

**BERKELEY NUCLEAR LICENSED SITE
SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP**

**SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS ARISING AT THE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 31 JANUARY 2018**

- Mr Mike Heaton, Site Closure Director, reported on activities at the Site. He said that high standards of safety had been maintained and the Site had been compliant with all regulatory requirements.
- Mr Heaton said that following the formal approval of the ONR there was no longer a requirement to have a plan for dealing with any off-site effects of an event on the site. Contingency plan arrangements for dealing with events on site had been implemented.
- Mr Heaton outlined progress with the various decommissioning projects on the site. He said that progress with the construction of an encapsulation plant had been delayed due to recent weather. Progress had been maintained with the retrieval and packaging of wastes - to date some 100 tonnes of waste had been retrieved from Vault 2 for storage in the Interim Storage Facility. Equipment was to be installed over the coming months for the retrieval of waste from Vault 3. Local residents would be kept informed of the dates for delivery of large plant items.
- Mr Heaton said that to commemorate the 55th anniversary of the official opening of Berkeley power station various items of memorabilia were being collected together. He asked members to share any such items which they might have.
- Reports were received from the Office for Nuclear Regulation and the Environment Agency on the results of their regulatory and inspection activities at the Berkeley site. Mr N Shaw, the ONR Site Inspector, referred to helpful discussions with members of Site staff on planned programmes of work and to discussions with Site Safety Representatives; he said that those representatives had demonstrated very positive attitudes towards safety.
- Mr Bill Hamilton presented a report on behalf of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority. He provided an update on the various investigations into the competition process used by NDA to award a contract for the management of the Magnox and RSRL sites. He reported on a proposed stakeholder event to be held on the Berkeley campus of the South Gloucestershire and Stroud College in July. He said that this event, which would be attended by stakeholders from all over the country, would provide an opportunity to demonstrate the support given to local organisations and activities.
- Mr Hamilton outlined consideration being given within NDA to a possible change in strategy which would allow work on reactor dismantlement and final site clearance to commence much earlier than currently envisaged. He emphasised that no decision had been taken on such a change in strategy at this stage.
- Mr Geoff Wheeler provided information on the Berkeley Research Group which was compiling a history of the Berkeley Nuclear Laboratories.

BERKELEY NUCLEAR LICENSED SITE

SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE BERKELEY ARMS HOTEL ON WEDNESDAY 31 JANUARY 2018

PRESENT:

Cllr Mrs P Wride (Chair)	-	Ham and Stone Parish Council
Mr S Andrews	-	Staff Representative
Rev R Avery		
Mr J Beckett	-	Stroud District Council
Cllr J Cordwell	-	Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr C Davies	-	Stinchcombe Parish Council
Mr J Stanton	-	Co-opted member
Cllr B Tipper	-	Gloucestershire County Council
Mr K Warren	-	Lower Severn Drainage Board

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr W Hamilton	-	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Mr N Shaw	-	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Mr M Lynden	-	Oldbury SSG Chairman
Mr M Heaton	-	Site Closure Director
Ms G Coombs	-	Magnox
Ms A Lenehan	-	Magnox
Mr J Bibby	-	Magnox
Mr A Slaney	-	South Gloucestershire and Stroud College
Mr P Barrett	-	South Gloucestershire and Stroud College
Mr D Evans		
Mr D Wride		
Mr G Wheeler		
Mr J Darlaston		
Mr T Hellen		
Mr J Darlaston		
Mr C Hall		
Mr M J Davis (Secretary)		

INTRODUCTION

- 1 Cllr Mrs Wride welcomed all those present to this meeting of the Berkeley Nuclear Licensed Site Stakeholder Group. She pointed out that it was necessary to postpone the presentation of an update from Horizon Nuclear Power, which had been included on the agenda, as the persons who were to have given the presentation were not able to be present. It was hoped to include this item on the agenda for the April meeting.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2 Apologies for absence were received from Mr A Davis, Mr D Drew MP, Cllr Mrs H Molyneux, Mrs E Ashton and Cllr G Craig.
- 3 Cllr Mrs Wride welcomed Mr Warren who was attending as representative of the Lower Severn Drainage Board to succeed Mr D Wride who had retired from that Board. She also welcomed Cllr C Davies as representative of Stinchcombe Parish Council to succeed Mr J Sant. She pointed out that Mrs Ashton had resigned from Berkeley Town Council and Mr Vaughan-Lewis had resigned from Alkington Parish Council and that new representatives from those councils would be nominated in due course.
- 4 Cllr Mrs Wride welcomed Ms Lenihan and Mr Bibby, Magnox graduates who were attending as observers. She welcomed Mr G Wheeler of the Berkeley Research Group who was attending to give a presentation.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

(a) Accuracy

- 5 The minutes of the meeting of this Group held on 12 July 2017 were approved as an accurate record.

