

Nuclear agency 6455 gets a rocket . . .

MANAGERS of a Government agency accused of wasting time and money in its attempt to bury nuclear waste at Sellafield were yesterday told to go by a former top adviser.

Nirex, the national nuclear waste agency, was informed by Environment Secretary John Gummer last week that it had failed in its appeal against Cumbria County Council's planning refusal for the pilot scheme.

Yesterday experts said that those responsible should be replaced.

Sir John Knill, former chairman of the Government's radioactive waste management advisory committee, said on radio: "It has acted in a secretive manner. Material which is

of importance has been held back."

He said: "The management, the board of Nirex, has got to be looked at and probably to a large extent replaced."

His comments were backed by Prof David Smythe of Glasgow University's geophysics department.

After 15 years and an estimated £200million of public money spent on research, the question of what to do with Britain's nuclear waste remains unanswered.

Nirex had wanted to set up a laboratory which would have allowed it to explore whether a long-term depository on the site would have been safe.

It is expected Nirex will now investigate other sites.