



16 October 2013  
Ref: DSG(2013)C054

Alex Paterson  
Chief Executive  
Highlands & Islands Enterprise  
Cowan House  
Inverness Retail & Business Park  
Inverness  
IV2 7GF

Dear Mr Paterson

## **BDUK ROLL-OUT ANNOUNCEMENT**

The DSG is represented by over 20 organisations and therefore this response is one that is generally agreed by most organisations. However, there are some organisations, who may not agree entirely with this submission and therefore these organisations have been encouraged to provide their own response.

As a group that takes an interest in the socio economic well-being of Caithness and North Sutherland we were absolutely disappointed to hear that the first phase roll-out announcement will take place around Inverness-shire.

As an area who will lose £80M from our economy from the run-down of the Dounreay site we would have expected Highlands and Islands Enterprise to have considered prioritising the areas for the roll out of this programme which would have allowed Caithness and North Sutherland to be among one of the first to be upgraded.

At a time it is vitally important to attract inward investment and new business to the area and the fact that the Caithness and North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership, of which you declare HIE is a key partner, we would have expected Caithness and North Sutherland to have been seen as a priority area.

This news is especially disappointing as we were led to believe at a CNSRP Advisory Board in the summer that Caithness was well placed to be part of the early roll-out. If, indeed, HIE is fully committed to the CNSRP then we would have expected you to have a full understanding of the challenges and opportunities that our county has and would have expected being amongst the first to

**Please respond to:**

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Bruce Crabtree, GMB Union

Kevin Coyne, Unite National Officer

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