.

DA Polhill
Clerk – on behalf of Gosforth Parish Council
16th March 2012

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS POSED.

Q1. GEOLOGY.

NO. We do not agree with the Partnership's initial opinions on geology.

Summary Response:

1. The work on the integrity of the BGS study was unnecessary.
2. Having reviewed the underpinning documentation relating to geology, it is clear that the consultation document has presented a more

favourable balance of the facts than is evidenced in the underpinning reviews and independent comments. Thus while it is arithmetically correct that 1890Km² were not ruled out as unsuitable by the BGS study, the criteria used in arriving at this figure were severely restricted, and it is misleading to claim that this entire area is available for investigation, especially as a substantial proportion is within the National Park.

3. 'Not unsuitable' does not necessarily mean 'suitable' and the results from the 1990's NIREX investigations indicate that the area of land suitable for investigation is, at best, severely curtailed, and at worst non-existent.

Detailed Response:

- a) Given the history of the evolution of the criteria used by the BGS – suggestions from learned societies, the involvement of leading Professors of Geology, endorsement by HM Government, plus the reputation of the BGS itself – about all of which the Partnership should have been aware, endorsement by independent reviewers seems to have been totally unnecessary.
- b) The MRWS consultation document has produced a more favourable presentation of the facts than the underpinning documentation and independent opinion support. For instance Dr Tim McEwen, an independent and expert geologist who worked with the BGS and NIREX throughout the 1980's states:

“I understand CORWM's statement (See Ref. d) below) to mean that it is not possible, based on the current level of geological knowledge of the area of West Cumbria, to state that the area is definitely unsuitable for geological disposal. This is a perfectly reasonable statement to make as there is insufficient evidence to state anything more at present, although if it were possible to select anywhere in the UK for repository development, based on geological factors alone, one's first choice would not be western Cumbria.”

- c) Furthermore the extensive NIREX investigations of the late 1980's – 90's support this contention. Those investigations were based on work by Chapman et al (1986). This latter work described the generic geological settings required for potentially safe siting of a geological disposal facility and was specifically developed for the UK, though subsequently it has become something of an international benchmark. Using these generic settings NIREX concluded that there existed only one area of West Cumbria with the appropriate geology, though there was even some dispute and confusion about this. Despite (at a cost thought to be in the region of £M400) the drilling of 29 deep boreholes, extensive seismic surveying and sub-surface testing, NIREX later abandoned two potential sites (Sellafeld A&B) and had its planning application for a Rock Characterisation Facility at Longlands Farm

turned down and therefore we conclude that there remains very significant uncertainty over the suitability of the geology.

- d) Your opinion that “there is enough possibly suitable land to make further progress worthwhile” appears to be based on appraisal of the NDA report ‘Geological Disposal: Steps Towards Implementation’, which also appears to provide the basis for CORWM’s position. We note a selection of independent comments on this report:

Dr J Dearlove and Dr R Smith, FWS Consultants labelled the document a “politically expedient response”.

Professor David Smythe writes – “One might have expected geology to comprise a large portion of this document given the subject matter but this is not so. Chapter 4 deals with the geology in 2¹/₂ pages out of a total of 65 pages of text”.

Dr Tim McEwen is even more scathing – “Nevertheless I have some sympathy with his (Smythe’s) comments, as this report is very poor. I have been involved with radioactive waste disposal since the late 1970’s and in fact it is probably the worst report, geologically speaking, that I have ever read on the subject. It is replete with geological errors and inaccuracies and should never have been published”.

These comments lead us to conclude that there is a lack of confidence among experts in the underpinning documents used to reach the Partnership’s opinions.

- e) In conclusion we reaffirm our fundamental disagreement with your opinions. The so-called Partnership area is an area of complex folding and faulting characterised by strong hydraulic gradients. It is perfectly obvious that any such area is inherently less safe than an area of low or zero groundwater flow. Such areas do exist within the UK. A safety case for a site within the Partnership area would have to be built on theoretical modelling and for a period over tens of thousands of years. Such modelling is beyond validation, or as Dr Tim McEwen writes, also in relation to the Partnership area and a potential Repository, “There is a greater probability that it will be shown that a convincing safety case cannot be made and, thus, that a Repository cannot be developed”.

Q2. SAFETY, SECURITY, ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING.

NO. We do not agree with your opinions.

Summary Response:

1. Safety, Security and Environmental matters are site specific and in any case for the majority part are the province of the Regulators. Without a potential site the relevance of this section is somewhat elusive.

2. Planning is almost certainly to be dealt with centrally by a body such as the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) or its proposed successor the Major Infrastructure Planning Unit (MIPU).
3. We have concerns at the low level of visibility throughout the process to date of the Office of Nuclear Regulation (ONR).

Detailed Response.

- a) Safety, Security, and Environmental matters are all very much the province of the various Regulatory Bodies. It is the responsibility of the Regulators to convince and reassure the general public, and in particular the residents within a Host Community, that appropriate protective measures are in place to deal with any uncertainties or misgivings they may have. All these matters are site specific and without a potential site chosen for a Repository, the relevance of this section is difficult to understand and it hardly provides much in the way of assistance with the Decision to Participate.
- b) On the question of Planning we understand that a project of this size would not be dealt with at District or even at County level but by the IPC/MIPU. That is not to say that either of the aforementioned councils should not be able to provide an appropriate input to the planning process – likewise the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) if the National Park is in any way affected. It should go without saying, that those who may have to live with the reality of a site being developed, constructed, and operated within their community, should have appropriate input to the planning process at the earliest possible time.
- c) Currently the ONR is the lead Regulator for the Sellafield and LLWR sites. Regulation of nuclear sites by an established nuclear regulator provides confidence and reassurance that nuclear safety is being adequately monitored and regulated, and due care and consideration is given to any potential impacts on the public from nuclear operations. Having read the Regulatory section of the consultation document we are concerned at the low visibility afforded to the ONR's role. It is noted that at the Gosforth drop-in session the Environment Agency (EA) supported the event and not the ONR, giving rise to some concern that nuclear safety impacts on the public are not receiving the degree of priority that they ought to have.

Q3. IMPACTS of a REPOSITORY in WEST CUMBRIA.

NO. We do not agree with your opinions.

Summary Response.

1. The research and strategy to protect the brand and reputation of the area seems to be fundamental to this section of the consultation document. Publication of the latter before completion of the brand protection work undermines confidence in the consultation document and this section in particular. The reasons for the publication of the consultation document before completion of the brand protection exercise are obscure **and not readily comprehensible**.
2. We have concerns that an error is being made in regarding West Cumbria as a single homogeneous economic unit.
3. We are seriously concerned about the NDA's assumption that spoil from any Repository excavation/construction "would be kept on site by building embankments 12 metres high".

Detailed Response.

- a) The absence of the brand protection work in the consultation document is not only a weakness in itself, but a major contributory factor to undermining the confidence in both the consultation document and the MRWS Partnership, and makes any detailed assessment of the impacts very difficult. Conversely it seems to us that to make any claim, as occurs with some degree of certainty in this section, about 'direct impacts', 'long term direction', and 'economic stability', without having the results of the brand protection work to hand is unacceptable. What is the point of the brand protection work when the Partnership's opinions are so firmly stated? There is a sense here that whatever the results of the brand protection work the Partnership's opinions have already been reached, and that any adverse repercussions on conclusions have already been determined. That too is unacceptable and we wonder who is pushing the time-line?
- b) We have concerns at your treatment of West Cumbria as a single economic unit. It is not. It is evident that Copeland is far more nuclear dependent than Allerdale which, with relatively good transport links to Mainline Rail and Motorway and to Carlisle, has met with a greater degree of success in attracting a more diverse economic base than has Copeland.
- c) Similarly with tourism; Allerdale, encompassing as it does Cockermouth and Keswick, has a far more developed and successful tourist sector than does Copeland. The inability of Copeland to attract industrial diversification as well as a greater tourism sector is as much to do with the presence of the nuclear operations at Sellafield as it is with its relative geographical isolation and attendant infrastructure problems.
- d) The locating of a nuclear installation in Allerdale, especially one with connotations of a 'dump' in popular imagination, could have serious adverse repercussions for Allerdale's existing economic base, any potential inward investment, and also for its tourist industry. To assess

potential adverse effects one only has to note the reactions of the local (rural) populations to the recent proposals to site two new nuclear reactors (two miles north and fifteen miles south of Sellafield), and this in 'nuclear supporting' Copeland, and to view the absence of economic diversification in Allerdale's southern neighbour. Locating a Repository in Copeland will simply reinforce its already existing nuclear image and its continuing dependency on the nuclear industry, and ensure very little, if any, future economic diversification.

- e) There are also serious concerns about the assumption contained in this section that Repository construction spoil would be kept on site in 12 metre high embankments, and that some spoil could be used as backfill in the Repository closure process. To ensure the stability of 12 metre high embankments it would appear necessary to have a base size of a minimum of twenty metres. For the smallest proposed Repository (Ref. Fig 5, Page 16) any such embankment would extend for tens of Kilometres; for the largest proposal the area of land to accommodate the spoil would be enormous. Moreover the time span involved in maintaining such embankments would cover a period from the start of construction to its final closure - some hundred years or so at today's estimate. These embankments would not only be wasted as a valuable resource but would also be an enormous blot on the local landscape for generations, and this would be in a community already blighted by hosting the Repository, adding insult to injury. A serious and radical rethink needs to take place about what to do with the spoil.

Q4. A COMMUNITY BENEFITS PACKAGE.

NO. We do not agree with the Partnership's initial opinions.

Summary Response.

