

BERKELEY NUCLEAR LICENSED SITE

SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT

THE TORTWORTH COURT HOTEL ON THURSDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2015

PRESENT:

Cllr Mrs P Wride (Chair)	-	Ham and Stone Parish Council
Mr F Baker	-	NFU
Cllr Dr J Cordwell	-	Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr J Stanton	-	Berkeley Town Council
Cllr G Vaughan Lewis	-	Alkington Parish Council
Cllr B Tipper	-	Gloucestershire County Council
Mr D Wride	-	Lower Severn Drainage Board

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr D Edwards	-	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Mr P Dickenson	-	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Dr R MacGregor	-	Environment Agency
Mr M Lynden	-	Oldbury on Severn SSG Chairman
Mr B Bridgewater	-	Magnox Ltd
Ms K Duane	-	Magnox Ltd
Ms B Grey	-	Magnox Ltd
Mr P Ireland	-	Magnox Ltd
Mr P Knollmeyer	-	Magnox Ltd
Mr A Neal	-	Magnox Ltd
Mr M J Davis (Secretary)		

INTRODUCTION

- 1 Cllr Mrs Wride welcomed all those present to this special meeting of the Berkeley Nuclear Licensed Site Stakeholder Group. She explained that this meeting had been convened to allow detailed discussion on waste strategy issues currently under consideration within Magnox as outlined at the recent meeting. She extended a particular welcome to Mr Knollmeyer, Ms Grey and Mr Edwards.
- 2 Cllr Mrs Wride emphasised her understanding that the potential changes in waste strategy currently under consideration were proposals only at this stage and might be subject to change. She felt that consultations over the previous two years had helped to form part of the NDA strategy. She said that in those consultations this SSG had accepted the principle of accommodating some waste from Oldbury in the Berkeley facilities; it had been understood however that this was subject to compliance with relevant planning procedures and at no time had it been expected that the Site would have another store or take waste from further afield.

- 3 Cllr Mrs Wride said that one of her main concerns was that no changes in approach should harm the viability of the South Gloucestershire and Stroud College development on the site. She read out the following statement made on behalf the college:

“Magnox has been talking to SGS College for a number of months about the possibility of extending the storage facilities at Berkeley Site and we are generally supportive of the proposals. Berkeley Site already stores intermediate level waste and it makes logistical and financial sense to safely store small amounts of additional waste on the site. We have every confidence in the inspectorates responsible for considering this proposed change and Magnox, who will implement any changes to the highest possible safety, environmental and technical standards. SGS, Magnox and NDA are committed to working collaboratively together to ensure the success of the proposed new college at the Berkeley Centre.”

PLENARY DISCUSSION

- 4 Mr Knollmeyer emphasised that the potential changes in waste strategy were proposals only at this stage – they had not been approved or received the necessary consents. He said that the proposals had been raised during the PBO bidding process; NDA and the regulators had raised no objections in principle but had pointed out that the necessary cases had to be made.
- 5 Mr Knollmeyer believed that there was a good case to be made for the proposals. High standards of safety and environmental protection would be maintained, there would be fewer containers transferred to Berkeley from Oldbury, and there would be cost savings. He said that if there were disadvantages from a safety, environmental or cost point of view then the changes in approach would not be made.
- 6 Mr Knollmeyer acknowledged that the proposals might be changed during the process of obtaining necessary regulatory approvals. He felt however that it was better to discuss the proposals openly with stakeholders at this stage rather than seek regulatory approvals first and then present the changes as a fait accompli.
- 7 In reply to a question from Mr Lynden, Mr Knollmeyer said that the proposed changes in approach would potentially affect all sites. The impact at individual sites would depend on the volumes of waste to be dealt with and the stages reached in processing those wastes and in the provision of storage facilities.
- 8 In reply to a further question from Mr Lynden, Mr Knollmeyer emphasised the value of using a package container with all the necessary approvals for use elsewhere. He said that the 6 m³ concrete box which was proposed for use was very similar to the design used previously for waste from the Windscale AGR.
- 9 Mr Bridgewater reminded members of the studies on waste optimisation and storage undertaken over the past two years and the conclusion reached in relation to the proposed transfer of some waste from Oldbury to Berkeley. He said it was still believed that this was appropriate from safety, environmental

and cost points of view. He said it had previously been thought that this would involve the transfer of some 140 packages from Oldbury to Berkeley. There was always some uncertainty in relation to the number of packages required but following a review and using the larger concrete containers it was now believed that only 72 packages would be required for the transfers between the sites.

