

ALLERDALE GDF WORKING GROUP SEARCH AREA IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP

7th-8th July 2021 at the North Lakes Hotel, Penrith (*and remotely on Microsoft Teams*)

Attendees: *In Person*

Jocelyn Manners-Armstrong (Independent Chair)
Cllr Marion Fitzgerald (Allerdale Borough Council)
Andy Ross (Interested Party - Workshop Chair)
Cllr Mary Bradley (Cumbria Association of Local Councils)
Dot Kirk-Adams (Independent Facilitator)
Eva Chua (Community Engagement Manager - RWM)
Matthew Pixton (Siting Manager - RWM)
Daniel Rigg (Technical Support - RWM)
Steve Reece (Head of Siting - RWM)
Barnaby Hudson (GIS Support - RWM)
Andy Parkes (Head of Site Characterisation - RWM)
Laura Kay (Communications Lead - RWM) - Day 2 only

Microsoft Teams

Linda Scott (Secretariat Allerdale Working Group)
Mark Barnett (Senior Environmental Assessment Manager - RWM)
Kirsty Simpson (Geological Technical Integrator - RWM)

Apologies:

Katy Arnott (Community Coordinator - RWM)
Samantha King (Head of Community Engagement and Site Evaluation - RWM)

Welcome and Introductions

Andy Ross (workshop chairperson) opened the meeting and set out the purpose and agenda. Safety information for the workshop and venue was shared with attendees. Declarations of Interest were sought and declared. The declarations are available upon request.

Context

The Working with Communities Policy sets out that an important task for Working Groups is to identify a Search Area. The Search Area is the geographical area within which Radioactive Waste Management (RWM) would seek to identify potentially suitable sites to host a GDF. The Search Area is derived from the area first put forward for consideration by the interested party and is defined using district electoral ward boundaries.

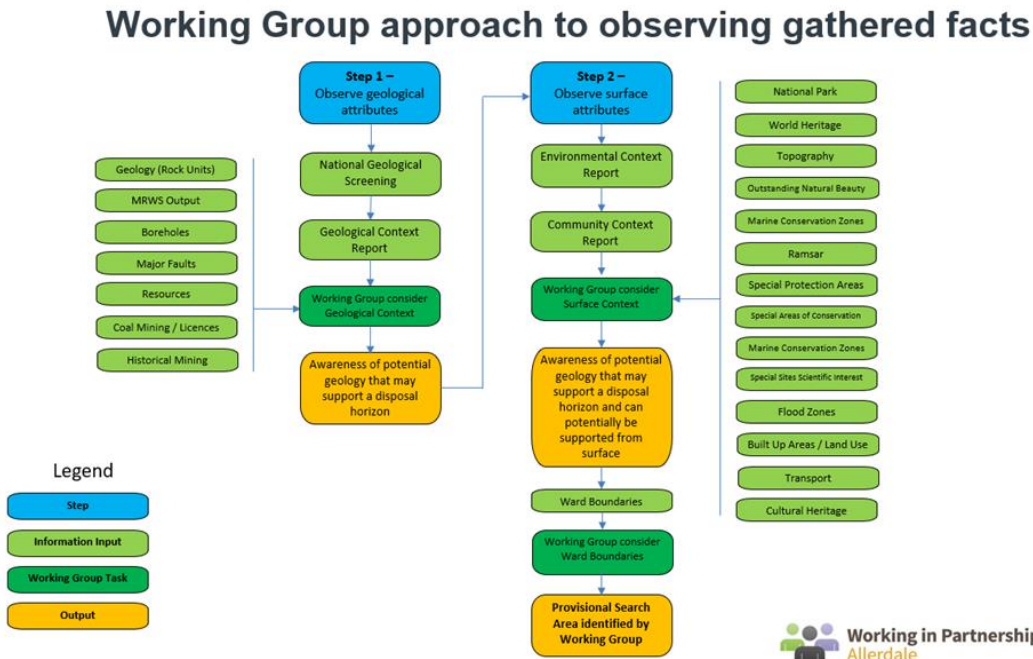
Defining the boundaries of the Search Area is important in order to identify appropriate membership for a Community Partnership, including relevant principal Local Authorities, and to determine eligibility for Community Investment Funding. Community projects, schemes and initiatives within the Search Area may be eligible for this funding.