1. We believe it right, as expressed in the White Paper, that a Community that hosts a deep geological disposal facility for nuclear waste for the benefit of the nation, should be 'rewarded' by means of benefits packages. However there are concerns that early discussions about benefits packages could be exploited to gain acceptance of a Repository by the general public while at the same time portraying the engagement process as a 'done deal'. The cart must not come before the horse!
2. Any agreement with Government relating to the benefits packages, especially given the likely inter-generational aspects of such packages, must be 'legally binding'.
3. We believe also that it is essential that any Host Community has to be actively and formally involved in all discussions and decisions regarding a benefits package which would include measures specifically benefiting (ie ring-fenced for) that Host Community, separately from and in addition to measures benefiting the area as a whole.

Detailed Response.

- a) Principles – not only can we not be certain about the specific Government package that might/might not be agreed so far in advance but we cannot even be sure that a set of principles agreed with Government this far in advance will be honoured by subsequent Governments, over what is to be a very long period of time. Furthermore among the twelve principles listed, terms such as flexibility, equity, and fairness are used. These terms are all subjective and judgemental. It is not clear who is going to be the judge.
- b) It seems to us that to ensure and retain Governmental agreement, especially as any agreement will have to cater for inter-generational time-spans, legally binding agreements are a necessity.
- c) We are extremely concerned that at this time a benefits package could be exploited to gain acceptance of a repository by the general public. A benefits package must not be a 'carrot' and it must not be used to divert attention away from far more serious issues such as the long-term safety of a Repository, and its effects on the welfare and well-being of the local population and the immediate environment.
- d) While we advocate a very low profile for a benefits package for now and the short-term future, nevertheless we wish to emphasise that any benefits package would need to be agreed and protected by a legally binding agreement, **before** any work commences on construction/excavation of a Repository.
- e) We believe that consideration should be given to 'disruption benefits packages' designed to compensate smaller local communities subject to any site investigative work. These packages would necessarily be of a much more limited scope than a benefits package and should be targeted solely and exclusively at and for the benefit of affected communities.
- f) We believe that at the right time in the process, any Host Community must be actively and formally involved in any discussions and decisions regarding a benefits package, which would include measures specifically benefiting (ie ring-fenced for) that Host Community, separately from and in addition to measures benefiting the area as a whole. The prime reason for any such package has to be to benefit the Host Community, and must not support any attempt by Government or the Principal Authorities to tie any benefit to the need for a business plan to demonstrate economic viability.

Q5. DESIGN & ENGINEERING.

YES. We agree with your opinions on general design concepts.

No. We do not agree with your overall opinions nor do we agree with your opinions on retrievability.

Summary Response.

1. As far as design concepts are concerned your opinion is a statement of the obvious. As for your overall opinions given that you say correctly that design issues are largely site specific the actual absence of a specific site makes it difficult to understand your opinion that design concepts being developed are appropriate.
2. Your opinion on retrievability is wrong and very misleading. Retrievability is not a feature of disposal and nor can it ever be. Retrievability is a feature of storage. (Ref. definition by CORWM in E-bulletin 49).

Detailed Response.

- a) As far as general design concepts are concerned we accept your opinion. As for your overall opinions we do not understand how you can be satisfied that “design concepts being developed are appropriate and flexible enough at this stage” when you have clearly stated that “design issues are largely site-specific” and there is no certainty as to the exact location of a Repository.
- b) Your opinion on retrievability is wrong and misleading. Logically, as well as historically, retrievability is associated with, and can be accommodated only by storage, not by disposal. Claiming that a disposal option can support retrievability, or can be decided upon in the future, undermines the very attributes upon which disposal putatively benefits society – ie the removal of the burden of the duty of care from future generations (if indeed that really is feasible), and the achieving of a greater degree of security than hitherto, principally from terrorist attack.
- c) The CORWM process and conclusions (and the ‘scoring’, as those of us who took part in the CORWM workshops will recognise) were compromised by the inclusion of a disposal variant which claimed that it could offer “removal of burden to future generations” while at the same time offering flexibility, in that the Repository could remain open for up to 300 years to facilitate waste retrieval – an option known as the Phased Geological Repository Concept (PGRC) – and somewhat naively developed by NIREX in the wake of the RCF fiasco. It should be noted here that ‘Phased’ should not be confused with ‘Staged’, which would allow retrievability during waste emplacement up to the point of a Repository’s final closure.

- d) The disposal variant even found its way into the June 2008 White Paper. However at the end of Section 4.20, Government policy quite clearly states that: “closure at the earliest opportunity once the facility operations cease, provides greater safety, greater security from terrorist attack and minimises the burdens of cost, effort and worker radiation dose transferred to future generations”.
- e) Your opinion that “we have confirmed that retrievability is an option to be decided on in the future” is not sustainable and puts you very much at odds, indeed considerably outside, Government policy. It is also we believe high time that the general public is made aware, clearly and concisely, of the real facts in relation to retrievability. Attempts to mislead the public are unlikely to succeed and the backlash from the public, on discovering any attempted deception is likely to be severe and sustained. The case for a Repository should stand on its own merits and attempts to soften the case by the inclusion of the retrievability option should cease.

Q6. INVENTORY: WHAT MIGHT BE SENT FOR GEOLOGICAL DISPOSAL?

NO. We do not agree with your opinions on the inventory.

Summary Response.

1. It is recognised that any inventory predicted over a significant timescale is bound to change as knowledge of details become available. That knowledge is likely to have an impact on principles agreed at an earlier date.
2. Agreement about the inventory with the Host Community is essential and the Host Community must have a right to veto disposal of waste types.
3. Generally we believe that at the present time there exist too many uncertainties to be able to record that you have a “good understanding” of what could go into a Repository.

Detailed Response.

- a) We note what you say about the UK’s baseline inventory and the upper inventory and that Government has given a “realistic estimation” of the latter. However an estimate, even a realistic one, hardly provides a sound basis for a “good understanding”. As acknowledged, nuclear new-build provides an unknown factor. Since CORWM in June 2007 made its estimate of new-build waste to be added to the legacy waste based on “10 new reactors”, the number of

possible new-build reactors has fallen. What will the situation be in a further 5-10 years time?

- b) In addition to these uncertainties there remain questions regarding the future for the present inventory of Spent Fuel, Plutonium and Uranium. Any attempted assessment today of what might be placed in a Repository would surely have to take account of the possible reprocessing (Spent Fuel), further MOX production (Plutonium and Uranium) and for the further development of Plutonium-based fuel reactors. As we understand it, as of today, no decision has been taken, making it all but impossible to gain anything other than an extremely generalised 'understanding' of what could go into a Repository. We too have a realistic estimation, and that is, that it is very unlikely that Spent Fuel, Plutonium and Uranium will be emplaced in the quantities outlined in either baseline or upper inventories.

- c) We have concerns about the principles outlined in this section and we note that there is still uncertainty. Agreement with Government now is capable of repudiation by a future Government. A legal framework is required for such principles to be effective. We also note that there is no mention in the principles of a Host Community veto in the event of changes to the inventory, nor for the availability of additional community benefits in the event of such changes being required.

- d) We note that the principles do contain mention of a Community Siting Partnership (CSP). Having read the following section of the Report (Chapter 10 – Siting Process) we note there is no mention in this latter section of a CSP. It would appear that a CSP does not translate from Section 9 (Inventory) to Section 10 (Siting Process). This is surprising and of deep concern. The CSP is of course the mechanism for delivering a Repository through Voluntarism and Partnership Working, and very much a key plank of Government policy in the White Paper. We are somewhat taken aback at the disconnect between Sections 9 and 10 of the consultation document and left wondering about the applicability of the principles, as it seems that the CSP is being written out of the process for siting a Repository, even though it is very much central to Government policy, and also why the authors of these two sections seem to have such widely divergent views about a CSP.

Q7. THE PROCESS FOR SITING a REPOSITORY.

NO. We do not agree with your opinions on the process for siting a Repository.

Summary Response.

1. We have no confidence whatsoever in the siting process as set out in this section - the intent, and at times the content of the June 2008 White Paper, has been undermined and basically ignored.
2. The Community Siting Partnership (CSP), the mechanism by which Government expects a Repository to be delivered, has disappeared from the language of the MRWS Partnership (Section 9 excepted).

Voluntarism appears only to apply to Principal Authorities and statements on Host Communities are incoherent and contradictory. Smaller communities which decide not to volunteer can be selected anyway by the DMB – the complete antithesis of the principle of voluntarism.

MRWS Partnership policy is put forward as Government policy. There is no mechanism in the White Paper for a Principal Authority to act on its own after stage 3, but this is being ignored.

3. We question the legitimacy of the MRWS Partnership itself, bearing as it does, no relationship at all to Government policy as set out in the White Paper.
4. The Government should immediately intervene to ensure that the principles and guide lines of the White Paper are adhered to, and in the changes it will have to make, the Right of Withdrawal (RoW) should be vested in a Host Community, and not exclusively in a Decision Making Body.

The siting process as described is completely without basis and impossible to support.

Detailed Response.

- a) We note that your treatment of Host Communities and their membership of “the new Partnership” is contradictory and incoherent. Consider the following three statements:
 1. P96, Box32 – “Representatives of potential Host Communities and Wider Local Interests should be members of the new partnership from the outset and should be involved in all aspects of Stage 4 work including discussions on Community Benefits”.
 2. P93 a&b – “.... The Partnership would lead on engagement with potential Host Communities and others” and... “The new Partnership should engage closely with

potential Host Communities keeping them up to date with technical work....”.

