

**BERKELEY AND OLDBURY ON SEVERN SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUPS  
SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS ARISING AT THE MEETING HELD AT  
SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE AND STROUD COLLEGE, BERKELEY, ON  
WEDNESDAY 18 MAY 2022**

- Mr John Stanton and Mr Malcolm Lynden welcomed members to the meeting which was being held on a face-to-face basis for the first time since the start of the coronavirus pandemic.
- Mr Mike Heaton, Site Director, reported on recent activities at the Oldbury and Berkeley Sites. He said that precautions against the spread of coronavirus were being eased; had been no evidence of on-site transmission of the infection.
- Areas of grass on the Sites were not being mowed during May, as they would normally have been, in order to encourage biodiversity.
- An individual at Oldbury whilst operating a concertina door had received injuries which had necessitated a hospital visit for stitches; he had returned to work the next day. Restrictions had been placed on the use of all such doors until engineering surveys had been completed.
- The modification of equipment at Berkeley to facilitate use of the new type of concrete box container was nearing completion. During the morning prior to this meeting the first load of radioactive waste had been placed within a concrete box container. This was the first use of such a box within Magnox. Retrievals from other vaults and the shielded area would resume later in the year.
- Changes in accommodation arrangements at the Oldbury Site were being made to allow electrical isolation of an area so that the turbine hall complex could be demolished. The building which had housed equipment connecting the station to the national grid was being prepared for demolition.
- All of the skips previously used for the storage of spent fuel in the Oldbury cooling ponds had been cut up to reduce the size of the waste for storage. Samples had been taken for laboratory analysis in order to identify how these waste materials should be treated in the future.
- Reports were provided by representatives of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, the Office for Nuclear Regulation and the Environment Agency. Mr Simon Napper of the NDA provided information to address concerns raised previously in relation to the use of the Berkeley railhead
- Mr Andy Bates of Business West provided an update on progress of the Severn Edge nomination for hosting fusion energy facilities at the Oldbury and Berkeley sites. It was noted that a decision on the choice of the site for this development was due to be taken before the end of the current year.
- Mr Stanton and Mr Lynden reported on their recent activities on behalf of these Groups.

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE  
AND STROUD COLLEGE, BERKELEY, ON WEDNESDAY 18 MAY 2022**

**PRESENT:**

Mr M Lynden	-	Oldbury on Severn Parish Council
Mr J Stanton	-	Co-opted member
Cllr Mrs E Ashton	-	Berkeley Town Council
Cllr I Bamfield	-	Berkeley Town Council
Cllr S Chandler JP	-	Hamfallow Parish Council
Cllr C Davies	-	Stinchcombe Parish Council
Mr S Henderson	-	Gloucester Harbour Trustees
Cllr R Holmes	-	Lydney Town Council
Cllr K Sullivan	-	Oldbury Parish Council
Mr B Roberts	-	Thornbury Chamber of Commerce
Cllr J Warren	-	Aust Parish Council
Cllr Ms V Williams	-	Alveston Parish Council

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr S Napper	-	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Mr P Jennesson	-	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Ms S Gallagher	-	Environment Agency
Ms R Cleverley	-	Environment Agency
Ms G Ellis-King	-	South Gloucestershire Council
Mr A Bates	-	Western Gateway
Mr M Heaton	-	Oldbury and Berkeley Sites Director
Ms G Coombs	-	Magnox Communications
Ms J Young	-	Magnox
Mr G Wheeler		
Mr T Hellen		
Mr M J Davis (Secretary)		

**WELCOME**

- 1 Mr Lynden and Mr Stanton welcomed everyone to this joint meeting of the Berkeley and Oldbury on Severn Sites' Stakeholder Groups.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 2 Apologies for absence were received from Ms A Paine, Cllr G Langdon, Dr J Cordwell, Mr K Warren, Cllr B Tipper, Mrs B French, Ms A Presdee, Dr J McHugh, Mr G Vaughan Lewis, Mrs J Hellen, Cllr Mrs H Molyneux, Mr A Mitchell and Cllr M Riddle

## **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

### **(a) Accuracy**

- 3 The minutes of the joint meeting of the Berkeley and Oldbury SSGs held on 26 January 2022 were approved as an accurate record.

