

Tourist Attractions in Copeland

There has been reporting in "The Times", 15/1/18, of the zip-wire planning applications.

In a letter in response, a supposedly knowledgeable gentleman from Dorking, Surrey, proposes that they would be better, not at Thirlmere or Honister, but at Whitehaven, "*where the extra jobs and tourism are actually needed*", he says.

One wonders why the gentleman should think that Whitehaven is somehow deprived and in need of employment opportunities. After all they have had nearly three quarters of a century of benefits from Sellafield and its £77 billion clean-up. (They have also had the benefit of its pollution, too, but that's another story.) The semi-derelict air to Whitehaven and the smaller towns nearby, interspersed with the modern pseudo Georgian facades which denote Sellafield's offices, are all part of the area's legacy, akin to the closed-down coal mines.

Talking of which, in the near future, the council are going to consider digging the first coalmine in the U.K. for over a hundred years, just off-shore from the area's main tourist attraction, St. Bee's Head. Tourists will be able to suck on a Hartley's ice cream while they watch the coal trains haul the sea bed away. A number of the scheme's promoters seem to be Australian and have had some connection with Australian mining company BHP Billiton. Strange, that. What happens though, after they've gone, taking their riches with them? Maybe tourists will be able to visit a derelict industrial site from the past and dive on the sea bed into the crevasses resulting from collapsed mineshafts?

Just ten miles or so to the south it is proposed to build the three-reactor, 500 acre site christened "Moorside" by those who don't want an association with Sellafield, which is literally just across the road. In order to blend in with Sellafield, this site, too, will have 12' high security fencing, threatening notices and armed patrols to shoot any deer that stray into its confines. Thus, those with the mind, should come early if they wish to catch the last views of the Lakeland Mountains across the picturesque landscape visible between the ever-growing number of chimneys spouting from Sellafield's main site, just beyond the high security barbed-wire-topped security fencing. The less adventurous may feel more comfortable just watching from the safe distance of Corney Fell, or, if they are a little braver, from atop Cold Fell. (Beware the high-speed nuclear drivers, however, as they, too, seek thrills.)

Mind you, those adventure-seekers who do come to the area may also care to take part in the seasonal activities carried out on behalf of Sellafield - the collection of radioactive particles from the tourist beaches. Be assured that the dangers are only slight. It is being mooted as to whether it is feasible to label each particle with a "Do Not Take Orally" warning sign.

A casual evening stroll along the beaches can reveal the corpses of seagulls. These are best left alone as they may have been "swimming" on Sellafield's radioactive ponds. Were they to be retrieved they would have to be treated as low-level waste, but that's alright, we leave them alone to decay naturally – a process which is generally a lot speedier than the radioactive decay.

Part of NuGen's plans, before the Toshiba fiasco, included the building of two (not just one) offshore unloading platforms, or harbours as we call them. These will add to the picturesque sea views. Imagine . . . the sun setting behind the Isle of Man, the sky ablaze with the oranges, yellows and reds, with this wonderful scene of industry in the near field. What could be better? 24-hour activity with enough heavy plant and concrete mixers to suit even the most avaricious JCB spotter. We have been assured by NuGen that there will be no disturbance to locals. The ships will arrive

very quietly and be unloaded by workmen with muffled boots. There is to be no visual intrusion as the miles of concrete are poured. Drilling the bedrock will be no noisier than a hand mixer.

For those who would prefer something a little different, we would suggest a wait until the "Moorside" project is up and running (it may take a little while) when they will be able to indulge in some warm-water bathing activities as the plant warms vast quantities of the Irish Sea at the rate of 2½ Billion gallons per day by 14°C. This beneficial change will enable new species of marine life to proliferate as the older, less tolerant species die out or move elsewhere. It might be best to advise against spending too much time in the waters, however, as they are expected to contain higher than natural quantities of bleach and other chemicals – none of which will be of concern to environmentalists.

Dissipating the thermal equivalent of 7.2 Gigawatts of power (think of the benefits of shining 2,400,000 three-bar electric fires constantly into the atmosphere) will have no effect on global warming, obviously, and the entire process will be very low CO₂, according to our publicity. The pedant may point to other, far more dangerous and destructive materials and gases, like NO₃, maybe, but not an excessive amount of CO₂.

Somewhat embarrassingly, the projects' piggy bank was recently found to be empty, but we are hopeful of funds from abroad soon. The cheque, we understand, is in the post.

The current Carillion storm-in-a-teacup is very unfortunate, of course. On our scale, their financial problems are peanuts. You want financial problems, try £330 billion! That is the amount it is said that those nice people at Électricité de France have problems with in the short-term. (Current debts are in excess of £30 billion and they are committed to over £280 billion for reactor maintenance in France alone.)

Happily, due diligence on behalf of the government doesn't exist, it appears. I mean, who with any regard to financial strictures would give a contract for £20 billion to a company like Électricité de France? Or even Toshiba, whose "misreporting of profits" had been known about for years before they came to the public's notice. One might think that a proper due diligence enquiry would have put paid to both these company's involvement in such major infra-structure projects. On the plus side, a lot of hard work has been avoided and friends made in high places.

On the basis of current projects we expect that labour will have to be imported, so, sorry Mr. Dorking-man.

It should be noted that the very import of labour may actually cause death – according to the Black Report. Solely in the Seascale area, you understand. It seems not to have been a problem elsewhere for strange reasons. Incomers to major ports, or other large infra-structure projects, are treated with non-nuclear chemicals, perhaps?