

KEEKLE HEADLINES

DECEMBER 2009

THANKS FOR YOUR INTEREST AND TIME



We would like to thank our west Cumbrian stakeholders, and particularly residents from the villages and farms surrounding Keekle Head, who took the time to visit one of the exhibitions or meetings in October and November.

It was clear that the majority of people who took the time to find out more about plans for the new low level radioactive waste disposal facility welcomed the presentations and said they felt better informed.

More than 140 people attended the four exhibition days, with many more attending six evening presentations, which were designed to share information on the plans and listen to feedback.

While some people did raise concerns relating to perceived problems with traffic, the environment and health, the vast majority said they felt much more comfortable and better informed about the plans once they had attended the events.

Endecom Development Manager, Phil Holland, said he was very pleased with the outcome of the public engagement, and the interest taken in the plans.

"We were very heartened by the response we had at the public exhibitions and meetings, and the many positive comments we received," he said.

"I think it is fair to say that most people seemed to leave feeling better

informed and comfortable with the plans and many saw this as an opportunity to restore the Keekle Head site and boost the local economy.

"Some people did raise concerns, but in a lot of cases we were able to dispel those fears with simple explanations. Only the lower end of low level radioactive waste would be accepted for disposal on this facility and it would be carried out in a very safe, organised and expertly-engineered way.

"Contrary to what a few people thought, this site would not operate in a similar manner to a household waste landfill site, and it will pose no risk or nuisance to the local community."

ON COURSE FOR PLANS SUBMISSION

Endecom is on course to complete the many tasks required in the course of preparing a planning application. It fully expects that the application to Cumbria County Council will be lodged on December 18.

The company has already secured agreement, subject to planning approval being granted, on the purchase of the now derelict, former coal quarry.

A REMINDER OF OUR PROPOSAL

Endecom is proposing to use the derelict Keekle Head site for the disposal of low and very low level radioactive construction and demolition waste – mainly generated within west Cumbria.

The plan is in line with Government and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's strategy, which states that alternative solutions are required for disposing of very low and low level radioactive materials, including waste created by decommissioning activities at Sellafield.

Endecom proposes to restore large parts of the former opencast coalmine, including re-instating the River Keekle near its original course, before creating an expertly-engineered and purpose-built disposal site.

The void would be filled, a section at a time, under an engineered and highly

durable canopy, which would only be removed and taken to the next section once a landfilled area was complete and sealed by capping. The operation would be carried out under cover to ensure as little impact on the environment as possible.

If the plans proceed, about 12 lorries a day will travel to the disposal facility along the A595 and new Distington by-pass, before turning off up the former coal haulage route, past the Distington Hall Crematorium to the Keekle Head site.

The site would be operated to the highest European standards and best practice, ensuring no detrimental impact on health, the environment or the community. It would also be regularly monitored by the Environment Agency.



TRANSPORT AND TIMES OF OPERATION

We wish to assure local communities about the transport route planned for vehicles travelling between Sellafield and Keekle Head. Lorries would be required to use the A595 and new Distington by-pass, turning off up the former coal haulage road – the Gilgarran Road to the site.

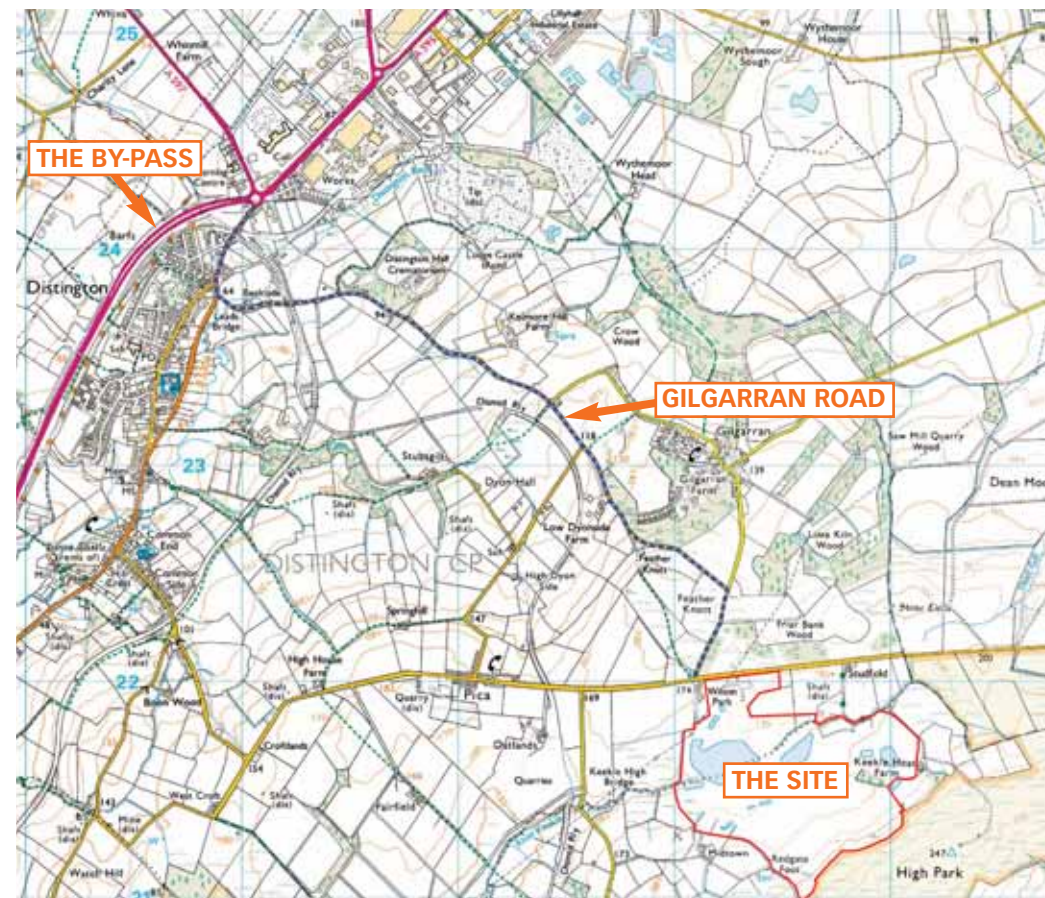
Except in absolutely exceptional circumstances, such as the emergency closure of a road, the use of other routes to the site would not be allowed.

