

Note of the online meeting of the Radioactive Waste Planning Group, 10.00 – 12.30, 21st July 2021.

Present:

Steve Smith	Copeland Borough Council
Rachel Whaley	Cumbria County Council
Charlie Pope	Devon County Council
Beth Rance	East Suffolk Council
Terry Burns	Essex County Council
Dave Illsley	Folkestone & Hythe District Council
Tim Bailey	Folkestone & Hythe District Council
Linda Townsend	Gloucestershire County Council
Charlotte Rushmere	Maldon District Council
Phil Watson	North Northamptonshire Council
Jo Marley	Sedgemoor District Council
Louise Martin	Somerset County Council
John Burton	Somerset West & Taunton Council
Gillian Ellis-King	South Gloucestershire Council
Cameron Clow	Suffolk County Council

Philip Matthews	Nuleaf
Catherine Draper	Nuleaf

Speakers:

Frank Wigley	NDA
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Observer:

Clare Hennessey	EDF
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1. Welcome and apologies

1.1 PM welcomed members, noting that it was the first RWPG meeting for Jo Manley of Sedgemoor District Council and Tim Bailey of Folkestone & Hythe District Council. Apologies were received from Sarah Hardy, Dorset Council and Sion Roberts, Snowdonia National Park Authority.

2. Note of the last meeting

2.1 The Note of the meeting held on 30th April 2021 was approved as a true record and will be posted on the Nuleaf website.

Action: CD

3. Matters arising

3.1 With regard to NDA's Local Economic and Social Impact Strategy, Andrew van der Lem was due to leave NDA this week. PM was speaking to Neil Smith, a member of Andrew's team on 22nd July and would ask what arrangements were being made to fill Andrew's position. [Note: Frank Wigley subsequently confirmed that Andrew van der Lem's position was being advertised].

3.2 All other matters were either in-hand or had been dealt with.

4. Update from NDA on the development of a land optimisation programme, Frank Wigley

4.1 PM welcome Frank Wigley to the meeting. Mr Wigley advised the meeting that he was in the process of setting up a land optimisation programme for the NDA. He was keen to receive comments on his presentation and would welcome engagement here and outside of this meeting.

4.2 Mr Wigley gave a short presentation (the slides are available on Nuleaf's website). Key points were:

- The aim is to move away from operational and reactive working to a more visionary, strategic and driven way of working.
- With the move from Care and Maintenance to rolling decommissioning, work is underway to define what the new approach will mean in terms of work programme for Magnox.
- NDA is undertaking a survey of its sites to define what its holdings are, and their state.
- Of the 4500 hectares NDA owns, only 20% is licenced for nuclear use. Of the remainder some is required for delivering the mission, some has been earmarked for nuclear new build, and some for other developments to support local projects. NDA is working to provide the metrics to inform decision making on land use.
- NDA is also looking at natural capital and how moving sites to interim and end state can be of benefit.

- NDA aims for its work programme to support the UK plc agenda, both in terms of levelling up, and in helping achieve Net Zero Carbon.
- The funding challenges are being considered. NDA will be asked to make cuts to expenditure, but it wishes to avoid a focus on high hazard reduction impeding progress elsewhere within the estate. It is working with BEIS to earmark funds to help release land.
- NDA is looking at how it could transfer some of its assets such as buildings outside the fence.
- NDA is looking at setting up a steering group which would: consolidate and agree NDA consensus; work with local authorities; and lobby BEIS to secure approval of proposed activity.
- Trawsfynydd is the lead and learn site for rolling decommissioning.
- The aim is to complete this work within 3 years, and this will be carried out by FW supported by the NDA business case team who will take a deep dive into individual sites and what impacts the site activities will have elsewhere within the NDA estate.
- This work programme combined with the Magnox rolling decommissioning plan will enable NDA to outline its programme of work across the estate, indicate what planning applications will be made and when.

The meeting opened up to questions.

4.3: Q: There seems to be a variance between the approach you have outlined and that being taken by Magnox's planning consultants. Local authorities are endeavouring to draft policies which will support your decommissioning needs, but this is not helped by the piecemeal approach taken by Magnox to planning applications where there is no coordination or consideration of the big picture. Nuleaf has promoted a masterplan approach but that seems to raise concerns with Magnox.

