

**Additional Comments on Local Community Compensation**  
**Review of the Siting Process for a Geological Disposal Facility (URN13D/250)**  
**Dated 25/11/2013**  
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These are additional comments made following the submission of my comments (21/11/13) made after attendance at the North Wales workshop.

The Gloucestershire Gazette has reported that the local community around, what was the Magnox station and laboratories at Berkeley, are upset about NDA plans to store intermediate level waste from the Oldbury nuclear power station site in the store built originally to store only waste from the Berkeley site. This is an illustration, perhaps, of a community happy to re-house waste already on their site but not to be labelled a waste site for other communities. NDA estimate that they would save £15m by using the vacant space in the Berkeley store. It will be interesting to see whether spending say £1.5m on say the roads around Berkeley will be sufficient to placate the residents.

This example also highlights an issue that was not discussed in any detail at the North Wales workshop: that of the effect on other projects of paying significant compensation to a community local to a GDF. If the community local to a GDF site is compensated by more than the legitimate expenses will communities next to other waste sites demand similar treatment? There is a substantial issue if the local community is compensated during the site investigation phase. Will communities local to test drilling for say shale gas extraction (fracking) demand similar payments?

It must be remembered that the overriding requirement is to secure low cost, low carbon energy supplies so increasing costs by paying unwarranted compensation, should be resisted.

Why pay compensation other than legitimate expenses for the exploration and assessment phase?

It is essential that exploration does not imply that a decision to proceed is inevitable if a site is deemed to be "a reasonable prospect".

Sites selected for exploration and assessment should be chosen on the basis that they will store high level waste or spent fuel for around 100 years anyway. The 'local community' is defined, the compensation package outlined and the education program and detailed compensation package negotiations started at this point.

Sites assessed to be "reasonable prospects" and proposed by the site owner and the Government are then subject to a referendum of the 'local community'. If the result is a yes vote then compensation could start even though further investigations may show that it would be prohibitively expensive to continue (for example because of geological faults and safety concerns from the Regulators). The right to withdraw is lost at this point.

From this point on the decision on whether the site is geologically suitable and safe is determined by the Regulators who must be independent of both Government and the Industry. This is not without financial risk as regulation, with associated increased costs, has been used to counter public concerns nurtured by opponents. The 'local community' must be kept fully informed and an imaginative public education programme must continue throughout the development and implementation phases.

A decision to stop development because of escalating costs will have to be sanctioned by Parliament and the alternatives spelt out.