(b) Matters arising

- 6 There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

PUBLIC FORUM

- 7 Cllr Mrs Wride invited members of the public to raise any issues which might not arise in discussion later in the meeting. No such issues were raised.

BERKELEY SITE CLOSURE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

- 8 Mr Heaton presented a report on current activities at the Berkeley Site, drawing particular attention to the following:
 - (i) This site had maintained its high standards of safety and there had been no accidents or injuries to report.
 - (ii) Following the formal approval of the ONR there was no longer a requirement to have an off-site emergency plan and contingency plan arrangements for dealing with events on site had been implemented.
 - (iii) There had been delays in the construction of the concrete encapsulation plant due to recent weather conditions.

- (iv) Retrieval of intermediate level wastes and packaging them in DCIC containers was continuing. There would be a change to the use of concrete boxes to encapsulate wastes during 2019; it was anticipated that there would be final residual waste in the vaults which would be packaged in DCIC containers.
- (v) Approximately 100 tonnes of radioactive waste had been removed from Vault 2, packaged in 62 DCIC containers and transferred to the Interim Storage Facility. The waste retrieval equipment was currently out of operation but would be returned to service during the coming week.
- (vi) Following successful off-site trials, equipment was being installed on site to enable cans containing waste within Vault 3 to be pierced within the vault. This would safely and effectively depressurise any cans which might have become pressurised during storage. Further equipment for the retrieval of wastes from Vault 3 would be delivered and installed over the coming months. Local residents would be kept informed of dates for delivery of these plant modules. Retrievals of waste from Vault 3 were planned to commence in 2019.
- (vii) Memorabilia were being collected to commemorate the 55th anniversary of the official opening of Berkeley power station on 5 April 1963. Anyone with any items of film, any photographs or documents of interest was invited to contact Ms Coombs.

9 In reply to a question from Cllr Davies, Mr Heaton explained the change from ductile cast iron containers to concrete boxes for storage of wastes. The concrete boxes were to be made off-site, the waste contents flooded with grout and a concrete lid manufactured on-site. This arrangement was similar to that used previously for decommissioning of the Windscale AGR reactor but the current arrangement had not yet received regulatory approval.

10 In reply to a question from Cllr Tipper, Mr Heaton said that the safety case regarding the retrieval of canned wastes from Vault 3 was being reviewed. He said that any gases which might be released by piercing cans which might have become pressurised during storage would be monitored and discharged via an authorised discharge route. Safety case considerations would include the possible need for blanketing these operations with an inert gas.

UPDATE FROM THE OFFICE FOR NUCLEAR REGULATION

11 Mr Shaw, the newly-appointed ONR Site Inspector for the Site, reported on his inspection activities, drawing particular attention to the following:

- (i) Inspection visits had given satisfactory results. Mr Shaw said that the language used in ONR reports to SSGs reflected the formal legal regulatory relationship but often did not do justice to the many good features which were observed. He referred to good practices in relation to

the reporting and investigation of incidents and the sharing of any learning resulting from those investigations.

- (ii) Mr Shaw had met with Safety Representatives on the Site and had been impressed with their very positive attitudes towards the site leadership and their engagement with safety initiatives on the Site. He said that positive attitudes amongst Safety Representatives were a good indication of the Site's culture.
- (iii) In carrying out his regulatory activities, Mr Shaw recognised the need for regulation to be proportionate to the current status of the site as decommissioning progressed.

UPDATE FROM NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING AUTHORITY

- 16 Mr Hamilton provided an update on issues of current interest, drawing particular attention to the following:
- (i) More than 50% of the fuel had been removed from the Wylfa reactors.
 - (ii) Access had been made to the Pile Fuel Cladding Silo at Sellafield to allow the removal of the waste.
 - (iii) A tall chimney on a reprocessing building at the Sellafield site was being demolished.
 - (iv) Jammed fuel elements were being removed from the Fast Breeder Reactor at Dounreay.
 - (v) The National Audit Office had published a report on the NDA's competition process for the Magnox contract and the Holliday inquiry set up by the Secretary of State had also published interim findings. Actions in response to these reports were already being taken within NDA. Proposals for future arrangements for the management of Magnox sites were being considered by the Secretary of State.
 - (vi) Following the success of last year's stakeholder summit, a further similar event was being planned. Mr Hamilton hoped that this would be held at the South Gloucestershire and Stroud College campus on the Berkeley Site in July. He hoped that all members of local SSG's would be able to attend and said that the event would provide an opportunity to demonstrate support given by the Sites to local organisations and activities.
- 17 Referring to the reported programme of consultation on the selection of a site for a geological disposal facility, Mr Beckett asked whether geological aspects had eliminated some sites from further consideration. Mr Hamilton said that geological conditions in some areas were not suitable but that it would be possible to build a facility in a wide range of different geological conditions; the

facility would be very carefully designed and the designs could take account of a wide range of geological environments.

