

## ITEM 6: UPDATE ON GEOLOGICAL DISPOSAL FACILITY SITING PROCESS

Report to the RWPG, 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025

This report provides an update on recent developments related to the process for identifying a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF). It covers:

- GDF Community Partnerships;
- Nuclear Waste Services (NWS) Update; and
- International News.

### 1. Introduction

1.1 The UK Government's policy on **Working with Communities – implementing geological disposal** was published in December 2018<sup>1</sup>, with the equivalent policy for Wales published in January 2019<sup>2</sup>. The **National Policy Statement**, governing the planning aspects of the GDF in England, was published in July 2019<sup>3</sup>.

### 2. GDF Community Partnerships

2.1 Following the decision by **Lincolnshire County Council's (LCC) Executive Board** to withdraw from the Theddlethorpe Community Partnership (CP), the Partnership has now closed.

David Fannin, Chair of the Community Partnership, commented: *'The GDF Community Partnership has enabled three-way interaction between the GDF developer, community, and local councils. It has listened to people across the Search Area, raised many questions and has heard a mix of opinions.*

*We would have welcomed the opportunity to discuss and consider the issues and benefits further but, ultimately, it came down to a choice between ending uncertainty now verses exploring the suitability of the area as the potential location for a GDF and longer-term benefits of investment in the area.*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/implementing-geological-disposal-working-with-communities-long-term-management-of-higher-activity-radioactive-waste>

<sup>2</sup> <https://gov.wales/geological-disposal-higher-activity-radioactive-waste-guidance-communities>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-policy-statement-for-geological-disposal-infrastructure>

*We understand the desire to remove uncertainty and respect the Council's decision to withdraw and thank them for their involvement in the process. The Partnership members are pleased to have allocated a further £1 million as the third year of Community Investment Funding ends. This brings the total to £3 million funding secured to support local community projects and groups, and we are proud of the difference this has made to them and the area.'*

Nuleaf will continue to support the involvement of Cumberland Council in the two remaining Community Partnerships in west Cumbria; and any other local authority considering engaging in the process.

**2.2 Mid Copeland GDF Community Partnership** has published a blog and video from Prof. Lucy Bailey, the Chief of Disposal Safety at NWS focussing on the safety case. It can be viewed here<sup>4</sup>.

### **3. Nuclear Waste Services (NWS) Update**

**3.1 Seth Kybird**, the newly appointed Interim CEO of Nuclear Waste Services has published an article making the case for geological disposal. It can be read here<sup>5</sup>. Nuleaf's Chair and Executive Director will be meeting Seth later this month to discuss the GDF siting process and the role of local government.

### **4. International news**

**4.1 Canada's Nuclear Waste Management Organisation (NWMO)** is seeking public input ahead on the anticipated launch in 2028 of a site selection process for a second radioactive waste repository, with this facility to be used for the disposal of intermediate and non-fuel high level radioactive waste. The repository could also potentially hold spent nuclear fuel from future nuclear reactors. More information can be found here<sup>6</sup>.

This new siting process and facility is separate from the Canadian GDF for spent fuel, with that facility being developed in the Township of Ignace/Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation in northern Ontario.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://midcopeland.workinginpartnership.org.uk/blog-from-nuclear-waste-services-designing-for-long-term-safety-of-the-most-hazardous-radioactive-waste/>

<sup>5</sup> [The Future of Radioactive Waste Disposal in the UK: Building Towards Geological Disposal - Nuclear Waste Services](#)

<sup>6</sup> [New projects](#)