3. P90, 3rd Bullet Point – “Although potential Host Communities would become clearer by the start of Stage 5....”

These sections appear to have been written by three different authors, each unaware of the others’ views on Host Communities, traversing a sweep from Partnership membership “.... from the outset...” to becoming “....clearer by the start of Stage 5....”.

b) There appears to be similar confusion with Voluntarism:

1. End of P91 – “We believe the emphasis on strong commitment to voluntarism and community willingness to participate is one that parties should keep at the forefront of their minds if this process continues. At each stage any future Partnership should seek to maximise consensus among the Decision Making Bodies, Local Authorities, potential Host Communities and Wider Local Interests”.
2. P93 e), repeated at P94 i) – “ In the event of the Partnership concluding that the omission of a potential Host Community would create insurmountable problems for the siting process then it would recommend the inclusion of the community concerned if this was supported by a full justification and explanation.”

So much for the Partnership keeping “community willingness to participate.... at the forefront of their minds”. We are not certain if the latter of the two statements has created a new concept of involuntary voluntarism or voluntary involuntarism – both oxymoronic concepts – but we do know that it totally contradicts the first statement, is far removed from the co-operation sought by the White Paper, and returns us all back twenty years to the NIREX era.

c) You head Section 10.3 “The Government’s proposals for the siting process” and set out “a brief summary” of these proposals in Box 29, P89. Based on what is in the White Paper, and on the fact that we are not aware of any other Government publication since June 2008 detailing the views on Stage 4, it is quite obvious that Box 29 is **not** a summary of Government’s proposals for Stage 4 but rather the MRWS Partnership’s proposals. The White Paper makes no mention of Potential Site Areas (PSA’s), a concept which seems to

have made its appearance in the consultation document. With regard to Box 29, none of the 4 bullet points in Stage 4a appears in the White Paper, and as far as we can ascertain nor do any of the 7 bullet points in Stage 4b, nor the 3 in Stage 5.

It seems here that that there is a complete confusion between Government proposals and the MRWS Partnership proposals, with the latter apparently confusing itself with the former as far as the MRWS process is concerned. While this affords an interesting psychological insight into the workings of the MRWS Partnership, it is nevertheless untrue that Box 29 represents a summary of the Government's proposals for Stage 4, and we remain extremely concerned about a so utterly and completely misleading message.

- d) Perhaps the most perplexing aspect of the repository siting process relates to the divergence - more of a radical departure - from the siting process set out in the White Paper, and how this has come about at the instigation of the MRWS Partnership. A White Paper sets out Government policy on a subject, in this case the safe management of radioactive waste. Given that the White Paper does not mention or foresee a role for a Partnership (such as the MRWS Partnership), and neither does it envisage any Principal Authority, after making a Decision to Participate, acting in any way other than through a CSP, which Government is very careful to define, then surely questions as to the legitimacy of the MRWS Partnership have to be asked. By what right/means has it taken over the process, and more importantly from where does it derive its authority to ignore Government policy? DECC, the Government Dept. which wrote the White Paper sits in on MRWS Partnership meetings and must be aware of how far the process has moved away from that originally envisaged. One can only assume a reluctance on the part of DECC to intervene is occasioned by their fear of losing West Cumbria as a possible area for a Repository – assuming that is a realistic possibility. If that is the case, then one can conclude only that wittingly or unwittingly the MRWS Partnership/DECC axis, has created numerous opportunities for judicial challenges at some future date. In the meantime our view is that the MRWS Partnership has no legitimacy and there exists no mechanism for a Principal Authority to act on its own, other than through a CSP as defined in the White Paper, once a Decision to Participate is declared.
- e) The extent to which the MRWS Partnership has ignored and moved away from the siting process requirements of the White Paper can be shown only by a somewhat laborious process. Nevertheless we feel that it is essential to point out the chasm which has opened up, and we have done this by summarising the key points of the siting process - Ch 6 of the White Paper – and key points at the beginning of Ch. 7 – the site assessment process. It is worth pointing out here that the correct title to

Ch. 6 is “Site Selection Process using a Voluntarism and Partnership approach”. The key points are:

1. “Government believes that nothing has emerged from the MRWS consultation (CORWM version) that alters its view that an approach based on Voluntarism and Partnership Working is the best means of siting a geological disposal facility”.
2. Voluntarism is defined thus – “ For the purpose of this White Paper ‘an approach based on Voluntarism’ means one in which communities voluntarily express an interest in taking part in the process which will ultimately provide a site for a geological disposal facility.
3. Communities are defined clearly in the White Paper. These definitions cover 3 different types of community. These are, in the order in which they appear in the White Paper – Host Community, Decision Making Body and Wider Local Interests.
4. Partnership Working is described – “By a partnership approach Government means the setting up of a formal Community Siting Partnership such that the Host Community, Decision Making Bodies and Wider Local Interests will work with the NDA’s delivery organisation and with other relevant interested parties to achieve a successful outcome”.
5. At the end of Stage 3 of the ‘Site Assessment Process’ Government states: “Following this Decision to Participate, Government expects that a formal Community Siting Partnership will be set up such that the Host Community, Decision Making Bodies and Wider Local Interests work with the NDA and other interested parties for the remaining stages”.
6. The importance attached by Government to the CSP as the mechanism for the successful delivery of a Repository can be seen in Appendix C of the White Paper – “Community Siting Partnership: Guidance. It is one of 3 appendices and over 5 pages it details how Government expects a Community Siting Partnership to work. It reinforces its message in Ch6 of the White Paper. Section 6.37 states – “Government does not wish to be prescriptive about the form of a Community Siting Partnership although guidance providing example objectives, rules and responsibilities should be taken into account by interested parties. This guidance is at Appendix C”.

7. In Stage 4 of 'The Site Assessment Process' Government policy makes it clear that "The NDA's delivery organisation will work with the CSP to ensure that local issues are addressed in the assessments", while discussing "the package of measures that they would like to see implemented alongside a disposal facility to develop the community's social and economic well-being".

Here is a straightforward, well designed process for the delivery of a Repository. Why its requirements have been ignored is not accountable, though it seems by not adhering to its requirements grave difficulties are being placed in the way of a successful outcome.

- Q8. WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON WHETHER THE AREAS COVERED BY ALLERDALE AND COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCILS SHOULD TAKE PART IN THE SEARCH FOR SOMEWHERE TO PUT A REPOSITORY, WITHOUT ANY COMMITMENT TO HAVE IT?

Our view is that the above mentioned areas should not take part in the search to site a Repository.

The reasons for this are:

1. The geology of the area, complex and characterised by folding and faulting and with strong hydraulic gradients, seems most unlikely to provide the geological setting required to give assurances about the safety of a Repository over an intergenerational time span of many tens of thousands of years. Your inability to represent the geological facts in a balanced manner, implying a more positive picture than represented by the underpinning documents and independent comments, only serves to increase concerns about long term and very long term safety.
2. We have serious concerns about the impacts of a Repository in West Cumbria and on the National Park. These concerns are heightened by your decision making ability, which saw fit to proceed with the publication of the consultation document before the availability of the brand protection work. Such decisions do not engender confidence.
3. Your almost total departure from Government policy as set out in the White Paper in relation to the engagement and siting processes, in particular your treatment of smaller communities (Host and Wider Local), and particularly your subverting and abandoning of Community Siting Partnerships, invites no trust at all from other would-be partners in these processes, thereby achieving quite

comprehensively that which the Government sought to avoid in the first place via the White Paper. This somehow seems to be a commentary on the workings of the MRWS Partnership and only serves to underline why the search for a Repository in the Allerdale and Copeland districts should not proceed.

Q9. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS.

1. It has always been the intention of Gosforth Parish Council to act on behalf of its parishioners in the MRWS engagement process following the publication of the June 2008 White Paper. It has never been the intention of the Parish Council to make any decision on behalf of the community to host, or not as the case may be, a deep geological disposal facility. The Parish Council feels that its parishioners, given access to all relevant information and expertise, are more than capable of taking such an important decision themselves. In the event that a potential site was sought within the parish, the Parish Council would seek to give effect to its view, that parishioners must take any decision relating to a Repository, by means of a Parish referendum held under normal electoral rules. To that end the terms of a referendum would need to be drawn up in advance and would require a representative proportion of the parish population of a voting age to participate, in order to be valid.

Any future processes therefore must:

- a) Allow adequate time and funds so that parishioners might have access to all relevant information and expertise relating to the siting of a Repository.
 - b) Allow adequate time and funds for the holding of a referendum.
 - c) Be prepared to accept the outcome as the community's final decision on whether or not to host a Repository.
2. We note that in European countries where it was claimed that the principle of voluntarism was exercised, an extensive desktop elimination process was first carried out, and only a handful of areas were recognised as inherently safe enough to be open to further consideration. Only at this point were negotiations opened and volunteers sought from within the pool of potential sites. We understand that this process was used in Sweden and Finland. The result of this is that Host Communities could be genuinely included in negotiations because the sites were known, while the whole population could take confidence in the knowledge that any of the sites chosen would be among the safest possible within that country.

In the UK to the best of our knowledge, no attempt was made to rank different regions for comparative suitability, and the principle of voluntarism appears to have been used intentionally to exclude from consideration all but one region (which has very doubtful geology). Attempts to compare solely within the so-called Partnership area two or more sites for safety can be no substitute for a proper scientific search nationally for suitable sites.

The continuation of this process, without one or more geologically suitable sites being identified, has the potential to commit large sums of money wastefully to a fruitless search. We believe it is a well-founded fear that when such sums have been committed, the strong temptation will be to continue the selection in the face of doubtful or adverse evidence. The fact that all previous initial generic criteria of the safety of the natural barrier have been abandoned gives us no confidence that this will not be the case.

3. It seems to us that the difficulties in finding a suitable site in the UK as set out in the White Paper, have been greatly increased by a) concentrating the search solely in West Cumbria, which has severe geological shortcomings for the safe siting of a Repository and b) by having what appears to be a perfectly reasonable Government process taken over by the MRWS Partnership, especially by the three Principal Authorities 'participating' in that partnership.