- 18 Mr Lynden said that he, together with the Chairs of other SSGs would be meeting with members of the Holliday inquiry team. He felt that the NDA had been presented with a very difficult task in implementing the competition for the management of the Magnox sites; he hoped that future arrangements would not repeat the competition process.

REACTOR DISMANTLING

- 19 Mr Hamilton referred to consideration being given within NDA to a possible change of strategy which would allow reactor dismantlement to be brought forward. He said that current plans were based upon a quiescent period of care and maintenance lasting some 85 years before final dismantlement of reactor structures. This approach benefited from the decay of radioactivity which would allow easier access for dismantling work and reduce the volume of materials to be treated as radioactive waste. Mr Hamilton said that since the current approach had been established there had been major developments in techniques which might facilitate remote dismantling work; this and all other aspects would be taken into account in the current review of strategy.
- 20 Mr Hamilton said that the NDA's strategy document approved by government had included a commitment to review the timing and sequencing of reactor dismantlement. If the current review of strategy demonstrated that a case could be made for bringing forward dismantlement then the priorities for undertaking this work at the various sites would be examined. He said that it would not be feasible to carry out a programme of dismantling all reactors simultaneously but if a case for accelerated dismantling was made he envisaged that a programme might start at between one and three sites with subsequent sites learning from their experience.
- 21 Mr Hamilton emphasised that no decision had been taken on a change in strategy and that any change in approach would require government approval. He said that in considering this possible change in strategy NDA was keen to understand the views of stakeholders.
- 22 During discussion members' comments included:
- (i) Mr Andrews suggested that there might be advantages in including the AGRs together with Magnox reactors in a single programme.
 - (ii) Cllr Tipper emphasised the fundamental importance of safety of the public. In relation to the possible sequence of accelerated reactor dismantling work he felt that they were sometimes advantages in being first but also potential advantages in coming later in the programme to benefit from lessons learned elsewhere.

- (iii) Mr Beckett suggested that there might be advantages in carrying out site clearance first on those sites which did not have an interim storage facility.
- (iv) Cllr Davies said that the current strategy was based upon radioactive decay making reactor dismantlement safer and cheaper. He recognised the improvements in remote handling techniques since this strategy had been devised but said that there would be further, perhaps more significant, developments in those techniques over the next 85 years. He felt that financial considerations would support the work being deferred. Mr Hamilton said that the Treasury was aware of the consideration being given to a possible change in strategy.

23 Cllr Mrs Wride invited members to give further consideration to this possible change in strategy and forward any further thoughts to herself or Ms Coombs.

BERKELEY RESEARCH GROUP

- 24 Mr Wheeler outlined the work of the Berkeley Research Group which was aiming to produce a documented history of the Berkeley Nuclear Laboratories from their opening in May 1961. He outlined briefly the role of the Laboratories in supporting the CEGB's nuclear programmes, the nature of the facilities and the work undertaken on the site. He said that the group, which was comprised of former employees, was helping to provide information for the South Gloucestershire and Stroud College on earlier activities within the facilities they now used and materials for tutorials for current and future students
- 25 Mr Wheeler invited members to provide him with any information, or details of any contacts who might have further information, on past activities at the Laboratories. His contact address is geof.wheeler@btinternet.com.

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

- 26 Cllr Mrs Wride referred to a meeting she was to attend with the NDA and the Chairs of other SSGs during the coming month; she would report back on this at the next meeting of this Group.
- 27 Cllr Mrs Wride said that the NDA had requested SSGs to review their constitutions and consider the need for any changes in membership. She said that details of the current constitution and membership would be circulated to members with the minutes of this meeting. She asked members to consider this further in preparation for discussions at the next meeting.
- 28 Cllr Mrs Wride drew members' attention to the forthcoming consultations on the siting of a geological disposal facility. Details of the consultations had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 29 Mr Slaney provided members with an update on the progress of the South Gloucestershire and Stroud College on the Berkeley site and the various projects currently in hand.

DATE TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

- 30 It was noted that the next meeting of this Group was scheduled to be held on Wednesday, 25 April 2018. The venue for this meeting would be confirmed in due course.

MJD

5 February 2018