

Date: 20 April 2021

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To: Head of Local Authority Planning Team
Head of Local Authority Emergency Planning Team

Email: ONR-Land.Use.Planning@onr.gov.uk

Our Reference: ONR-EPR-21-047
Unique Number: 2020/91179

Dear Sir/Madam,

Changes to ONR Land Use Planning consultation zones

Further to our letter dated 24 April 2020 in which we outlined planned changes to ONR Land Use Planning consultation zones, I am writing to inform you of some further changes to the consultation zones and that the changes will take effect from the 1st June 2021.

ONR has a non-statutory role when considering the impact of proposed developments on local detailed emergency planning arrangements for 'nuclear sites'¹, and the potential for developments to pose external hazards to sites.

We therefore request local planning authorities to notify us of any application for planning permission within our consultation zones that meets our consultation criteria.

We continue to request consultation for:

- All proposed developments on nuclear sites;
- Proposed developments that meet our consultation criteria within Detailed Emergency Planning Zones (DEPZ) around nuclear sites that are determined in accordance with the Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2019; and
- Proposed developments that meet our consultation criteria within Outer Consultation Zones (OCZ) within which ONR deems development could impact on the operability and viability of the detailed emergency planning arrangements or pose external hazards to sites. OCZ are areas which extend beyond the DEPZ out to a distance from the centre point of the site, where this distance is determined by the nature of the site. For sites without a DEPZ, the OCZ extends outward from the site perimeter fence.

In order to ensure consistency between sites and improve clarity about the developments we request to be consulted upon we have made the following changes:

- Introduced OCZ around all nuclear sites as historically not all sites have had an OCZ;
- Introduced a requirement to be consulted on certain types of significant developments² within a new 12km consultation zone³ around all nuclear sites due to the potential for such developments to pose external hazards to sites; and
- Introduced the requirement to be consulted on planning applications for special cases. These represent developments that either introduce a new hazard or change the existing external hazards posed to nuclear sites, irrespective of distance from nuclear sites⁴. These special

¹ 'nuclear sites' are defined as GB licensed nuclear sites, authorised nuclear sites and nuclear warship sites.

² Significant developments are major hazard facilities, i.e. those included within the scope of the Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations 2015, the Offshore Installations Regulations 2015, the Offshore Installations (Safety Case) Regulations 2005, or the Pipelines Safety Regulations 1996. Significant developments also include military installations storing munitions.

³ During 2020 ONR commissioned a research project to underpin its consultation distances from an external hazards perspective. ONR had originally planned a 30km consultation zone for significant developments, but the project found that by introducing a 'special case' consultation requirement the appropriate consultation distance for significant developments would be reduced to 12km. The research project report is published at www.onr.org.uk/land-use-planning.htm.

⁴ More information on significant developments around nuclear sites and special cases are available in the ONR research project report to underpin consultation distances from an external hazards perspective which is published at www.onr.org.uk/land-use-planning.htm.



cases include new or expanded airports⁵, other launch facilities, large reservoirs⁶ military airspace use (e.g. for training), military practice/bombing/firing ranges, and activities that involve hydraulic fracturing of rock, as this can induce seismicity. Example developments involving hydraulic fracturing of rock that may come forward in the UK in the near future are geothermal power, and the injection of CO₂ as part of carbon capture and storage. (Note: the current UK moratorium on fracking for shale gas means that further developments for this purpose are now frozen).

ONR's updated Land Use Planning policy, procedure and consultation criteria are published online at www.onr.org.uk/land-use-planning.htm⁷.

I would be grateful if you could ensure that all relevant personnel are aware of the above changes and the need to consult ONR in line with the above effective from 1 June 2021.

Should you have any further queries with regard to these matters, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Eamonn Guilfoyle
ONR Specialist Inspector

Distribution

Graeme Thomas

ONR

⁵ Airport developments (including civil airports, military airports and airfields) that: (a) qualify as NSIPs under the Planning Act 2018 or (b) would enable a material increase in the number of aircraft movements; or material changes in aircraft types and sizes, in the nature of aircraft operations (passenger, cargo, military etc), in the number and orientation of runways, or in flight paths.

⁶ 'Large reservoirs' are currently defined as a reservoir with a maximum impounded capacity of 25,000 m³ (25 megalitres) or greater.

⁷ Consultation zones, distances and special cases are based on current information and will be reviewed by ONR on a periodic basis.