The White Paper suggests implicitly – probably expressed explicitly at the end of Stage 3 of the Site Assessment Process – that potential sites for a Repository had to be identified before the making of a Decision to Participate by Principal Authorities. Certainly that must have been Government thinking which led to Host Communities and Wider Local Interests making an appearance at the end of Stage 3. *{Perhaps the Government had in mind a process similar to those in Sweden and Finland described above}*. It would also have been a far more rational situation than we have at present, it quite obviously being a more realistic scenario to have a potential repository site identified, **before** a Decision to Participate, rather than **after**. There does appear to be little logic in spending several years trying to decide whether or not to make a Decision to Participate if in the event a suitable repository site cannot be found, unless of course the whole process is something of a 'done deal' and a site has already been /will be chosen come what may.

Thus this part of the process pre-supposed a lead role for both types of community (Host and Wider Local) something which without doubt was unacceptable to the Principal Authorities, particularly Copeland BC whose 'dash for cash' may not have been the only reason why it acted so precipitately and without any consultation on the White Paper. Allerdale Borough Council (also we believe without White Paper consultation) and Cumbria County Council (with a bare minimum of consultation, the results of which do not appear to have been made

public) swiftly followed suit. It was this rush on the part of the Principal Authorities to 'Express an Interest' which upset the dynamics of the process envisaged in the White Paper and threw the whole thing out of kilter, leading also to the necessity to form the MRWS Partnership, in effect merely a cover for the aims and ambitions of the Principal Authorities.

Hale and Wilton Parish Council

Geology

Q1.1 - Do you agree with the Partnership's initial opinions on geology?

Not sure/Partly

Q1.2 Reasons:

- Why is the data obtained by the Nirex study not in the public domain and being consulted and used?
- Concerns regarding that a 'make do' attitude will be adopted to enable a solution to be found and help bring forward the siting programme to 2029
- Conflicting external information with regard to the geological suitability of the area by specialists like Professor Smythe

Safety, security, environment and planning

Q2.1 – Do you agree with the partnership's initial opinions on safety, security, environment and planning?

Not sure/Partly

Q2.2 – Reasons:

- We deem this question not applicable at this stage in the process but we assume that all legislation will be covered. This matter should be further reviewed should the siting process progress – These matters will become very important in the later stages of the project.

Impacts of the repository in West Cumbria

Q3.1 – Do you agree with the partnership's initial opinions on the impacts, both positive and negative, of a repository in West Cumbria?

Yes

Q3.2 – Reasons:

- A very comprehensive list has been drawn up and acknowledges the areas requiring more attention.
- The chapter lacks depth around the disruption that will be caused during the construction of the facility and the huge environmental impacts of the rock removal process; the creation of spoil heaps, infrastructure issues, extra traffic involved, land needed and general scale of the operation.

A community benefits package

Q4.1 – Do you agree with the partnership’s initial opinions on a community benefits package?

Not sure/Partly

Q4.2 – Reasons:

- Any community package needs to be sustainable, transformational and offer long-term inward investment to help mitigate the perceived environmental decline of the area.
- The ‘host community’ should be consulted and gain the maximum benefit package with a ripple effect of benefit packages for others areas.
- The identified ‘host communities’ needs to have the right of withdrawal at any point in the process
- The community needs to be engaged and details of the proposed benefits package outlined at the earliest opportunity in the process.

Design and engineering

Q5.1 – Do you agree with the Partnership’s initial opinion on design and engineering?

Not sure/Partly

Q5.2 – Reason:

7. Too early in the process to comment on the design and engineering of the facility. It could, at least, have discussed the anticipated arrangements for dealing with water flows, gases, explosive hazard, criticality, etc.
8. There is no mention of the extent of monitoring that is foreseen for the facility, nor the period during which waste could be retrieved.

Inventory

Q6.1 – Do you agree with the partnership’s initial opinions on the inventory?

Not sure/Partly

Q6.2 – Reasons:

- Very wide inventory spectrum from sludge’s to uranium/plutonium which is not necessarily currently well defined.

The process for siting a repository

Q7.1 – Do you agree with the partnership’s initial opinions on the process of siting a repository?

Not sure/partly

Q7.2 – Reasons:

- The ‘Partnership’s Seven Principles for Community Involvement’ seem to encompass a viable way forward.
- The consultation document acknowledges the need to change the representation on the decision making body to reflect the evolving situation.

Problems arise from the way that the ‘way forward’ might be interpreted:

- The areas highlighted in red on the map on page 27 encompassing the industrial areas of Carlisle, Workington, Whitehaven, Egremont and

Maryport which have already been excluded due to the BGS screening study, therefore it is only right that representatives from these towns should now have much less of an influence in the process going forward.

- Also, it is a current perception that it is very unlikely that the repository will be sited within the Lake District National Park, therefore like the above; representatives from it should have less of a say.
- Once any area is identified as a suitable site that community should be consulted to see if they are agreeable to the benefit package on offer.
- Throughout the process the identified host community should have the option to withdraw and 'Voluntarism' should be core principle, not just for the County Council and Borough Councils but for those individuals communities directly affected by the siting process. A 'free' right of withdrawal should be available at any stage to all concerned as the project progresses.

Q8 – What are your views on whether the areas covered by Allerdale and/or Copeland Borough Councils should take part in the search for somewhere to put a repository, without any commitment to have it?

All areas of the UK were invited "to take part in the search for somewhere to put a repository, without any commitment to have it". Our views are that the areas covered by Allerdale and/or Copeland Councils have the same opportunity as the rest of the UK to take part or not, without any commitment to have it.

Q9 – Please use this section to make any additional comments

- The majority of the current Public Relations activities are not seen to be very engaging for the majority of the community in the consultation area.
- The language in the consultation document is very ambiguous, to the extent that it could be interpreted that the repository is good or bad for the area.
- The process is at a very early stage, so a lot of information is unavailable to make an informed submission to the consultation process currently.
- There is no thought given in the document to how an independent Scotland's waste might be dealt with, particularly in-light of the NDA's move to relocate waste from the Dounreay site in Scotland to Sellafeld over the coming decade.
- What kind of geology would automatically eliminate an area from the process?

- There is no mention that individual compensation packages will be offered to businesses and individual households affected by the siting of the repository.

Millom Town Council

- 1.1 Yes
- 1.2 Has the process of 'Fracking' been looked at as a potential hazard. Would there be any implications to the local area?
- 2.1 Yes
- 2.2 Planning consultation at local level needs to be an essential part of the consultation process.
- 3.1 Not Sure/Partly
- 3.2 More information is needed.
- 4.1 Yes
- 4.2 More details are needed.
- 5.1 Yes
- 5.2 (no comments)
- 6.1 Yes
- 6.2 Should not have responsibility to store waste from overseas.
- 7.1 Yes
- 7.2 (no comments)
- 8 Millom Town Council agree that Allerdale and Copeland Borough Councils should take part in the search for the place to put a repository without any commitment.
- 9 As Millom Town Council are making this initial decision on behalf of the community and future generations, we would wish that this process is rigorous and open with consultation continuing before any final decisions are made.

Millom Without Parish Council

Summary:

The Parish Council does not support the current proposals for the following reasons:

- i) the present consultation to identify a suitable site is too narrowly focussed, offers no geographic comparisons and gives priority to community acceptance in the areas volunteered by principal councils rather than geological suitability and secure containment,
- ii) the extreme longevity of this project and nature of the elements to be

stored makes the utmost caution essential,

iii) the opportunity for the Parish Council's views to be influential may be lost when decision making defaults to principal councils, perhaps before the extended consultation period ends,

iv) remaining mineral deposits (e.g. Iron ore which was previously mined in the Millom and Furness areas up to 1968) may be made unrecoverable in future centuries by the proximity of a nuclear repository.

Argument:

1. The Parish Council recognises the national importance of the proper disposal and storage of nuclear waste. It is also aware of the time-scales involved both in building and storage. On the one hand urgent action is necessary because of the unsatisfactory nature of the present storage arrangements. On the other hand the essential longevity of storage makes, for example, the eight-and-a-half thousand years since the land-bridge to Europe was lost (due to rising sea levels) seem as yesterday compared with the expected duration of this programme.
2. In view of the above, the Parish Council is of the opinion that it is the duty of the government and the nuclear industry to investigate widely and give principal weight to criteria based upon geological considerations in the most rigorous sense. Therefore, the search for a site should not be confined to the areas of those principal councils which have, at present, expressed an interest, thus excluding a truly wide and impartial study which offers a range of choice.
3. It is in the national interest that:
 - First, the proposed site should be determined by a wide examination of suitable areas and that the final selection should be made only from among those sites which best satisfy scientific and geological requirements.
 - Secondly, South Copeland and the, nearby, Furness peninsula are potentially rich sources of mineral deposits. For example, iron ore (which was extensively mined from the mid-nineteenth century until 1968) may again become economically viable to extract in the future. The cessation of mining in the Millom area was due to the ingress of water and the cost of pumping rather than exhaustion of deposits. It is understood that the possible future availability of mineral deposits has led to other areas being excluded from consideration as suitable sites.
4. It is tempting for the Parish Council to take the suggested process forward as indicated in the public consultation documents ('Geological disposal of radioactive waste in West Cumbria') due to its urgency and importance and thus agree to await more information at a later date. The Council is of the opinion that this is an unsatisfactory way to address the matter,
 - First, because it is wrong in principle as the criteria of selection is too restrictive and does not best serve the national interest (see paragraphs 2 & 3).

- Secondly, in waiting for more information the opportunity to decline to become further involved may pass from small councils and the decision making power default to the principal councils whose views will not necessarily reflect the views of this or other Parish Councils.