The Working Group noted that the Search Area can be refined over time by the Community Partnership as investigations advance and further information becomes available.

Workshop Approach

The Allerdale Working Group had previously considered and agreed its approach to the workshop, and the identification of the Search Area, which is summarised below and in Figure 1. The Working Group sought to identify a Search Area that has potential to host a GDF and therefore RWM shared readily available information, which had been used to inform the development of RWM’s published Initial Evaluation Report, to inform the identification of the Search Area.

Figure 1 – Working Group approach



The approach undertaken had two steps. In the first step, the geological attributes of the area were presented, discussed and considered, and a key source of information utilised in this context was the output from the National Geological Screening exercise. This included information on subjects such as rock type, faulting, historical mining and resources. In step two, surface features were presented, discussed and considered, including relevant environmental, community and other factors. This included information on subjects such as landscape designations, heritage assets, ecological designations, transport and flooding.

At each of the two steps, the Working Group considered the Initial Evaluation work that had been carried out by RWM (using readily available information) in respect of the area first put forward for consideration by the interested party during Initial Discussions. This included the consideration of three context reports that were produced by RWM (geology, environment and community). These context reports and other relevant reference materials (i.e. National Policy Statement, Implementing Geological Disposal - Working with Communities and RWM Community Guidance) were available to the Working Group during the workshop.

The Working Group also considered feedback received during its early engagements with the public and a series of workshops with a group of stakeholders who shared information and their local insight. This included feedback relating to community factors, environmental and landscape impacts,

community wellbeing, socio-economic data and safety. The Working Group was also mindful of the location of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and World Heritage Sites, as well as the commitment that had already been made to excluding the Lake District National Park from the area under consideration and the Search Area. The group also discussed the impact on a Search Area's community holistically, recognising that communities are not solely defined by wards boundaries or geographical areas. The cultures and needs of different areas were also considered.

RWM's subject matter experts were available during the workshop to provide information and answer questions to assist the Working Group members.

Information, including relevant Geographical Information System (GIS) data layers, were presented and considered by the Working Group who debated the relative merits of individual wards for inclusion or not, and to come to a judgement on those wards to include within the Search Area as the starting point for the work of the Community Partnership.

