

## **Note of meeting held 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022, online, between Nuleaf RWPG and NDA to discuss planning issues.**

### **Attendance**

Heather Morrison	Copeland Borough Council
Rachel Whaley	Cumbria County Council
Beth Rance	East Suffolk Council
Naomi Goold	East Suffolk Council
Linda Marsh	Folkestone & Hythe District Council
Linda Townsend	Gloucestershire County Council
Charlotte Rushmere	Maldon District Council
Jo Marley	Sedgemoor District Council
Colin Arnold	Somerset County Council
Louise Martin	Somerset County Council
John Burton	Somerset West & Taunton Council
Cameron Clow	Suffolk County Council
Ross Walker	Suffolk County Council
Philip Matthews	Nuleaf (Chair)
Catherine Draper	Nuleaf
Alan Houghton	Alan Houghton Planning
Frank Wigley	NDA
Paul Nicholson	Sellafield Ltd

### **1. Introductions and purpose of meeting**

1.1 PM welcomed everyone and gave an overview of Nuleaf's previous engagement with NDA's planning group (NIGLQ-P: Nuclear Industry Group for Land Quality – Planning). Meeting participants then introduced themselves.

### **2. Purpose of NIGLQ-P, membership, meeting format**

2.1 FW gave an overview of the group and its role. It comprises members from each of the NDA Group companies and NDA teams. Its purpose is to share and understand where there are mutual issues or opportunities/challenges across the

NDA estate. The group has expanded to include representatives from AWE and EDF.

2.2 The group also provides a mentoring network to its members – it contains some early career professions – and provides a forum where they can receive support and peer guidance.

2.3 The group hopes to engage with Nuleaf members and have wider technical discussions.

2.4 PN noted the nuclear decommissioning programme was important for the UK and that the planning system wasn't always easy to negotiate. He hoped the group would help bring a level of consistency of approach across sites, and identify where there were sensitivities which needed to be addressed.

2.5 AH advised that the group met three times each year and the next scheduled meeting would take place in October 2022. However, this did not preclude the group meeting at other times. Sub-groups had been established to discuss Masterplanning and Permitted Development Rights (PDR). The group aimed to improve the way NDA worked collaboratively and collectively.

2.6 It was noted that the group did not currently publish a note of its meeting, but in due course it would use the NDA Hub<sup>1</sup>. It is hoped that the format of future NIGLQ-P meetings will comprise a closed 'safe space' session followed by an open session on lessons learnt and open discussions to which external stakeholders could be invited. NDA hopes to open up membership of its sub-groups to Nuleaf members.

### **3. Subject areas of NIGLQ-P interest**

#### ***Masterplanning***

3.1 PN: We believe the desire of local authorities to have a masterplan for sites relates to having a degree of predictability. We have produced a masterplan for one site in Scotland and will do one for a site in Wales. Problems lie around the effect of emerging technologies and impact these can have on decommissioning proposals as they emerge over time. It would help us if we could understand the degree of detail a local authority would need in a masterplan to support their development plan.

3.2 FW: NDA is working to establish the end state is for each site, and how that will fit in with socio-economic aspirations and needs. This year we will gather baseline information and develop a high-level end state, looking at how that fits in with land

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<sup>1</sup> The NDA Hub is not publicly accessible, so documents would not be available to Nuleaf members.

use, and what the timeline for the decommissioning programme will be. We would then be able to speak to local authorities about how that fitted with their plans, and look at what we can do better, or more e.g. natural habitat creation, socio-economics and mitigation of negative impacts of decommissioning. NDA would also look to identify potential challenges and blockers which may cause proposed plans to change.

3.3 Although in discussions NDA is using the term masterplan, it may in fact be a strategy or framework and a number of different document vehicles. It would help NDA to know what information would be helpful to local authorities, and also set out what information an operator can provide given the changing nature of decommissioning.

3.4 A Nuleaf member noted that it is important that NDA uses planning terms when engaging with planners. The Masterplan which was developed for Winfrith with Elly Joyce of Magnox and with the Environment Agency is an overarching planning document with special layout, and which can be used to structure land use planning. It has gone through Local Plan examination, and therefore can be used as a starting point for the development of other masterplans. A masterplan should give a holistic view of the site. Planners understand that they are iterative documents and that there will be revisions. Each site will require a masterplan, though it may be possible for a high-level set of principles to be set out which set out the approach to the development of a masterplan. The approach from NDA to be part of the discussion was welcomed.

3.5 It was noted that a co-ordinated approach needed to be taken at sites where an AGR station would be moving to decommissioning.

### ***Permitted development rights (PDRs) and their interpretation***

5.1 NDA would like to see some standardisation of the application of PDRs across local authorities. It would like to understand what the impact of this would mean for local authorities – free up resources, provide confidence – or would it give an additional burden.

5.2 Prior to the introduction of any regulations regarding the application of PDRs, it may be possible that the wider group could agree some interpretation rules. The more a standardised approach is taken, the more risks on both sides can be managed, delays avoided and costs reduced. Nuleaf members noted that discussions on PDRs could prove time consuming for planners and would welcome a national discussion and consideration of nuclear PDRs to engender a common approach.

#### **4. Purpose of Nuleaf/LPA, membership, meeting format**

4.1 PM gave an overview of Nuleaf and its work. It is a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association of England and Wales. Its most active members are those that host NDA sites and other infrastructure. It is able to provide input from local authorities across the NDA estate. Although its membership is restricted to English and Welsh local authorities, it has, on occasion, extended participation in its meetings to representatives from Scottish authorities. Nuleaf seeks to be the voice of its members to the nuclear industry and UK government, and also to build the capacity of its members. It engages with BEIS in developing policy and guidance on radioactive waste management and decommissioning issues.

4.2 The Radioactive Waste Planning Group meets, on average, once a quarter, though ad-hoc online meetings can be held as required.

#### **5. Ongoing meetings – arrangements, frequency, format**

5.1 Looking ahead, NDA would consider expanding the scope of the next meeting of NIGLQ-P. It will need to identify the topics for discussion at the meeting and liaise with Nuleaf to see if there is mutual interest.

5.2 Other topics for engagement between the two groups could be Planning Performance Agreements and biodiversity and net gain (on and off-site). NDA would welcome Nuleaf members identifying any other topics which would be of interest.

##### ***Action: Nuleaf***

5.3 Nuleaf noted that a discussion on community benefits would be welcomed, especially if waste is being disposed at a site, and therefore the community is being asked to host a waste disposal scheme on behalf of the nation.

5.4 Nuleaf secretariat and NDA will engage regarding date of next meeting in second half of October.

##### ***Action: Nuleaf/NDA***

#### **Action List**

Item	Action	By	Outcome
5.2	Identify other topics for engagement with NIGLQ-P	Nuleaf	
5.4	Liaise re date for next NIGLQ-P meeting	Nuleaf/NDA	