

<b>Meeting:</b>	NuLeAF Steering Group, 20 <sup>th</sup> July 2012
<b>Agenda item:</b>	7
<b>Subject:</b>	Low Level Waste (LLW) update paper
<b>Author:</b>	Phil Matthews
<b>Purpose:</b>	To update the Steering Group on recent developments regarding Low Level Waste.

## **Introduction**

This report covers:

- Overview of current situation regarding LLW
- Refusal of Keekle Head application
- King's Cliffe: Application to the National Infrastructure Directorate
- Working Group on Very Low Level Waste and Low Activity Low Level Waste
- Note of consultation on Dounreay LLW disposal

## **Recommendation**

That Steering Group notes these developments and considers how best to further support local authorities in developing a co-ordinated approach to LLW that supports local authority and community interests.

## **Contribution to Strategic Objectives**

The initiatives are intended to contribute to the achievement of the NuLeAF objectives 4-8 for 2012, namely:

- Seek to ensure that LLW strategy is implemented in ways that can inspire local authority and public confidence.
- Encourage and assist the NDA, SLCs and the supply chain to take full account of the role and needs of the LA planning system in the implementation of LLW strategy.
- Encourage WPAs to develop policy on MWDFs on the management of (LLW and VLLW).
- Encourage NDA to provide sufficient evidence base information and to engage in discussion about the potential for a more strategic approach to the siting of LLW management facilities.
- Subject to site suitability and local community views, encourage development of local or multi-site LLW management facilities at or adjacent to existing nuclear sites, rather than at non-nuclear sites.

## **1. Overview**

There have been a number of developments related to LLW since the last Steering Group meeting.

The Localism Bill Duty to Co-operate is beginning to have an impact on the consideration of waste plans. The North London Waste Plan Examination was suspended following issues raised by South East Waste Planning Advisory Group (SEWPAG) and others<sup>1</sup>. SEWPAG involves a number of NuLeAF member authorities, and this decision is likely to impact on future waste plan developments.

The new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also bedding in following its launch in March<sup>2</sup>. The new NPPF represents a significantly stripped down framework for planning that sees the removal of almost all Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) – although PPS10 on Planning for Sustainable Waste Management is still 'live' until a new National Waste Management Plan for England is published.

The NPPF is based around a '*presumption in favour of sustainable development*' with 'sustainable' being defined in terms of intergenerational equity and 'development' meaning growth.

These developments are likely to have a significant impact on LLW decisions in coming years. As noted in the Progress Report (item 9), NuLeAF will be revising its interim guidance on Mineral and Waste Development Frameworks (MWDFs) to take on board this new policy environment.

The Radioactive Waste Planning Group (RWPG) met in May. A draft note of the meeting has been circulated.

Finally, discussions relevant to Low Level Waste were undertaken at the Integrated Waste Management Topic Overview Group (IWM TOG) held on the 12<sup>th</sup> July. A note of this meeting is provided as part of the NDA Strategy Paper (paper 8).

## **2. Refusal of Keekle Head application**

The planning application for development of a disposal facility for LLW and VLLW at the former open cast mine at Keekle Head in Cumbria has been refused by the Development Control and Regulation Committee (DCRC). The full report to Cumbria County Councils DCRC is available on the NuLeAF website<sup>3</sup>.

## **3. King's Cliffe: Application to the National Infrastructure Directorate**

As noted at the last Steering Group, Augean has applied for the alteration of existing facilities and the construction of new facilities for the recovery and disposal of

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nlwp.net/examination/examination.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/planningpolicy/planningpolicyframework/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.nuleaf.org.uk/nuleaf/DisplayArticle.asp?ID=9719>

hazardous waste and disposal of low level radioactive waste at the East Northants Resource Management Facility (King's Cliffe) in Northamptonshire.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2012 Jonathon Green of the Planning Inspectorate was appointed as the Examining Authority to consider the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for King's Cliffe. The Initial Assessment will consider a range of issues including health (both impact on workers and residents) and the location of the site in relation to sources of waste and the impact on the availability of other sites for disposal of LLW.

The preliminary meeting will take place on the 26<sup>th</sup> July. It is focused on procedure, with the aim of hearing representations about the way the application is to be handled. The procedural timetable will be issued on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August and the whole examination must be completed by the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2013.

#### **4. Working Group on Very Low Level Waste (VLLW) and Low Activity Low Level Waste (LALLW)**

A date for the next meeting of the working group on VLLW/LALLW disposal, involving the NDA, LLWR, NuLeAF and Cumbria County Council has still to be fixed. DECC has now indicated that it wishes to participate in the group and it is hoped that a meeting date can be agreed in the near future.

#### **5. Consultation on Dounreay Low Level Waste disposal**

The Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) has launched a consultation on plans for a Low Level Waste Disposal facility at Dounreay. The consultation will run until the 29<sup>th</sup> August 2012.

SEPA has stated it is 'minded to grant' an authorisation. An Environmental Safety Case has been prepared and will be subject to further iterations as and when consent for the facility is given. More information can be found here<sup>4</sup>.

The new Executive Co-Directors are planning to set up a meeting with SCCORS to discuss co-operative working and will raise this issue and the related concerns of NuLeAF members relating to 'cross-border' waste.

In a related development, it has been announced that NDA has provided funding for a study into road transport improvements in the Dounreay area<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.sepa.org.uk/about\\_us/consultations/dounreay.aspx](http://www.sepa.org.uk/about_us/consultations/dounreay.aspx)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-18771779>