A: We are still unsure what Magnox require to support decommissioning and the purpose of this programme is to ascertain that. We want to avoid ring-fencing the whole site.

4.4 Q: How much of the 80% of land owned by NDA which is not subject to a nuclear license is contaminated by nuclear activities.

A: We have carried out work looking at this subject and the information has been mapped and is in a GIS database. Although I cannot give you exact figures at the moment it is only a very small portion of the land. There is more land which has been contaminated as a result of industrial activity during construction such as diesel spills. We understand where the issues are with land contamination and that will enable us to address issues in order to release land and move the fence. We hope to take this to regulators this summer and then will release the information to Nuleaf.

4.5 *Q: Does this work programme replace the site interim and end state discussion and what do you see as the end product of the process?*

A: The work programme will be informed by and inform the site end state process, but it will not replace it. Although planning applications will come from the sites, NDA corporate centre will set the strategy and take an overview of operations across the estate looking for performance improvement. We see the benefit of using specialist skills within the organisation for the benefit of the whole. The output of the work programme will be a schedule which sets out what will happen, where and when, noting issues which could affect delivery. It will set out what land will become available and when, and to what use it could be put. This will be alongside other information such as changes required to environmental permits and what planning permissions would be required.

4.6 *Q: Is the work programme you've described for existing Magnox sites only, and what will happen when the AGR stations are transferred to NDA for decommissioning?*

A: The programme is for the existing NDA land holding. However we are already starting to consider the impact of the AGR stations and what the transfer to NDA will mean to us. We will initially look at the Magnox sites, but also look at the impact of extending the site boundary to include the AGR stations, and then at stations where NDA does not currently have a presence such as Hartlepool.

4.7 DI noted that Folkestone and Hythe District Council had recently been approached by Magnox with an invitation to discuss forthcoming planning applications. He asked whether it would be appropriate for someone from Mr Wigley's team to sit in on the discussion. FW said he, or a delegate, would be happy to attend that meeting.

4.8 PM thanked Mr Wigley for his presentation.

5. Update on GDF siting process

5.1 PM introduced the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting and which provided updates on the GDF siting process and RWM, CoRWM activities and international engagement.

5.2 It was noted that RWM had opened the tender process for seismic testing in in-shore areas.

5.3 The meeting discussed the decision by Cumbria County Council not to participate in the Copeland Working Group. The Group can continue without the council's engagement, and there will be a further opportunity for the council to participate when the Community Siting Partnership is created. Both Copeland Area Committee

and Allerdale Area Committee at Cumbria County Council had been interested in joining the Working Group, however this had not been approved by the Leader of the council nor the Cabinet.

5.4 An announcement is expected on July 22nd regarding the local government reorganisation in Cumbria and Somerset.

6. Update on developments in radioactive waste management

6.1 PM introduced the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting and which provided updates on: NDA (including Strategy 4), BEIS, ONR, MoD, fusion, the decommissioning of EDF stations, presentation to Waste Technical Advisory Board (WTAB), and a new Nuleaf Briefing Paper on socio-economics, sustainability and climate change.

6.2 Nuleaf had circulated draft guidance from BEIS on the on-site disposal of radioactive waste. The guidance was not yet published as it would be revised following the consultation on UK radioactive waste policy later this year.

6.3 It was noted that the timing of the announcement regarding the creation of a single waste division within OneNDA had not been well received in Copeland. The merger of LLWR Ltd and RWM Ltd can be interpreted to imply that the GDF will be sited on the LLWR site. A meeting with David Peattie and other senior staff at NDA is being held on Thursday 22nd July to discuss this issue.

6.4 In response to a question regarding the waste produced by fusion and how it differs from fission, PM advised the meeting that the amount of waste produced was lower and remained radioactive over a much shorter period. Also, when the reaction was shut down the nuclear reaction ceased.

7. Nuleaf sustainability policy

7.1 A draft copy of the proposed sustainability policy had been circulated to all members. Nuleaf would welcome comments and the final policy will be submitted to the Steering Group at the meeting on 15th September for approval.