5. For the reasons given above this Parish Council does not give its assent to the present proposals.

Comment

6. A long-term project such as this should be sited at an optimum location and be inherently as flexible as possible. It is very likely, that in the time-scale envisaged the methods of disposal, processing or containment of nuclear waste will be modified or improved. It is of fundamental importance, therefore, that flexibility should be built into the system and allow for future developments at a safe and secure site.
7. Any benefits for the present community would be relatively short-lived and trivial when put alongside the enormity of the project and its longevity. Any disadvantages, on the contrary, will be long lived and serious.
8. The matter has been considered at two meetings of the Parish Council, which came to the decision not to support the proposed repository in this area, at this time, on the basis that information so far produced is inadequate, the study being too narrowly focussed.

Moresby Parish Council

1.1 Partly

1.2 It is accepted that the BGS study was required to ensure that an area that had expressed an interest was not an area where the geology was totally unsuitable. West Yorkshire has been given as an example where coal seams proliferate. However once that test has been undertaken and areas not worth pursuing at all have been eliminated then DECC should permit the relevant organisation be it the NDA or others to provide the local authority who has expressed an interest with as much information as is available. There is much more knowledge about the geology of West Cumbria available which is being held back and will be published if the authority decides to participate. It is unfair to the residents and a potential willing host community to be denied this information. There is a view that no geology in West Cumbria exists that is suitable. That is not the universal view but it will gain ground if government refuses to release or permit to be released studies that would demolish that argument. The partnership should make clear in their report to the decision making bodies that they do not believe that authorities should move to stage 4 until information concerning geology which is now known is put in the public domain and the population are consulted. Geologists must know what type of rock they are looking for and where it might be in West Cumbria. A clear and unambiguous statement of the geological requirements for the repository would assist all parties in identifying a suitable site and would support the public justification of the site selection. If then it is clear that there is

reasonable chance that further work may provide a suitable area the relevant authority could seek the consent of its residents to take the matter further. The proposed MRWS process is open to the suspicion that a site will be selected and then a pseudo-scientific justification back-fitted to support the selection. We need to know now the prospects of finding suitable site not simply that all data and knowledge can be released after a decision to participate is taken.

2.1 Partly

2.2 There is a vast amount of work to be undertaken by the regulators but there are concerns that as an arm of government it will not have the resources that are necessary to carry out the tasks. There are concerns that the developer will contract the most suitable and experienced officers and the regulators will struggle to find staff with the necessary competences. The NDA R and D programme has been criticised by a number of different organisations including CORWM and it is a step in the dark to move to stage 4 on the basis that “we are as confident as is possible at this stage” when in fact there is very little evidence to support that statement. At a more fundamental level, if our current state of knowledge on the interactions of the geology, the waste packaging and the waste are such that we require any R&D at all, it represents a significant risk to the project. Until the R&D is complete there can be no detailed design. Given the intrinsic uncertainty as to what the results of the R&D will tell us and more importantly when, there can be no confidence in the timescales of the programme.

The opinions reached on the planning aspect are weak. There is no mention of a requirement to address the question of a formal environmental assessment pursuant to European Directive 2001/42/EC. It should be noted that those opposing H2 are looking to judicial review on this issue. It surely isn't good enough for the government to argue that there is no need at this stage to commit the repository, wherever it is located, to being a development included within the scope of the major infrastructure planning unit or its successor in title. It is quite clear that no application of this magnitude could be considered locally especially when the DMB's would be the planning authority. This raises the question of whether a national policy statement will be in place before the final right of withdrawal has passed and if so as a statutory document whether the principle of “voluntarism” will be enshrined in the NPS. These are clearly issues of great importance and until adequate responses are given by the sponsoring government department no decision to participate should be taken.

3.1 Not sure

3.2 No mention is made in the document of the application pending by a commercial organisation to site and store large volumes very low level waste at a site formerly open cast close to the village of Pica some 18 miles from Sellafield. The parish council raise this issue because all the DMBs who have expressed an interest in entering stage 4 have objected to the low level application on the grounds of proximity, adverse perceptions by the general public and fears that other commercial developments would not proceed in an area where nuclear waste was stored. It is difficult to accept that the same grounds do not apply when considering a GDF.

The section refers to brand perception work but it does appear from the CORWM observers report to their 7th March 2012 meeting that a major proposal from the consultants that an overarching Cumbria Brand organisation should be developed was not accepted. This rather suggests that the partnership does not want to take the issue seriously.

The sponsoring department have been clear from the outset that jobs created by a move towards a GDF in the district cannot be reserved for local people and it is not note that those involved in preparation work for a new nuclear power station in another part of the country have plans for a contractor's village. The partnership in its final report to the DMBs should not seek to overplay the benefits new jobs would bring to the area when it is more likely that as with the THORP construction the overwhelming majority of workers will be from away.

Whilst Copeland may be wedded to a nuclear future the same cannot be said of Allerdale who are really hoping to diversify their industrial base. A GDF may not help this aspiration especially in the more tourist orientated areas of the district. It has to be accepted that the Western Lakes and the hopes to improve the tourist footfall in the area cannot benefit from a GDF and consultation document is correct when it suggests that the rural economy needs to be looked at quite separately from the urban economy.

It does not appear that the partnership has seen any independent views on the subject of spoil and simply skates over the problem of vast amounts of rock to be moved and the consequent traffic movements by repeating the assumptions of the NDA. This unacceptable and before moving to stage 4 the local population should have a much clearer idea of what is involved.

4.1 Partly

4.2 There is much local cynicism about the delivery of community benefits packages because local experience is not good. In one case, the local community cannot trace where the money which was promised went, and in another case the money is tied up in a community fund which has backfitted rules which prevent the local community accessing the funds in the way they understood would be accessible. There is clearly a lack of confidence that central government would deliver a suitable benefit package but equally worries abound that communities in their broadest sense would not be involved to the degree that many feel necessary. It is difficult to believe that individual government departments will simply hand over some part of their budget to satisfy some agreement between say the county council and DECC. By way of illustration should an improvement to local roads be agreed this would surely require the sanction of the Department for Transport who may have in their view more important/urgent plans within their forward plan? We understand that it has been difficult enough to obtain the funding that has been necessary to properly consult during stage 3. How much more difficult will it be to persuade central government that genuine additionality requires substantial funds. This is another area where to accept a decision to participate is to take a step into the dark with no certainty that any government now or in future will deliver on promises. It is bound to be a

concern that until the right of withdrawal has passed no meaningful benefits will be forthcoming. Furthermore, the partnership's opinion on this criterion lacks required information as to who would negotiate with central government. Principal 10 suggests that it would be between two levels of government with a community siting partnership standing to one side. If this is the case, there is a concern that the DMB may not represent the views of the host community. In any event, Principal 6 appears to indicate that the scale necessary would preclude a host community from making a really meaningful input. There is a view that leaders of the DMB's would see a community benefits package as being an area where they and they alone hold sway.

5.1 partly

5.2 It is difficult to accept that the design concepts being developed are appropriate at this stage when the information provided so far is almost non-existent. The generic design image shown in the consultation document is of little help to a respondent to this consultation. More could be said about monitoring and how that might be undertaken and over what period. More could be said about engineering of tunnels and how they could affect the countryside between the surface site and the underground repository especially so far as they would relate to river/stream flows. More could be said about the barriers introduced in the packaging and any additional barriers built into the repository as well as the barrier of the rock to illustrate the reliability of the assessment for the safety case. The potential for a leak of radioactive material from the repository is a critical concern for parishioners and the feeble response that this will be looked at as part of the engineering design is not very convincing. There is little mention of studies carried out and design concepts developed elsewhere in the world which might inform the design of a UK repository. There is not mention of the possibility of a rock characterisation chamber being built as part of the validation of the design to fill in any gaps and to ensure that the concepts work under UK geological conditions. Retrievability is a big issue for people who are concerned about what happens in the future if the safety case is incorrect, and also for people who look to the future and see a valuable energy resource in the uranium, plutonium and spent fuel that the present government plan to categorise as waste. The consultation document says that how a repository might be designed and engineered is important because it helps people to visualise what a repository might look like and appreciate the scale of the project. The final report to the DMBs should therefore be illustrated with possible plans and contain responses to the type of question posed here which are only given to illustrate the many and varied issues that would help people visualise and appreciate the scale of the project and allay fears.

6.1 No

The inventory statements would appear to be designed to confuse and from press reports would appear to have been successful in confusing the MRWS partnership. This is unfortunate, as this section is one which generates a great deal of unease. One of the concerns of the parishioners is that the repository will be justified with a modest inventory and then there will be a series of incremental additions which make the repository substantially larger. The introduction of a lower inventory and an upper inventory would appear to support the cynics, particularly as the upper inventory is not an upper limit.

The lower inventory is based upon a publicly available document which we are told represents the current and future arisings from a list of sites which comprise the majority of the nuclear establishments in the UK. The upper inventory we are told comprises three parts – additional material from projected new build and NPP lifetime extensions, some “additional material owned by the MOD” and “uncertainties” in the baseline.

- The uncertainties would appear to be very large. The new build inventory assumes not reprocessing which would generate additional HLW. It is therefore surprising that the packaged volume rises from 7000m³ to 12000m³ (a rise of 71%) between the lower and upper inventories (these figures are in the consultation document). The NDA technical note 12877243 quoted in the consultation document gives a figure of 23000m³ for the upper inventory which is over three times the lower inventory.
- The future inventory from New Build has a huge impact on the footprint of the repository because of the spent fuel which is presumed to be of a high burn-up. It is surprising that the inventory only takes an allowance for the next generation of nuclear power plants for a repository which is planned for such a long lifetime. It is also surprising that there is no sensitivity analysis on the effect of reprocessing on the footprint of the repository.
- The “additional materials from the MOD” presumably include the radioactive materials listed in the public consultation document for the submarine decommissioning programme which uses the same image of a geological repository for the final destination of the material. It is not clear from the inventory statement whether the additional plutonium inventory is military origin or another “uncertainty”.