It is estimated that only about 12 lorry loads a day, on average, will be transported to the proposed site. Any application would be supported by a full Traffic Impact Assessment, which

would assess the potential impact on the local highway network, from an amenity and safety perspective, as a result of the development.

In response to a concern raised by one resident, we would agree not to run lorries to or from the site during the time covered by the morning and afternoon school run.

If approved, the operating hours for the centre are likely to be between 7.30am and 4.30pm followed by one hour of tidying and securing the site, Monday to Friday. Weekend working will only take place on rare occasions, for example during periods of restoration, construction and maintenance.



TWO KEEKLES

During recent months, and particularly at our public exhibitions, Endecom representatives were made aware that some people might be mistaken about where the company is proposing to create the new disposal facility.

Phil Holland said: "As far as we are aware, there are at least two places with Keekle in their name – the village of Keekle, near Cleator Moor, and Keekle Head, the former coal quarry on the Pica to Dean Cross road. Our proposal relates to the latter.

"Despite its similar name, our site is definitely not located close to Keekle Village, as some people have been led to believe."

HEALTH IMPACTS

An independent consultancy, Westlakes Scientific Consulting, based at Westlakes Science Park, is carrying out research for a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) for the proposed re-development of the Keekle Head site.

Assessing the impacts of any development on health involves consultation with a wide range of people in order to obtain complete and unbiased results. Westlakes attended the exhibitions held in October and November to gain initial opinions and held a half-day workshop in late November at UCLan's new Westlakes Campus in West Cumbria.

A quarter of the people surveyed at the exhibitions considered the development would not have a significant negative impact on health. Those who did express concerns thought that the potential for contamination of surface and ground water, the safe transport of materials, stress and the long-term monitoring of the site should be considered in more detail.

The subsequent workshop, provided a forum for discussion, exchange of views and detailed evaluation of the potential health impacts – both positive and negative – of the development. Attendees also helped to identify measures that should be taken to minimise any possibly adverse effects of the development.

The outcomes of the HIA will be included in a report that will be submitted to Cumbria County Council alongside the Environmental Statement.

COMMUNITY FUNDING

Lots of people have asked about potential funding for local community initiatives. Here Phil Holland offers his thoughts on how this may be approached by Endecom.

From my perspective there may be three potential funding mechanisms, although each of these needs more detailed consideration and, of course, each will be wholly-dependent on the scheme progressing.

- As a disposal facility the site will be required to charge customers the Government's levy known as the landfill tax. This levy – managed via the SITA Trust – would be available via the 'trust fund' to support suitable approved local community and environmental schemes.

Funding can range from a few thousand pounds to very substantial awards for major schemes.

- Early discussions have been held with a range of local agencies and residents in an attempt to identify suitable schemes to which we might offer direct cash support. At present three schemes seem to be emerging as potential opportunities – improvement of the back lanes in Pica; traffic calming and speed restriction signage on the road past Lawson's and the crematorium and, finally, the potential refurbishment of Pica village hall.
- Attached to many major planning applications is a requirement for the applicant to make financial contributions through a form of legal

agreement, which becomes part of the planning permission requirements. This is known as a Section 106 agreement. Here the developer, in this case Endecom, would typically agree to fund road improvements, traffic calming, long-term restoration or maintenance of amenity areas.

If we are successful, we will clarify the offer we can make and then it will be essential that local communities come forward with their proposals. It will also be important that the community in general has 'buy-in' and is involved in the development. Experience tells me that the more the community is willing to become involved, the better the scheme outcome will be.



FESTIVE GREETINGS

I would like to take this opportunity to wish the people of west Cumbria a very merry Christmas and happy New Year.

Phil Holland, Development Manager, Endecom UK Ltd.



FURTHER INFORMATION

Anyone wanting more information, or wishing to discuss any aspect of the proposal, is invited to contact Phil Holland by any of the following ways:

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