### **(b) Matters arising**

- 4 There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting, but it was noted that issues raised by Cllr Chandler in relation to the Berkeley railhead would be covered under the NDA report.

## **SITE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- 5 Mr Heaton reported on recent activities at the Oldbury and Berkeley Sites, drawing particular attention to the following:
- (i) Precautions relating to the spread of coronavirus were being eased. There was currently one case of Covid on the Sites but there had been no evidence of on-site transmission of the infection.
  - (ii) Sites had adopted a “no mow” policy on open areas of land during May to encourage biodiversity.
  - (iii) An individual at Oldbury had sustained injuries to a finger while opening a concertina door. The injuries had required stitches, but the individual had returned to work on the following day. Restrictions had been placed on the use of such doors until engineering surveys had been completed.
  - (iv) Targets for the current year at Berkeley anticipated the retrieval of some 48.5 tonnes of intermediate level waste from the vaults with 17 packages entering the storage facility. Modification of the retrieval equipment to facilitate the use of concrete box containers was nearing completion.
  - (v) During the morning before this meeting radioactive waste had been loaded into a 6 cubic metre concrete box at Berkeley for the first time. This was the first such operation within Magnox.
  - (vi) Modifications to allow retrievals from Vault 3 at Berkeley would be completed later this year and retrievals from the shielded area would restart in the autumn.
  - (vii) It was anticipated that a contract would be placed during the current year for the demolition of the Berkeley blower houses.
  - (viii) Accommodation moves were taking place at Oldbury to allow electrical isolation of an area of the site which would facilitate the

demolition of the turbine hall complex. The building which had housed the equipment connecting the station to the National Grid had been prepared for demolition with large quantities of asbestos waste being removed.

- (ix) Equipment for the retrieval of fuel element debris from the Oldbury waste vaults was being designed.
- (x) All of the former Oldbury pond skips had been cut up to reduce the volume of this waste for storage and samples had been taken for laboratory analysis. The characterisation of these waste materials would be completed by the end of March 2023.
- (xi) The transfer of waste packages from Oldbury to Berkeley was continuing. Packages contained pond filtration equipment, miscellaneous contaminated items, sludges and resins.

6 Ms Coombs gave details of socio-economic grants given to local organisations during the past year. She said that for the future the limit for grants which could be approved locally had been increased to £2000. She invited members to get in touch with her if they were aware of any local causes which might qualify for such a grant.

7 In reply to a question from Mr Stanton, Mr Heaton said that the packages which were planned to be deposited in the storage facility during the current year could be either concrete boxes or ductile cast iron containers. The choice of container would depend upon the nature of the waste to be packaged.

8 Replying to a question from Cllr Chandler, Mr Heaton said that the concrete box which was currently being filled with waste would be taken to the encapsulation plant where the waste would be grouted, and a concrete lid cast over the top before being taken to the interim storage facility.

9 In reply to a question from Cllr Bamfield, Mr Heaton said that after removal of the wastes the vaults would be empty, and decisions would be taken at that time as to how the remaining voids should be dealt with. The programme of waste retrievals was expected to continue for a further eight years.

10 Mr Wheeler asked about plans for the future of the shielded area. Mr Heaton said that after removal of the wastes the facilities would undergo a post operational clean out and would be ready for demolition. Decisions would be taken at that stage as to whether or not that area should remain part of the nuclear licenced site.

## **NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING AUTHORITY**

11 Mr Napper reported on current NDA issues, drawing attention to the following:

- (i) They NDA's offices were now open, but a balanced mix of office and home working would probably be the arrangement for the future.

