



# Department for Energy Security & Net Zero

Andrew Bowie MP  
Minister for Nuclear and Networks

**Department for Energy Security  
& Net Zero**

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Andrew Seekings and Mark Fryer  
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Our ref:  
Your ref: AS/SF

10 January 2024

Dear Andrew and Mark,

Thank you for your letter dated 15<sup>th</sup> November about Cumberland Council requesting my department facilitates securing potential investment at the Moorside site in West Cumbria. I apologise for the delay in responding.

I am pleased to read about the interest of private investors to invest in Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) in Cumbria. Like Cumberland Council, I am committed to securing inward investment and ensuring that the UK is one of the best places in the world to invest in new nuclear. I recognise that securing investment for private projects will be vital to deliver on our ambitious civil nuclear programme. This will be important to achieving the government's long-term plans for deployment of civil nuclear by up to 24GW by 2050.

I am proud of the role the North West has played so far in the UK's Civil Nuclear history. As you know, West Cumbria is the UK's nuclear heartland with over 70-years' experience in nuclear. As we progress on the UK's Nuclear renaissance, the Government believes that regions such as the North West will have a key role to play to achieving our Civil Nuclear ambitions, in delivering clean energy and reaching the UK's commitment to net zero by 2050.

The Government welcomes Community Nuclear Power's (CNP) interest in bringing forward privately financed nuclear projects. And we are of course aware of CNP's keen interest in the land at the Moorside for development of up to two SMRs. As I have previously stated in our correspondence to CNP, there is strong commercial interest in sites owned by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) for potential new nuclear development. While I understand that neither of these proposals would formally commit this land to CNP, the government is unable to quickly dispose of, or provide access to, NDA land without a fair and open process to all interested parties.

I acknowledge the support of Cumberland Council for development at Moorside. The support of local leadership is a crucial factor in the success of any new nuclear project. I am also aware that CNP faces commercial time constraints which put pressure on their potential plans in Cumbria. The government intend to make rapid progress in this area and will in the Civil Nuclear Roadmap set out HMG's vision for NDA land subject

to an open and transparent process. More information will be provided in due course. In the Interim, Government will continue to engage with prospective developers about their proposed new nuclear projects. All enquires on NDA land should be directed to the department in the first instance.

Thank you for writing and I hope we can work towards a satisfactory outcome. I trust this information will be helpful and I look forward to reading your responses to the consultation.

Yours aye



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