In the circumstances we do not consider the government response to principle two acceptable in that the principle suggests that the DMB would have the right of veto and not the Host Community or the siting partnership and in any event the government does not sign up to a veto arrangement and further the Minister of Energy does not commit other government departments. The consultation document and the partnerships opinions do not give us the confidence that any local community could influence the inventory. As a minimum we would need to see a better undertaking by government departments that there would be a genuine veto and it can be wielded by the community siting partnership with the DMB being simply the method of delivering the message.

7.1 No

7.2 The first matter to acknowledge is that any decision making body moving forward to stage 4 need not take any notice of the “suggested steps” outlined in this section and DECC requires in the framework it has published only that “decision making body/ies must agree a mechanism with which they are comfortable”. It is not clear who “they” are. Is it the community at large or

the DMB's? The framework at page 11 shows at figure 3 seven steps to identification of potential candidate sites. Host communities in areas such as West Cumbria where no decision to participate will be made in respect of specific locations are not brought into the process until step 5 and at paragraph 5.3 the decision making process is outlined. All this indicates that the potential host community will be volunteered rather than genuinely stepping forward. That must be taken together with the DECC statement at 2.13 that partners would be expected to work together to avoid the need to exercise the right of withdrawal at a late stage. The question must be posed. How much easier for DMB's to follow a nationally laid down process where they dominate and host communities are sidelined rather than a "suggested" scheme which may give potential host communities an actual voice. There is bound to be concerns with a suggested scheme when (excluding the county council) the consultation required by a DMB in the White paper at 6.18 was very limited in one case and non-existent in the other. It is hardly surprising that cynicism is wide spread and many believe that DMB's will only agree to a process where they dominate, and rather than taking advice from a wide ranging community partnership will seek to go their own way. Given that the stage three partnership has been chaired by leading members of the three DMB's and other partnership members may well have been seen by the public as add ons it does not bode well for the future. Whilst the facilitators have been seen to provide an excellent service they are not process managers and have to bow to the wishes of the steering group which is totally dominated by members and officers of the DMBs. The consultation document says that some people are sceptical that the government will honour commitments to a right of withdrawal. It might be said that many are sceptical that DMB's would follow the advice and recommendations of the Community siting partnership. It ought to be remembered that a CSP may well be lead by the local MP. The present member for Copeland has made his position quite clear and he would be undoubtedly reluctant to withdraw from the process. We do not believe that sufficient weight is given in the consultation document to paragraph 7.25 of the whitepaper nor to one stated aim of the process that the procedure will only go forward with the consent of a willing host community.

8 It is clear that the partnership has undertaken a vast amount of work and the consultation process throughout have been exemplary. However, it is very difficult to see whether there can be any clear outcome at this stage when there has been very little hard information presented. Even with the few details which are revealed many issues have arisen which need to be tackled. Whilst it can be said that the right of withdrawal remains until much later in the process, it is only at this stage that those local authorities who expressed an interest in finding out more about the process can walk away without any comeback. To agree to participate means that the area is committed to making it work and therefore the decision at this stage is of utmost importance. It has to be made with the full consent of the residents of the two areas and whilst it can be argued that a representative opinion poll will give a really good indication of the views of those residents it will not satisfy those who say "I want my vote to count". It is trite to say that "it is too early in a process that may last many years and there will be plenty of opportunities at a later stage" but this is the one time when a referendum will not be coloured by

views on locations. At this point all the areas covered by the two district councils are in the frame either for an underground repository or the surface facilities or both. Once decisions have been taken about potential site areas then a full referendum is bound to attract shouts of foul because those in the south of the area may be quite happy to see a location in the north chosen (or urban voters a rural location) and vote accordingly. If a poll is limited to the potential site area(s) then those outside who believe in principle that the county should not be involved are disenfranchised. The DMB's may not want to see a very local referendum knowing that it is likely to be against moving forward. It does seem that credible support has to be at two levels both area wide and local to the particular potential host(s) communities. Is now the time to satisfy the first requirement? Should the borough councils together with the county council take part in a search? No. Not at this point with what we know.

Muncaster Parish Council

To whom it may concern. I have been asked by my council to respond to you.

We have discussed the proposals at three council meetings and have decided not to comment either way on the proposals. We wish to "sit on the fence " until further notice.

Parton Parish Council

1.1 Partly

1.2 We believe that we should know much more about the geology of the area before we are committed to a process which might prove difficult to withdraw from especially as areas where it is said the geology is more suitable have shown no interest. We would not be happy if the government wanted to persuade the area that whilst not ideal the geology would be acceptable.

2.1 Not sure

2.2 Why cannot the government now say that any planning application would not be dealt with locally? The planning authority locally would be one of the councils that are involved in the present consultation. That cannot be right. It is said that a planning application is many years away but it offends common sense to argue that the system might change. It could still be said that any planning application would be dealt with the then current national planning authority.

3.1 No

3.2 The consultation documents underestimate the impacts of a repository on the area. In our area already there are major worries that a very low level waste site will mean fewer visitors and business unconnected with the nuclear industry will stay away. Young people in the area want to be able to choose different careers and not be wedded to the nuclear industry. We should be aiming to diversify not more of the same.

4.1 No

4.2 A benefits package must not disadvantage any community. Look at the new road from Howgate to Lilyhall. A real benefit for everyone saw Parton people where it is nigh on impossible to get into the flow of traffic especially when turning towards Whitehaven. If the package is negotiated by local authorities only then it is bound to be unfair to the host community who will suffer most. If a financial package is secured there needs to be an organisation quite separate from the local authorities administering the fund without councillors or at least executive/cabinet councillors being involved.

5.1 Not sure

5.2 Is it not possible to provide more detail? It is said to be the initial opinions but these hardly amount to information on which any one could make an informed decision. Why cannot we be told what will happen to spoil if a host communities only agree on the basis that spoil is moved right away. It is not good enough to keep repeating that issues will be sorted out later. That might be when the area is left with no choice but to stay in the process.

6.1 Not sure

6.2 Why cannot it be said now that everything that the government decides will go in will go in? Talk of local people negotiating or having an influence about the inventory is beyond belief. The only possible involvement might be the size of the prize (see community benefits).

7.1 No

7.2 The consultation document refers to credible support and the only way that can be measured is by allowing every individual who might be affected a vote. An opinion survey, however it is argued that it will be accurate, does not allow the individual to have their say. This is the only democratic way that credible support can be calculated. It would not be expensive given that there is to be a poll for police commissioners this autumn and the cost of the election/referendum could be shared. Now is the time for a referendum because once the next stage is reached different areas are considered and people might be content that if a GDF is sited many miles away but would not agree if it were on their doorstep. If only a very small poll were undertaken at a later date then those who opposes in principle would be denied a say. A democratic mandate is required by the borough councils and the county council before they can justify entering the next stage.

8 We would need much more detail and the agreement to a referendum on whether the area should enter the stage where a search for a site in Copeland and Allerdale is started before we could agree to move forward.

Ponsonby Parish Council

Q1 Geology – No, we do not agree with your opinions.

Safety is the overriding criterion in determining the construction of a Geological Disposal Facility and in turn the suitability of the geology of the proposed location.

The 1890 Km² area of land declared as not ruled out as clearly unsuitable by the BGS survey, is misleading.

The NIREX explorations previously undertaken using generic geological settings concluded that only 1 area within West Cumbria was potentially suitable. This, after investigation and incurred costs exceeding £M400, was abandoned. An agreement to move forward into the next stage must not be given before further unsuitable areas have been eliminated (and shared with the general public). Without this there is an unacceptable risk of ongoing significant abortive expenditure and delay, and of sustaining an over-optimistic representation of the suitability of the area in the eyes of the general public.

The public and stakeholders concerns have not been fully and adequately answered (Ref Box4 and in Prof David Smythe's public presentations). 2 Professors of Geology have stated publicly that the complex and fractured geology of West Cumbria makes it one of the worst places in the UK for a long timescale disposal site.

Q2 Safety, Security etc – We partly agree with your opinions.

Little mention is made of any international regulatory framework with regard to HLW and ILW.

The Safety, Security and Environmental concerns are dealt with by the various Regulators and being site-specific will involve the local communities as stakeholders. We have confidence in the independence and integrity of the Regulatory Bodies and their ability to ensure an acceptably safe outcome. However we are disappointed that the Regulators' view of the generic disposal system Safety Case, which should have been published before the end of 2011 for consultation, is not included within this consultation process. Until this document is made available and has been subject to public consultation no decision to move forward should be taken.

No reference is made to the inferior infrastructure which is unable to cope with a traffic incident on the A595 south of Calderbridge, never mind an emergency at Sellafield.

Q3 – Impacts. No, we do not agree with your opinions.

The location of a Repository in West Cumbria will further discourage the investment of non-nuclear enterprises, not only within the proximity of the proposed site, but also throughout Lakeland.

The decline of the diversified industries in West Cumbria has much to do with the presence of a large nuclear site and the loss of enterprises in the area of multi Queen's Award success is deplored.

It is regrettable that the Brand Protection strategy together with the Government's response on how the impacts will be addressed is not forthcoming. This leads to a loss of confidence. Whilst all the detail cannot yet be provided, a positive binding commitment to sustain a diversified wealth generating base, to both Borough and Host Community, must be given before any decision to move forward is taken.

The proposal by NDA for spoil to be kept on site by building 12 metre high embankments for an indeterminate number of years is not acceptable.

Concern is raised over the market value of domestic and business properties and how the blight problem would be dealt with.

Q4 – Community Benefits Package. No, we do not agree with your opinions.

