

The Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP
Secretary of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1A 3JR

3rd July 2008
Our ref: MRWS/EOIL/030708

Dear Secretary of State

Expression of Interest in Managing Radioactive Waste Safely - Implementation Framework for Geological Disposal

We refer to your invitation to local communities on the 12th June 2008 to express an interest in opening, without commitment, discussions with Government on the possibility of hosting a geological disposal facility at some point in the future.

Following debate and discussion of the issue at Full Council on the 24th June, we have the authority to inform you that Copeland Borough Council is now formally 'expressing an interest'.

This is made on the clear understanding that it is without prejudice or commitment, and any decision to move forward to formal participation would need to be the subject of a wide consultation in West Cumbria, subject to the views of the people of Copeland and a future decision of this Borough Council.

We are committed to lead a wide partnership which will collect and consider the information upon which the decision to formally participate, or not, will be made. The make up of this partnership is yet to be determined. Other local democratic bodies, including Cumbria County Council, will be involved in agreeing the nature of the partnership. We would then expect the full partnership to agree a work programme. The partnership will in, due course, make recommendations to this Council for decision.

The development of the partnership and delivery of the work programme, will be subject to sufficient funding being available from Government in order to thoroughly consult stakeholders and explore any other issues necessary to inform this Council's considered decision.

Copeland currently accommodates some 70% of the nations higher level radioactive wastes and therefore has a key role to play in this decision making process whether repository can be sited in our area or not

In anticipation of this invitation the Council has been in consultation with local partners for some time. There is good partner support for Copeland expressing an interest

Details of the Council's consultation and engagement stated in attached Annexes

We look forward to working closely with you on this issue.

Sincerely

Elaine Woodburn
Leader of Copeland Borough Council

Liam Murphy
Chief Executive

Attachments

Annexe 1

Supporting Statement – Details of local support to express an interest.

Annexe 2

Nuclear Policy Consultation List

Annexe 3

MRWS Consultation Event – Attendance/Invitation List

ANNEXE 1

Supporting Document – Initial Support for an expression of interest

In-line with Chapter 6, Para 6.18 of the White Paper the Council has canvassed opinion with existing key local partners in order to take initial soundings on whether to express an interest. The details are as follows:

In early 2007 the Council sent its draft nuclear policies for consultation to a wide-ranging number of key stakeholders including; neighbouring local authorities, parish & town councils, local businesses, local & regional economic development agencies, environmental and conservation groups and the local strategic partnership. A list of those consulted is attached as supporting information in Annexe 3. The responses showed a broad support for the Council's policies including the Council's agreed policy:

'Copeland Borough Council will, in view of the presence of approximately 70% of the nation's higher activity wastes in the Borough already, would be prepared to talk to Government about the potential for a partnership between the Borough and Government, with the possibility of Copeland hosting facilities for the nation in the future. However, any such decision would be without prejudice or commitment, and any decision to move forward would need to be the subject of a wide consultation in West Cumbria, and subject to the views of the people of Copeland.'

As part of the consultation on the Government Managing Radioactive Waste Safely – Implementation Framework for Geological Disposal consultation, a key stakeholder event was hosted by the Council in September 2007, where key organisations were invited to further debate the Council's nuclear waste policies. An attendance list is attached in Annexe 4.

In addition to this, the policy was incorporated into the Energy Coast Master Plan document and through discussion and debate, was endorsed by the following key local stakeholders:

- Cumbria County Council
- Allerdale Borough Council
- Cumbria Vision
- West Cumbria Partnership (LSP)
- North West Development Agency

The document was also approved by Copeland's Full Council and also presented to the West Cumbria Strategic Forum (Chaired by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry) and the former Prime Minister Rt Hon Tony Blair

Further to these initial soundings, recent meetings with Cumbrian Local Authorities and Sellafield Ltd Trade Unions have confirmed their agreement for taking the approach outlined in the Council's policy.

Meetings were held on the 9th June with Allerdale Borough and Cumbria County Council and again on the 18th June to discuss support and initial partnership arrangements between local authorities. It is mutually understood that the partnership and work

programme will be developed with full involvement of relevant local partners including Cumbria County Council.

On the 17th June the Council met with representatives of the Parish Councils of Copeland to discuss the contents of the White Paper and to outline the Councils position on expressing an interest to Government. The Council also *canvassed opinion* at a special meeting open to all Copeland Councillors on the 18th June 2008.

On Tuesday the 24th June 2008 at a meeting of Copeland Borough Council it was recommended to note that:

- Initial discussions with Copeland's residents and Government on whether to participate in the Government's process will take place in line with Council Policy.
- To facilitate this process the Council will 'express an interest' to Government, and seek funding to engage the local community and partners in the issues before deciding to 'participate'.
- A work programme and partnership arrangements designed to consider all the issues needed for this Council to make a 'decision to participate' will be reported back for agreement.
- The partnership arrangements and work programme will be developed with the full involvement of relevant local partners including the County Council.
- The Council agreed to establish a 'working Group' of five members to provide the focus of this work within the Council.