- 10 In reply to a question from Cllr Stanton, Mr Bridgewater said it was envisaged that some sites would continue to use DCIC containers while others would change to 6 m³ concrete boxes. Because of the large volume of waste at Berkeley there were advantages in changing to the use of concrete boxes due to the cost saving compared with using DCICs. For sites with smaller volumes of waste it was envisaged that they might continue to use DCIC containers.
- 11 Mr Bridgewater said it was now proposed that the waste to be transferred from Oldbury would include some wastes which originated from the Dungeness A and Sizewell A sites. This waste had arisen from IONSIV filter cartridges which had been used in the ponds at Oldbury, Dungeness and Sizewell. It had been proposed that the packaging of these wastes from the three sites should be undertaken at Oldbury rather than establishing separate processing facilities at each site. The waste from Dungeness and Sizewell would fill 11 packages representing 1% of the total volume to be stored at Berkeley.
- 12 In relation to the timing of a change to the use of concrete boxes at Berkeley, Mr Bridgewater said it was important that progress with hazard reduction was maintained and it was envisaged that the use of DCICs would continue pending completion of the necessary approval process for the use of concrete boxes.
- 13 Mr Bridgewater said that in preparing plans for the use of 6 m³ concrete boxes at Berkeley it was currently assumed that this would require the construction of a new storage facility. That assumption was made because at the moment it was not possible to demonstrate a case for the use of concrete boxes with the existing storage facility and its crane. Rigorous efforts were being made to produce a case justifying the use of the ISF, possibly after modification, with concrete box containers. This work had not yet been done and plans therefore conservatively allowed for construction of a new store. It was hoped that this work would be completed during the current calendar year, allowing decisions to be taken on storage arrangements.
- 14 Mr Baker said he had always understood that only waste from Berkeley was to be stored on the Berkeley site. He drew attention to potential public concerns and reductions in the value of local properties if Berkeley was to be seen as a waste dump for other sites. Mr Bridgewater acknowledged the importance of public perceptions and the need to make clear the scale and context of waste packages brought to the site.
- 15 Mr Baker said he was aware of three previous attempts to define arrangements for waste storage on the Berkeley Site and asked why these changes had taken place. Mr Bridgewater said that progress would continue to be made with the existing approved approach but advantages had been identified in the proposed changes.

- 16 In reply to a further question from Mr Baker, Mr Bridgwater said that the current proposals would involve fewer transport movements than had been envisaged in the proposals discussed last year but more movements than would take place if each site stored its own waste. Mr Baker pointed out that all traffic to the site had to travel through Berkeley town and suggested that the situation could be improved by construction of a bypass.
- 17 Cllr Vaughan Lewis questioned whether the only benefits of the current proposals compared with the arrangements discussed last year were due to cost savings. He said that in his experience of the nuclear industry in the past safety and environmental issues were always given priority over cost savings. Mr Bridgwater said that concrete boxes provided self-shielding in the same way as DCICs. He said that since the time when the use of DCICs had been proposed, the 6 m³ concrete box design had been developed for use at other sites and their use represented significant cost savings.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

- 18 The meeting divided into groups for discussions between members, company representatives and regulators. A summary of issues raised and information provided during those group sessions is attached as an appendix to the minutes.

CLOSING REMARKS

- 19 Cllr Mrs Wright thanked members for their participation in what she believed had been a useful discussion. She said that there would be an opportunity for further discussion at the next meeting of this Group in April and suggested that members should get in touch if in the meantime they identified any issues which required explanation.

13 February 2015