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## **Nuclear new build: County council welcomes clarity for communities in Kirksanton and Braystones**

Cumbria County Council has welcomed an announcement from the Department for Energy and Climate Change that sites at Kirksanton and Braystones are considered unsuitable to host a new generation of nuclear power stations.

The publication of the revised draft National Policy Statements (NPS) for energy infrastructure today says that both Kirksanton and Braystones are not suitable for the deployment because of doubts about their ability to contribute to new nuclear capacity before 2025 and concerns about the visual impact on the Lake District National Park.

Earlier this year (February 2), Cumbria County Council's Cabinet produced its response to the first wave of consultation on the new draft NPSs. The county council said that it was minded not to support the case for the sites at Braystones and Kirksanton "because it is not convinced at either site that the benefits of development would outweigh the costs".

The county council argued in its response that Sellafield should be the preferred site in the county to build one of the next generation of nuclear power stations as there was a compelling argument there in terms of job creation and tapping into the existing nuclear skills base in the community in West Cumbria. The council said at the time that the impact on local communities and the landscape at Kirksanton and Braystones outweighed the potential benefits.

Cllr Tim Knowles, Cumbria County Council's Cabinet member responsible for environment, said:

"This announcement brings some welcome clarity to the communities of Kirksanton and Braystones. People living there have faced an uncertain future, not knowing whether they would soon have a nuclear power station built next to them. For some, that has meant they've been unable to sell their house or make long-term plans. We are now going forward with the clarity that Sellafield is the most suitable site for a new nuclear power station in Cumbria and the industry will now focus on that site. The county council will now carefully consider the revised Energy NPSs and decided whether to comment further to Government."

Cllr Tony Markley, Cumbria County Council's cabinet member responsible for economic regeneration, said:

"The nuclear industry plays a vital part in West Cumbria's economy and this latest announcement means that Sellafield is still in the right position to be a linchpin in the Government's future strategy for energy delivery. The county council is delighted that its voice was heard in the initial stage of this ongoing consultation."

The new round of DECC consultation closes on Monday 24 January 2011. Subject to the consultation and Parliamentary scrutiny, the Government intends to finalise and formally approve the energy National Policy Statements in Spring 2011. These National Policy Statements would then be used by the Infrastructure Planning Commission and its successor, the Major Infrastructure Planning Unit, when decisions are made on applications for development consent for nationally significant energy infrastructure.

**Notes for editors**

The Cabinet paper from February 2nd can be viewed at [www.cumbria.gov.uk/CouncilMeetings/Content/Public/2941/40204164344.pdf](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/CouncilMeetings/Content/Public/2941/40204164344.pdf)

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**Media enquiries to Gareth Cosslett, News Manager on 01228 226332**