8. Local site updates

East Suffolk: The Sizewell C DCO examination was almost half-way through and should be completed by October.

Somerset West and Taunton: No update other than they will be part of the reorganisation of Somerset councils, the announcement being due on 22nd July.

Suffolk: Nothing further to add.

Devon: Nothing further to add.

Maldon: The site nomination for STEP fusion by Belport Ltd at Bradwell-on-Sea has been taken forward for technical assessment by UKAEA. The nomination forms part of a long list that doesn't imply that the site should or could be developed, but it nevertheless is somewhat controversial being located within the footprint of Bradwell B.

Essex: Bradwell is in Care & Maintenance, but ILW is still being imported into the store. Strict conditions were imposed on the planning permission and Magnox are required to submit quarterly reports on the receipts to the store. TB commented that he would welcome more joined up working between decommissioning organisations regarding site decommissioning and the waste arisings from this. More clarity on the long term picture would also be welcomed.

Somerset: A meeting of the SSG was held just after the announcement about decommissioning the AGR fleet. Permission was not given to share the slides, but LM's understanding was the EDF will defuel the site as part of a 12 year decommissioning programme, the site will then go into safe store or Care & Maintenance for a period until final site clearance is carried out. It is unclear how this approach will mesh with the new rolling decommissioning programme for Magnox sites.

Gloucestershire: Notification is now being received when waste from Oldbury station is received into the ILW store at Berkeley.

Copeland: Anecdotal comments had been made in a national forum that the lack of the right people with the right skills is having a negative impact on pace of decommissioning, though no evidence had been produced to support this. The council is going into the process of transition planning and looking at how it will address nuclear issues to which ever form of local government is selected by the Secretary of State. Sellafield Ltd has published its Annual Report and Accounts.

Cumbria: Nothing further to add.

Folkestone & Hythe: Magnox has written to the council inviting them to take part in discussions on anticipated planning permission applications. The hearing on the review of the Core Strategy is coming to an end and the Inspector has indicated that

subject to modifications the plan will be found sound. One of the modifications required is in reference to an objection from NDA regarding Dungeness A. Dave Illsley advised the group that he would be leaving the council at the end of August. PM thanked Dave for his input to Nuleaf meetings over the years and wished him well.

South Gloucestershire: Submissions had been made on the local plan by representatives for Magnox. The submission had been marked confidential which would have meant they could not be discussed at the hearing. These have now been submitted under normal terms.

North Northamptonshire: Northamptonshire County Council has now been split into two unitary authorities: North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire. North Northants is carrying out minerals and waste duties for both authorities. The DCO application for extension at King's Cliffe is expected shortly. Augean has carried out considerable pre-application engagement. The council will be asked to submit a local impact statement in due course. The extension is for 2 million tonnes of hazardous and LLW. Final restoration of the site is now expected in 2046. A community fund of £5 per tonne will remain in place.

9. Date of next meeting

9.1 The next meeting will be held online on 28th October 2021, 10.00 – 12.30. It was noted that this falls within half-term. Nuleaf agreed that it would review the date and has subsequently moved the meeting to Wednesday 3rd November.

10. Any other business

10.1 PM asked the meeting for its views on whether the application for a near-surface disposal facility for intermediate level waste (ILW) should be treated as an NSIP or made under the Town and Country Planning Act. The general consensus was that the NSIP process would be appropriate, especially given the sensitive nature of such an application.

10.2 A letter had been received by Gloucestershire County Council from ONR advising them of their approach to land use planning consultation zones. From discussion it transpired that none of the other planning officers had received this correspondence. Nuleaf would ask ONR how this letter had been circulated and to whom.

Action: Nuleaf

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12.25.

Action List

21st July 2021			
Item	Action	By	Outcome
2.1	Post agreed Note of the Meeting held 30 th April 2021 on Nuleaf website	CD	
10.2	Contact ONR regarding consultation zones letter	CD	Email sent 22 July.
29th July 2020			
8.2	Contact NDA re Local Economic & Social Impact Strategy and implications of Covid-19 crisis on local community	PM	Andrew van der Lem has now left NDA and has not yet been replaced.