The Partnership's Community Benefits principles should incorporate the requirements that Parish Councils are involved in the allocation and use of community benefits. It is essential they have protection in the interpretation of Principles & Flexibility, and Principles & Distribution.

This Parish Council has received 'nowt' from the nuclear industry over the years from the establishment of UKAEA at Windscale; rather it has suffered the loss of its local School, Post Office and pub. It has also experienced the drain of local youngsters unable to afford the rents and house prices which can be afforded by incoming contracted employees. The village community has lost its heart!

Any commencement of preliminary work on a Repository should be preceded by a benefits package and consideration given to the recompense or compensation for the ongoing disruption to local communities.

A binding specific commitment to large scale benefits to West Cumbria eg. massive infrastructure improvements, should be sought and obtained before any onward decision is taken and these should be delivered in parallel with the construction of any facility.

Q5 – Design & Engineering. We partly agree with your opinions.

Generally the opinions on design are acceptable but detailed design issues are largely site-specific. Whilst retrievability is explicitly included within generic designs, it begs the questions 'When does a Storage Facility become a Disposal facility?', and 'Will the Host Community be fully consulted in the making of that decision'?

Q6 - Inventory. We partly agree with your opinions.

The Safety, Design and Engineering Safety Cases for a GDF will determine the various levels of inventory for disposal.

Box 24 illustrates the imponderables in determining the volumes of inventory to be dealt with and raises concern that some radioactive materials such as spent fuel, plutonium, and uranium, should be treated as waste, when they could be used for reprocessing and fuel manufacture. The large quantity existing of these materials are of deep concern to communities with close proximity to Sellafield. Any change to a new-build programme illustrates the necessity to govern the disposal of new wastes and the logistics covering new reactors within the UK.

Within Principle 2 of Box 25, a Host Community must have, along with DMB's, a veto on any changes to the inventory.

The report implies strongly that only UK wastes will be placed in the facility; this is just not true. Relatively large volumes of ILW derived from the reprocessing of overseas fuel will inevitably be incorporated. This is misleading to the public and should be corrected; failure to do so will reduce confidence in any factual data subsequently presented.

Q7 – The Siting Process. No, we do not agree with your opinions.

The White Paper of June 2008 devotes much of its volume to the principle of voluntarism and partnership working and in Chapter 7 clearly sets out the staged process to determine site selection. It is regrettable that the consultation document deviates from this site selection process. Para 6.8 of the White Paper defines the concept of community under the headings of Host Community, Decision Making Body and Wider Local Interests, all of whom should be participants in the formal Community Siting Partnership prior to the Stage 4 assessment. The report is lacking in a timescale for such a new partnership and whilst its suggested steps for organisational arrangements (Box 32) are outlined, it does not record the strong feeling that any Host Community would require Government commitment to immediate infrastructure improvements prior to construction of a GDF. Appendix C9 of the White Paper envisages that potential partners would begin to work together in the next steps leading up to a local Decision to Participate, and if that decision is affirmative the formal Community Siting Partnership would then be established. This is ignored in the consultation document.

Under Para 6.40 of the White Paper which refers to the Right of Withdrawal – an objective to obtain a Community Benefits Package to reflect the needs of local communities and their future generations, is stated. However no process is formulated should a Host Community disagree with such a package negotiated by the Community Siting Partnership.

Q8 – Should the 3 Principal Authorities move forward.

The health, safety and well-being of the current and future generational inhabitants of West Cumbria are of fundamental importance as we are all stewards of the West Cumbrian environment with an obligation to protect it from harm.

The location of a Repository, no matter where it is to be built, must be demonstrated to be SAFE and the associated impacts managed accordingly.

The response to the previous questions reflects the views of the Parish Council and the lack of understanding in the conduct of the Partnership controlled by the 3 Principle Authorities.

Until the Partnership/Decision Making Bodies have addressed the points we have raised we do not believe that a decision to move forward should be taken.

Q9 – Additional comments.

The White Paper (Para 6.13, Table 2) – Indicative Steps to a Decision to Participate – in Step 13 suggests that Decision Making Bodies will make a formal Decision to Participate probably through a full meeting of the councils. It is reprehensible that only 1 of the 3 Principal Authorities has stated that a decision would be made by the full council, hardly encouraging the demonstration of credible support.

The policy of not having had an independent Chairman for the MRWS Partnership calls into question the stance of the leaders of the Decision Making Bodies within the Partnership and their respective authorities.

Seascale Parish Council

1.1 Yes

2.1 Yes

3.1 Yes

4.1 Not Sure/Partly

4.2 It was argued that each step of the process should be accompanied by visible community benefits. The view was expressed that a government commitment to future community benefits would be insufficient.

5.1 Yes

6.1 No

7.1 Yes

8 Allerdale and/or Copeland Borough Councils should take part in the search for somewhere to put a repository, without any commitment to have it.

Ulpha Parish Meeting

Geology – Not sure/partly

1.2

The BGS screening report is not fully reflected in Figure 9, Page 27 of the consultation document as the presence of aquifers are mentioned but not shown. Why?

Figure 13, Page 72 of the BGS report shows that the entire coastal plain from Carlisle to Millom has areas of Sherwood sandstone aquifers and carboniferous secondary aquifers.

Aquifers are listed in the BGS report as being applied as an exclusion criteria.

There is no specification of what is considered to be 'West Cumbria' however the coastal strip seems to cover the whole potential West Cumbria area.

Is it likely that there will be sufficient area remaining after the initial screening to make further progress worthwhile? This seems unlikely.

In the 1980's when a repository was first suggested the top of the list in geological terms was the area around Bedford. Following protests by residents of this area the location was quietly dropped by the government of the day. Nirex in more recent times had considerable problems with rising groundwater in their boreholes. Again the whole thing was dropped.

Ulpha Parish Meeting insists that safe geology for the siting of the repository is crucial.

2.1 Safety, security, environment and planning - Not sure/partly

2.2

It is our understanding that the nuclear industry is highly regulated and monitored and rightly so.

Our concern is that the present government is intent on greatly relaxing the planning process.

A development of this type and size must be held under the utmost scrutiny to ensure the safety, security and environment of the plant itself during its construction and operational phases with due consideration of the local workforce and its neighbours far into the future.

When the new reprocessing plant at Windscale and Calder works was proposed in the 1970's a public enquiry was held in Whitehaven. Should this be necessary do we have an assurance that the same will occur with this project?

3.1 Impacts of a repository in West Cumbria – Not sure/partly

3.2

The Cumbria infrastructure from Calder Bridge to Millom/Barrow in Furness is at best poor. The road/rail links and utilities are in need of substantial improvement particularly in the light of current and proposed developments.

At present any improvements tend to be to the north from Sellafield, thus leaving the area to the south, Millom and Barrow in Furness in dire straits as regards security of supply of utilities with outdated unsuitable supply lines for present & future demands.

Any work which remedies this situation will be advantageous to the southern area and will help bring it into the 21st century. A high standard infrastructure fit for the future should be the right of the area to replace the present 19th century standards.

Improved job prospects with full time working at rates greater than minimum wage are to be welcomed.

4.1 A community benefits package – Not sure/partly

4.2

Is this a carrot or a stick?

All areas must be covered by the benefit, both urban and rural with the emphasis on all residents having ready access to facilities that the rest of the country takes for granted.

5.1 Design and engineering – Yes

5.2

Will the design and engineering be undertaken to accommodate the worst possible case?

The design must give high priority to health & safety and security.

6.1 Inventory – Not sure/Partly

6.2

This is very much like confirming the length of a piece of string before knowing what it will be used for.

The design and engineering will have to take into account the inventory and its implications.

Will the initial repository have the facility for extension build in? What will be the implications of that?

7.1 The process for siting a repository – Not Sure/Partly

7.2

Allerdale/Copeland are currently volunteering for the siting and no other authority/location has.

There is insufficient information to show that should the area wish to withdraw as still the sole volunteer what pressure the Government will put on the area to remain nominated whether the geology is safe or not.

8 – Yes, the primary assessment must be based of safe geology.

Waberthwaite Parish Council

Waberthwaite & Corney Parish Council have considered the MRWS Partnership Consultation document. It feels there are many unanswered questions that can only be answered by moving to stage 4.

It was proposed and resolved unanimously that Copeland Borough Council should move to stage 4 and that Voluntarism and the Right to Withdraw be enshrined in law by the Government.

Whicham Parish Council

1.1 No

1.2

The consultation document states that there is no significant public or stakeholder criticism of the study's integrity. It therefore follows that there is some criticism and this is not described in the main part of the document

Varying opinions amongst geologists and the evidence of previous investigations lead us to doubt that any of West Cumbria (not already screened out) is suitable for a repository

2.1 No

2.2

The conclusion on page 51 is very conditional, e.g., "will have", "will be in place". This does not inspire confidence, neither does the fact that safety is enclosed in inverted comma on that page.

We are not confident of the impartiality of the NDA.

The White Paper on which this consultation is based states that the aim of a GDF is to "ensure no harmful quantities of radio activity ever reach the surface" There is no such thing as a safe level of radiation - if there is to be even slight leakage, then a GDP can not be considered to be a safe, permanent way of disposal of high level nuclear waste

3.1 No

3.2

We question the integrity of the impacts study. 377 people were questioned, all but 0.8% in towns. This is not a representative sample. And almost half of these people questioned were in Workington and Whitehaven - these areas have already been ruled out by the initial screening process. This means the "evidence" is skewed, by questioning people who will not have the repository in their immediate vicinity. There is an implication that rural areas do not favour a repository, but there are no figures given. As a rural area we feel that our views are not represented in the study

The study on impacts was carried out prior to the Japanese disaster and it is likely that this event has coloured people's perception and it could be argued that the impact study is no longer valid

The main impacts of a repository have been defined as physical, social, environmental and economic. Of these categories the only one that may be a benefit is economic with jobs created during the construction. This benefit would be outweighed by the loss of jobs in the tourist and farming industries.