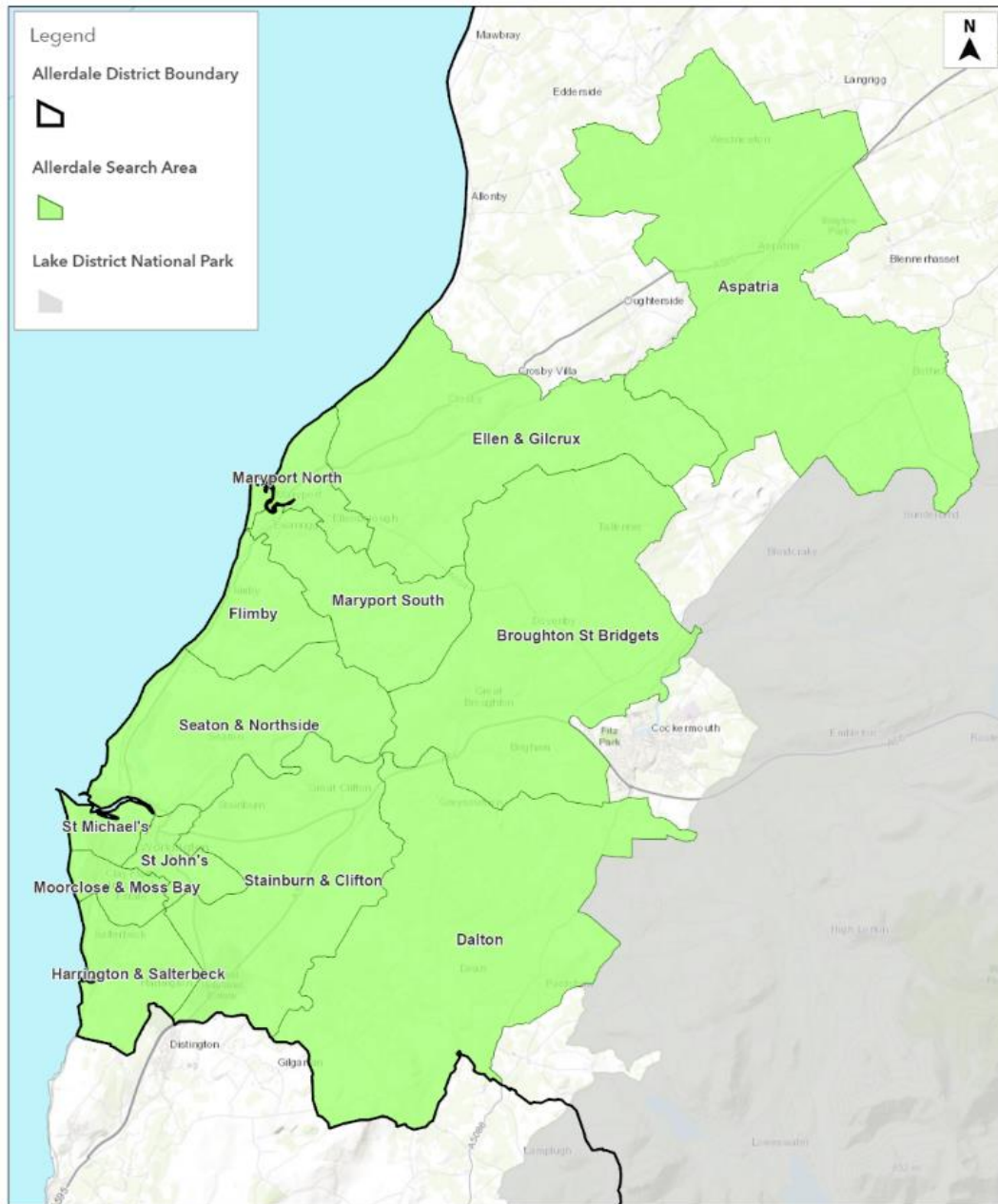
The Working Group reached a unanimous conclusion to include 13 Allerdale electoral wards in the Search Area (*Table 1*).

Search Area Electoral Wards
Aspatria
Broughton St Bridgets
Dalton
Ellen & Gilcruix
Flimby
Harrington & Salterbeck
Maryport North
Maryport South
Moorclose & Moss Bay
Seaton & Northside
St John's
St Michael's
Stainburn & Clifton

Table 1 – Search Area Wards (in alphabetical order)

The wards included in the Search Area are highlighted in green on the map below (*Figure 2*).

Figure 2 – Search Area



After careful consideration, the wards identified in Figure 2 above were proposed by the Working Group as being included within a Search Area. Based on the information available, the Working Group considered that these wards should be considered in further detail by a Community Partnership, noting that the Search Area would be further refined over time.

The inshore area adjacent to the Borough of Allerdale also remains under consideration, although the term “Search Area” defined in the Working with Communities Policy stipulates that it includes only the relevant electoral wards on land.

The Working Group recognises that as investigations progress the Community Partnership may identify areas that it wants to rule out of consideration or bring in additional areas that it did not at first consider to be part of the Search Area. Any future changes to electoral ward boundaries will be reflected in the Search Area as it evolves over time.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Working Group recognises that at this stage both the onshore and inshore areas remain under consideration to host the underground elements of a GDF. Also, as previously stated, the Lake District National Park remains excluded from consideration.

Next Steps

RWM will evaluate the Search Area and confirm (or otherwise) to the Working Group whether the Search Area has potential to host a GDF.