



15 July 2019  
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The Manager  
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Dear Sir/Madam

## **DOUNREAY STAKEHOLDER GROUP**

The Dounreay Stakeholder Group (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.

On a recent visit to Edinburgh, one of the DSG members visited your museum aware that you have a partnership working arrangements with both DSRL [Dounreay Site Restoration Limited] and Caithness Horizons for the Dounreay nuclear site artefacts.

It was with great disappointment that the DSG representative saw a statement on one of the interpretation boards which said *"Nuclear Power: Dounreay's three research nuclear reactors were developed on Scotland's north coast from the 1950s. Part of the big hope for future electricity generation, nuclear power brought employment to the Caithness area, helping reverse emigration from the area."*

*Now that the end of their life of all three reactors are being decommissioning, leaving a legacy of pollution and controversy. The land will remain contaminated for 300 years.*

*Scotland has had four other nuclear power stations, two of which still operate. The Scottish and British governments remain divided over future developments of nuclear facilities in Scotland."*

We would question your statement that the end of the three reactors left a legacy of pollution and controversy. First of all, the Dounreay site was a research and development site and hence proved the fast reactor technology cycle. While we understand that some events during the years of research did lead to some levels of contamination on the site and in the locality, this has been dealt with in an open and transparent manner with substantial funding spent to clean up the environment.

You also state that the land will remain contaminated for 300 years and this implies that the 'legacy pollution' is the cause of this contamination. This is not true. The site will remain under institutional control for 300 years until the levels of radioactivity reach 'no danger'. This is based on the closure of a new low level waste facility, where low level waste is disposed of and will pose 'no danger' after 300 years.

We feel your stated legacy is currently one-sided and should also reflect the large number of multi-skilled people who trained and worked at the site. Those people worked with acceptable risks and the decision to host the site in Caithness was with a community who weighed up the economic prosperity against such risks.

It is disappointing at best that you have chosen to overlook important parts of the site's legacy, including:

- that these three reactors were research reactors and served their purpose as such
- that our community prospered from the facility
- that many people were trained and employed at the facility
- the opportunities given to our young people with thousands trained through apprentice programmes and other training schemes throughout the years
- the fact that without Dounreay there would be no North Highland College, UHI
- that we have a strong supply chain in the area because of Dounreay

We request that you ensure that some thought goes into how you portray the site when updating these boards to ensure that there is a balance of both positive and negative legacies.

Yours sincerely



**Roger Saxon**  
**DSG Chairman**

cc. Chapelcross SSG  
Hunterston SSG  
James Gunn, DSRL Heritage Officer