- (ii) The NDA had published its Business Plan for the coming three years and its Sustainability Strategy.
  - (iii) A supply chain event which would attract large numbers of potential suppliers was to be held in Telford on 21 July. A nuclear industry association conference would be held on the previous day.
  - (iv) Magnox fuel reprocessing at Sellafield was to come to an end in July. This reprocessing had been taking place since 1964 and a total of almost 55,000 tonnes of spent fuel had been processed in that time; this was more than half the total of fuel reprocessed in the world.
  - (v) Three Community Partnerships in West Cumbria were discussing issues relating to the potential location of a geological waste disposal facility and work was being undertaken to provide information on the local geology. A working group in Theddlethorpe, Lincolnshire had identified a potential local search area.
- 12 In reply to a question from Cllr Davies, Mr Napper said that some of the geological surveys in West Cumbria were taking place offshore as in some cases geological conditions could be different under the sea.
- 13 Cllr Bamfield said that he had been disappointed that the NDA's sustainability report had not included more proposals relating to tree planting.
- 14 Mr Stanton asked about future financial arrangements if the funds which had been accumulated for AGR decommissioning were inadequate to cover the total costs. Mr Napper said that at a meeting of the Public Accounts Committee it had been acknowledged by a representative of BEIS that if there was such a shortfall then public funds would be provided to cover the work.
- 15 It was noted that members had been provided with information from NDA on the points raised by Cllr Chandler at the previous meeting about regulatory responsibility for and monitoring of the Berkeley railhead. Cllr Chandler acknowledged receipt of that information but said he still had concerns whether radiological monitoring at the railhead was adequate to detect any potential accidental deposit of radioactive contamination. Mr Napper undertook to provide further information on the frequency and scope of radiological monitoring undertaken at the railhead.
- 16 Cllr Chandler said he was also concerned by the note in the information provided to members which said that other bodies and other waste may use the railhead in the future; he was concerned that radioactive waste from other nuclear sites might be routed through Berkeley. Mr Napper said that generally the nuclear sites each had their own railhead, and it was difficult to foresee any circumstances in which traffic from other sites would be routed through Berkeley rather than using their own local facilities. Mr Heaton said that in the future when a geological disposal facility had been established it might be appropriate to transfer wastes from the interim storage facility to the GDF via the rail system.

## **OFFICE FOR NUCLEAR REGULATION**

- 17 Mr Jenneson introduced himself as the newly appointed Site Inspector for Berkeley and Oldbury and he reported on ONR's regulatory and inspection activities in relation to the Sites. Reports had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting.
- 18 Mr Jenneson acknowledged that coronavirus precautions on sites were now being relaxed and he felt that the Sites had managed adequately the threats posed by the pandemic. He said that from his inspections there were no matters of nuclear or conventional safety concern which he wished to bring to members' attention.

## **ENVIRONMENT AGENCY**

- 19 Ms Gallagher and Ms Cleverley reported on the Environment Agency's regulatory activities in relation to the Berkeley and Oldbury Sites. Reports had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. During discussion the following points were noted:
- (i) Inspections to date had provided satisfactory results and future inspections were planned. There were no non-compliances with permitted limits or requirements and discharges of radioactivity from the sites were very low compared with permitted levels.
  - (ii) The Agency was pleased to see the Sites' focus and actions on sustainability issues.
  - (iii) An Agency specialist on flood prevention would be available to come to a meeting of this group if required.

## **SEVERN EDGE UPDATE**

- 20 Mr. Bates provided an update on issues relating to the Severn Edge nomination for hosting the UK's first fusion power plant facility at the Oldbury and Berkeley Sites. The following points were noted during discussion:
- (i) The Severn Edge nomination to host the project on the Oldbury and Berkeley sites was one of five competing bids which were still being considered. A recommendation on the preferred nomination would be made by UKAEA in the coming months and a government decision was due to be made before the end of the year. There was good political leadership for the project
  - (ii) The Severn Edge nomination had received strong community support and with the support of local industries and the availability of local skills was well placed to move forward if selected. There was strong support for the nomination on both sides of the Severn estuary.

- (iii) Although the recently published Government ‘British energy security strategy’ reconfirms Oldbury as one of 8 ‘designated nuclear sites’ in relation to nuclear new build, the Planning Inspectorate has recently confirmed that Horizon’s proposal to develop a large scale new nuclear power station at Oldbury has been withdrawn. The website where further information can be found is [Oldbury New Nuclear Power Station | National Infrastructure Planning \(planninginspectorate.gov.uk\)](https://www.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/oldbury-new-nuclear-power-station/)

#### **CHAIR’S UPDATE**

- 21 Mr Stanton and Mr Lynden reported on recent activities on behalf of the Group. Mr Lynden said that he intended to spend time in Portugal in the future but maintain his local connections; he intended to continue to act as Chair of the Oldbury Group for the remainder of his term of office; members supported him in this approach.

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 22 No business

#### **DATE TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 23 It was noted that the next meeting of this Group was scheduled to be held on 27 July 2022.