

Heysham Anti-Nuclear Alliance
Response to the Re-consultation National Policy
Statements on Energy and Nuclear Power

Heysham Anti-Nuclear Alliance is an alliance of individuals who have individually responded to the initial National Policy Statements on Energy and Nuclear Power.

We remain deeply opposed to nuclear new build at Heysham for the following reasons:

1. Health and safety

No dose of radiation is safe. Each dose received adds to the risk of developing cancer or birth defects. Cancer clusters are associated with many nuclear power stations in Britain and other countries. In 2008, for example, a major study commissioned by the German government, found large increases in infant cancers near 16 German nuclear power stations [1]. A new book on Chernobyl published by the New York Academy of Sciences shows that damage to people's health is accelerating and that the accident has killed more than a million people across Europe [2].

The nuclear industry says doses from Chernobyl or from power station discharges are far too small to cause these diseases. But the latest thinking is that the concept of dose is meaningless for many of the types of man-made radioactivity we eat and inhale [3]. As with asbestos or smoking, the only acceptable exposure is no exposure.

The proposed reactors have key safety design faults that could lead to a Chernobyl-type accident, according to internal documents of EDF (the power company who want to build Heysham 3) [4]. And already World-wide there have been numerous accidents at nuclear power stations, and plenty of near-accidents we never hear about.

Nuclear energy is intrinsically linked with nuclear weapons, war and terrorism. In January 2010, for example, it was reported that Al Qaeda are trying to obtain a nuclear bomb [5].

2. The waste problem

New build in the North West at Sellafield and Heysham (and all new build) is absolutely dependent on the government cosily "finding a home" for existing and new build waste. The findings of the Flower report "Nuclear Power and the Environment", was released in September 1976. One of the recommendations of the report was that:

"There should be no commitment to a large programme of nuclear fission power until it has been demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that a method exists to ensure the safe containment of long-lived, highly radioactive waste for the indefinite future".

Selwyn Gummer, the responsible Minister in 1997 accepted the recommendation of the Nirex Inspector Chris McDonald to dismiss the appeal for the Proposed Repository Zone for intermediate level wastes in Cumbria's leaky geology [6]. The view of the inspector was and still is that "alternative sites have to be considered under European law, and that the Irish Government was right to claim it would be illegal to further pollute the Irish Sea".

While snow was falling on snow, people attending the ironically named Managing Radioactive Wastes Safely, "drop-in" sessions throughout Cumbria saw lie piled on lie. Cumbrians at the 'honest and transparent' MRWS drop-in sessions held in November and December voiced concerns that Nirex had already ruled out Cumbria's geology as being leaky and unsuitable for the 'disposal' of intermediate level wastes, never mind the more volatile high level ones.

Alun Ellis, Repository Project Manager, smoothly reassured people that the outcome would have been different had all the information been available

at that time. This blatant untruth has been demolished by the lead Nirex Inspector Chris McDonald in a letter to the Repository Project Manager.

Following the outcome of the Nirex Inquiry and Appeal the government and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority had two logical options:

- 1. Accept they did not have a deep disposal option in the UK and change policy; i.e. no new wastes and above ground storage.*
- 2. Stick with deep disposal, taking account of the fact that West Cumbria is geologically unsuitable and therefore ruled out. Seek to identify whether or not a suitable volume of rock can be found for existing and/or any possible future wastes.*

Instead the government has chosen the indefensible option three which is to pretend that the inquiry never happened, and with a 'fresh sheet of paper' rewrite the geological criteria to rule West Cumbria back in.

This fabrication is essential to the pretence of sustainability for new nuclear power stations. DECC has been exposed as biased in its 'steps towards geological implementation' and new build at any cost.

3. Carbon Emissions

Nuclear energy is NOT 'carbon free', emitting 66g CO₂ per kWh, because it relies on fossil-fuels for plant construction, decommissioning and fuel processing. Enormous amounts of carbon are produced during uranium mining and enrichment. Also, any carbon cuts will be far too small and too late [6].

4. The Consultation Process

The 'consultation,' including this one, has been so technical and badly advertised that the public has not had the chance to be involved. Also, the recent changes in planning law have enabled fast-tracking of nuclear power stations, thus removing a historic democratic decision-making process.

Therefore, *Heysham Anti-Nuclear Alliance* strongly opposes new nuclear build at Sellafield and Heysham and we strongly oppose the plan for the geological disposal of nuclear waste in Cumbria.

[1] www.ipnw-europe.org/en/nuclear-energy-and-security.html

[2] <http://www.nyas.org/Publications/Annals/Detail.aspx?cid=f3f3bd16-51ba...>

[3] <http://www.llrc.org/wobblyscience/subtopic/dosemeaningless.htm>].

[4] www.sortirdunucleaire.org/

[5] 'A Timeline of Terrorists' Efforts to Acquire WMD', Rolf Mowatt-Larssen, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs.

[6] Sovacool, B, 'Energy Policy 36 (2008).