The research into protecting the brand and reputation of the area was not complete when the consultation document was published. This was completed and reported in the MRWS bulletin no 17, point 7. The recommendation was "putting in place a phased communications campaign to emphasise the area's strong points" It is difficult to see how this extra advertising will mitigate the negative perceptions that would arise from siting a nuclear waste repository in West Cumbria

The full report will not be available on the web site until the end of the month. This is after the end of the consultation period, so respondents have to take on trust the precis published in the bulletin. It could be the case that the findings were that it would be very difficult to protect the area's reputation, should a repository be sited in West Cumbria. This is another example of the flawed nature of this consultation

We do not agree that an "acceptable process can be put in place during the next stage of the MRWS process to assess and mitigate any negative impacts" as some of the impacts, e.g. visual and disturbance will be impossible to mitigate.

4.1 No

4.2

There are, and can be, no firm proposals. "We cannot be certain what specific package the Government might agree to this far in advance", so there are no guarantees

Impact mitigation is discussed - in our opinion there can be no mitigation for the impact of a repository in terms of visual impact and effect upon tourism and farming. In other words community benefits on offer would not address the disbenefits.

There is also the point that the Community Benefits package is in the gift of the Government. In the life time of this process it is likely that there will be at least one change of government.

5.1 Not Sure/Partly

5.2

We agree that waste should be retrievable

We agree that it is too early to consider specifics

6.1 Not Sure/Partly

6.2

It is too early in the process to be considering the detail

7.1 No

7.2

The Decision Making Body is remote from Whicham, more than 30 miles away and in this context is not accountable to our residents.

We are concerned that if there is progression to the next stage it appears that the wishes of the host community can be over ruled "If omission of a potential host community would cause insurmountable problems for the siting process" the Partnership could recommend inclusion of the community concerned. In other words, we find the Right of Withdrawal suspect, especially as it would be exercised by Copeland Borough Council.

8

Whicham Parish Council do not wish to host a repository or over ground facilities. If the decision is taken to proceed to the next stage we would like our parish to be taken out of the areas being investigated as being suitable.

RESPONSE OF PARISHES IN THE REST OF COUNTY

Asby Parish Council (Eden)

1.2.

The Partnership acknowledges that we do not yet know enough about the geology of the proposed area, and need to consider this much further

2.2.

The safety of the disposal is the paramount issue and no houses, businesses or environment should be put at risk

3.2.

The benefits do not justify a site in unsuitable geology or in a national park.

4.2.

Community benefits package should be justification for siting the disposal in any specific area

7.2

Should the process go ahead the local councils must retain the ability to withdraw from the process at each stage and the criteria for credible reasons for withdrawal be subject to consultation.

Blawith and Subberthwaite Parish Council (South Lakeland)

Please note that at its meeting on 12th March, Blawith and Subberthwaite Parish Council, in response to correspondence from Radiation Free Lakeland (Marianne Birkby, 1st March) resolved (Item 2b – full Minutes on www.crake.org) to write to convey general unease about the closeness of the proposed waste deposit sites to this parish, and to urge, because of the unsoundness of the geology, that the use of those sites should not be pursued.

Colton Parish Council (South Lakeland)

Colton Parish Council opposes any underground repository for radioactive waste in Cumbria and therefore feels that there is no purpose in Copeland and Allerdale taking part in this exercise.

Kirkoswald Parish Council (Eden)

After representations to the Parish Council by concerned parishioners, Councillors would hope that those considering the proposals would consider the long term effects on the County and they believe that nothing should be buried underground that will be unsafe for future generations. It is also hoped that much consideration is paid to the impact upon the water table in the County as a whole.

Lowick Parish Council (South Lakeland)

We are very concerned about three matters:

1) RADIOACTIVE FALLOUT HERE FROM ACCIDENT. The best advice we can access (a local scientist with an INTERNATIONAL reputation!!) suggests that long term waste needs to be buried at, at least, THREE KILOMETRES

down.

2) TOTAL CIVILIAN EVACUATION FROM WEST CUMBRIA. Any possible routes SOUTH, especially the A595, A5094 and A5082, are HIGHLY UNSUITABLE for any mass evacuation.

3) TRANSPORT OF WASTE TO WEST CUMBRIA. See note 1. AND WHY BARROW DOCKS? - WHITEHAVEN would be safer!

Preston Richard Parish Council (South Lakeland)

1.1 - No

1.2 - The council feel insufficient knowledge is available about the long term effects

2.1 – No

2.2 - The council feels safety is only as good as those who implement it and as stated human failure is a possibility and too high a price to pay

Sedbergh Parish Council (South Lakeland)

Sedbergh Parish Council is aware that the period for response to the consultation ended on the 23rd March. Nevertheless the Parish Council wishes to place formally on record its views on the current process following its meeting on the 29th March not only because of the grave disquiet which it feels as a result of how the matter is being dealt with but also as a declaration of solidarity with those other Parish Councils which have expressed opposition to the matter proceeding to Stage 4 (and which in many cases are far closer to the likely site of the proposed repository).

The Parish Council has both substantive and procedural reservations to the existing process and is opposed to the matter proceeding further at this time. In summary the reasons for objection are as follows:

1. Contrary to the procedure carried out in other countries, "volunteer" communities to host the repository were requested *before* scientific and geological surveys were undertaken as to the suitability and safety of likely volunteer sites. This is putting the cart before the horse. Common sense alone dictates (let alone the practice in all other countries) that the science be done first and only then that volunteers be requested. Otherwise there is the strong danger that the geology will be "bent" to fit the volunteer community which in the present case in fact is the only community in the country coming forward. From the Nirex Inquiry onwards there is abundant evidence to indicate that there are very big question marks over the suitability of the geology throughout the whole of West Cumbria and this alone is enough reason to pause the process until other sites in the country have been investigated.

2. The Parish Council is astonished that the principal and most influential members of the Partnership set up to advise the Decision Making Bodies (DMB's) are the DMB's themselves. This seems contrary to all principles of natural justice and weights the process in such a way as to lead to the conclusion that the decision to go ahead to the next stage has effectively already been taken.

3. For similar reasons we feel that the decision to limit the telephone opinion poll largely to the Districts of Allerdale and Copeland is once again skewing the likely result in favour of proceeding to the next stage. There are many other interests in the County which should be considered at this crucial point in the process apart from the economic benefits which are seen as

likely to accrue to the West Coast as a result of proceeding all the way down the road to the construction of a repository. The further the process goes the less likelihood there is of the Government allowing a withdrawal at a later stage.

4. So far we feel that the whole process has been lacking in transparency and that the only way in which this can be rectified is by way of a Cumbria wide referendum so that the concerns of *everyone* in the County may be expressed and given due weight alongside of the views of those living in West Cumbria.

We ask that the Partnership take these views into account when formulating its advice to the DMB's.

Threlkeld Parish Council (Eden)

As a Parish Council whether we agree or disagree with using nuclear power as a source of energy is not the point – the issue is that in this country we have radioactive waste that needs to be stored safely. Copeland, Allerdale and CCC may believe that ‘volunteering’ may secure jobs for their constituents but their safety, our safety, the safety of our children and our future generations should be their first priority.

In Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Canada, France and Belgium suitable geological sites have been found BEFORE communities have volunteered. The Lake District has complex geology with fault lines prone to movement. We also do have earthquakes – the last in December 2010 was 3.5 on the Richter Scale. Several well respected local geologists have already drawn attention to the Lake District ‘being geologically unstable for high level radioactive waste’. Existing international waste repositories are on flat land for two simple reasons they have simple stable geology and minimal groundwater problems. Everyone in Threlkeld knows that underground and overground water is prone to change on a regular basis – can our colleagues in Copeland and Allerdale predict or model this for the next 100 years or the next 1000?

As a Parish Council we would also be concerned about safety on the A66 during construction and excavation of the massive site. It is already a dangerous road and should this project go ahead, how long before an accident and radiation spillage at the Threlkeld Quarry junction?

As a Parish Council we watched a DVD produced by MRWS and this raised more questions than answers. You can view this on the website. The impact on safety, security and tourism raises more questions and answers. We find it difficult to comprehend why Allerdale and Copeland are going down the ‘volunteer’ route before a full scientific investigation. We unanimously agreed that the authorities should withdraw from this process.

Walton Parish Council (Carlisle)

a. Yes

1.2

Subsurface storage safer than above ground storage.

Disagree future communities not able to manage waste.

Geology still being considered and more detailed investigation required. Therefore not finalised and as long look at this in more detail with an open mind - agree

2.1 Yes

2.2

This is an initial opinion and has considered all of the areas we would consider important. The next stages as this moves forward will require detailed information and a more thorough review.

3.1 Yes

3.2

Do not know anyone else's opinion though. The impact will be significant - but at this stage most of the impact areas have been identified and need to be considered fully in the fullness of time.

4.1 Not Sure/Partly

4.2

This is not clearly defined. Or how it would move forwards. The fact benefits are required has been identified is good but very vague at this time. Getting local buy-in is v important.

5.1 Yes

5.2

Based on information from other facilities around the world. As long as lessons learned are carried forward for this depository.

6.1 Yes

6.2

Well thought through at this stage. Need to finalise waste volume and type at an early time and have strict rules for changing this.

7.1 Yes

7.2

Location seems sensible given Sellafield location. Only query is additional infrastructure needed. This needs careful planning as current infrastructure is a problem for traffic.

8

Agree. No reason why not as long as not committed to it.

9

Questions and information very positive towards this option. Would be good to see other viewpoints. The fact that this is only the first stage of many should allow more detailed consultation moving forwards. Excellent initial work.