In addition, Cumbria County Council held a meeting on the 26th June 2008 where members recommended:

- That given Sellafield's role in hosting much of the UK's higher activity radioactive waste and also the potential impacts of moving it, the County Council engages with District Councils and other stakeholders in discussing the implications of a deep geological disposal facility siting programme.

Furthermore, during the meeting of the County Council on the 26th June 08, it was stated that the additional steps the County Council will conduct in stakeholder engagement will support and complement the work already done at Copeland.

END.

ANNEXE 2 – Nuclear Policy Consultation List

ORGANISATION CONSULTED	
1	Countryside Agency North West Region
2	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
3	English Nature - Conservation Office
4	Environment Agency
5	Government Office North West
6	The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)
7	The Maritime and Coastguard Agency
8	Allerdale Borough Council
9	Barrow in Furness Borough Council
10	Lake District National Park Authority
11	South Lakeland District Council
12	Chief Constable
13	North West Regional Assembly
14	Cumbria County Council
15	Corporate Team
16	HM Nuclear Installations Inspectorate
17	CoRWM
18	National Grid
19	NDA
20	Alco Waste Management
21	CORE
22	Workington Town Council
23	Cumbria Chamber of Commerce & Industry
24	Cumbria Strategic Partnership
25	Cumbria Tourism
26	Cumbria Vision
27	Cumbria Wildlife Trust
28	Cumbria Woodlands Trust
29	Forestry Commission
30	Friends of the Earth
31	Friends of the Lake District/CPRE
32	Millom Tourism Group
33	National Trust (North West Regional Office)
34	National Farmers Union (North West)
35	North West Development Agency
36	RSPB (North West England)
37	West Lakes Renaissance
38	West Cumbria Strategic Partnership
39	Cleator Moor Chamber of Trade
40	Invest in Cumbria
41	The Diocese of Carlisle
42	W3M
43	Westlakes Research Institute
44	West Cumbria CVS

ORGANISATION CONSULTED	
45	West Cumbria Development Agency
46	Whitehaven Civic Society
47	Whitehaven Heritage Action Group
48	Highways Agency
49	National Farmers Union
50	British Nuclear Group
51	British Nuclear Group
52	HMP Haverigg
53	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
54	UKAEA
55	Westlakes Properties Ltd
56	Arlecdon & Frizington Parish Council
57	Bootle Parish Council
58	Cleator Moor Town Council
59	Distington Parish Council
60	Drigg & Carleton Parish Council
61	Winscales Parish Council
62	Dean Parish Council
63	Egremont Town Council
64	Ennerdale and Kinniside Parish Council
65	Eskdale Parish Council
66	Gosforth Parish Council
67	Haile and Wilton Parish Council
68	Irton with Santon PC
69	Lamplugh Parish Council
70	Lowca Parish Council
71	Lowside Quarter Parish Council
72	Millom Town Council
73	Millom Without Parish Council
74	Moresby Parish Council
75	Muncaster Parish Council
76	Loweswater Parish Council
77	Buttermere Parish Council
78	Ponsonby Parish Council
79	Seascale Parish Council
80	St Bees Parish Council
81	St Bridget's Beckermest PC
82	St Johns Beckermest Parish Council
83	Ulpha (Parish Meeting)
84	Waberthwaite Parish Council
85	Wasdale Parish Meeting
86	Weddicar Parish Council
87	Whicham Parish Council
88	Cumbria Association of Local Councils
89	NuLEAF

MANAGEMENT OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE

COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL, THE COPELAND CENTRE

12th September 2007, 5pm

List of Attendees

Name	Organisation	Signature
Liam Murphy Chief Executive	Copeland Borough Council	JM
Cllr Elaine Woodburn Leader	Copeland Borough Council	EW
Fergus McMorrow Corporate Director	Copeland Borough Council	FM
Cllr Cath Giel Deputy Leader (Achieving Transformation)	Copeland Borough Council	CG
Cllr Allan Holliday Deputy Leader (Effective Leadership)	Copeland Borough Council	
Cllr George Clements Deputy Leader (Promoting Prosperity)	Copeland Borough Council	GC
<i>Seaford Parish tp</i> Cllr David Moore	Chair, West Cumbria Site Stakeholders Group	DM
David Davies	Head of Sustainability & Nuclear Policy, Copeland Borough Council	DD
David Martin	Allerdale Borough Council	Apothge's
Cllr Joe Milburn	Allerdale Borough Council	MIKE DAVIDSON.
Jean McSorley	Greenpeace	JM McSorley
Dr Ruth Balogh	Friends of the Earth	In attendance 5-10
Felicity Bruce	Lake District National Park	FB.
Shaun Gorman	Cumbria County Council	SG.
Cllr Tim Heslop	Cumbria County Council	TIM KNOWLES.

Colin Edgar	The Whitehaven News	CE.
Colin Jackson	Egremont Town Council	Arrogues
Cllr Doug Wilson	Millom Town Council	DW.
Chris Shaw	Cumbria Association of Local Councils	CSW
Ranald Stewart	Cumbria Association of Local Councils	RS.
John Kane	GMB Union	JK.