Dear Mr Merchant

Thank you for your email of 25 May.

Following the Order of the High Court made on 17 January 2014 quashing the decision of the Secretary of State [taken on behalf of the Secretary of State by the then Energy Minister, Greg Barker] dated 9 April 2013 to refuse the application by Halite Energy Limited for development consent for the proposed underground gas storage facility in Preshall, Lancashire, the application must now be redetermined.

Decision-making on applications for consent for nationally significant energy infrastructure falls within the portfolio of Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth. Amber Rudd will not therefore be taking this decision.

Your representation in respect of the possible impacts of the proposed development will be taken into account during the decision-making process.

Yours sincerely,

[Email address]

From: Jeff merchant [mailto:Jeff merchant@enterprise.uk]
Sent: 25 May 2015 15:23
To: Correspondence (DECC)
Subject: Come clean over the gas storage decision

Dear Ms Rudd,

I urge you to come clean over the decision-making process concerning the underground gas storage facility proposed by Halite Energy Group in Lancashire. The application, after more than a decade of legal wrangling, is currently being considered by your department, where it had previously been understood that the Secretary of State would determine the outcome. It has now been reported in the media that you will not be involved in the decision.

Following the recent news report (Independent on Sunday, 24th May, 2015) that Halite is represented by the lobbying company headed by your brother, Roland Rudd, I would like to seek clarification that you will not be involved in the decision.
Given that a spokesperson for your department declined to explain who would be taking this decision in your place, I would like to ask what process will be followed for making the determination. In a democracy it is right that citizens know what processes are being followed, especially when it concerns major decisions like gas storage.

The great majority of people in the areas surrounding the proposed development have been clear in their opposition to the plans for many years. I share the safety concerns of local MP, Cat Smith, urge you to come clean about the decision making process and ultimately for your department to turn down Halite’s plans.

Yours sincerely,

Jeff merchant

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