

**BERKELEY AND OLDBURY ON SEVERN SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUPS  
SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS ARISING AT THE MEETING HELD  
VIA ZOOM ON WEDNESDAY 26 JANUARY 2022**

- Mr John Stanton welcomed members to the meeting which was again being held via the Zoom digital platform.
- Mr Mike Heaton, Site Director, reported on recent activities at the Oldbury and Berkeley Sites. He said that there had been no significant safety events at either Site. Emergency services investigation of a suspect package which had been delivered to the Berkeley Site had shown it to be safe. Two events identified by staff at the Sites had been reported to ONR.
- The waste encapsulation plant at Berkeley was in the final stages of commissioning and prefabricated 6 m<sup>3</sup> concrete boxes were being delivered to the Site. It was hoped that the filling of these boxes with waste would commence during the current financial year.
- Good progress was being maintained at Oldbury with the removal of plant and equipment from the former cooling ponds area. Electrical supplies to the former turbine hall were being isolated so that the buildings could be demolished. Demolition of the building which housed 132 KV electrical equipment was due to take place in May.
- Freedom of Information requests relating to flooding and flood defences had been dealt with. Members expressed interest in flood defence issues, and it was noted that local councils had established a group to pursue these matters.
- Reports were provided by representatives of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, the Office for Nuclear Regulation and the Environment Agency. Mr Lynden drew attention to local public interest in NDA's proposals for future use of the Oldbury Power Station silt lagoons. Cllr Chandler sought assurances in relation to the monitoring and regulation of activities at 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 local drop-in centres would be set up in the coming weeks to seek public engagement with the project.
- Mr Stanton reported on his recent activities as chairman of this Group.

**BERKELEY AND OLDBURY ON SEVERN SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUPS  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM  
ON WEDNESDAY 26 JANUARY 2022**

**PRESENT:**

Mr J Stanton (in the chair)	-	Co-opted member
Cllr Mrs E Ashton	-	Berkeley Town Council
Cllr S Chandler JP	-	Hamfallow Parish Council
Cllr C Davies	-	Stinchcombe Parish Council
Mr M Lynden	-	Oldbury on Severn Parish Council
Cllr C Parkinson	-	Thornbury Town Council
Cllr M Riddle	-	South Gloucestershire Council
Mr B Roberts	-	Thornbury Chamber of Commerce
Cllr B Tipper	-	Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr J Warren	-	Aust Parish Council

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr S Napper	-	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Mr S Morgan	-	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Ms S Gallagher	-	Environment Agency
Ms R Cleverley	-	Environment Agency
Mr R Drake	-	Gloucestershire County Council
Ms G Ellis-King	-	South Gloucestershire Council
Mr J Cooke	-	South Gloucestershire Council
Mr R Layfield	-	Stroud District Council
Mr B Cleere	-	Stroud District Council
Mr A Bates	-	Business West
Mr J Townes	-	Western Gateway
Mr W Smith	-	Western Gateway
Ms S Chang	-	Gloucestershire Constabulary
Mr K Warren	-	Lower Severn Internal Drainage Board
Ms J Maloney	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Ms A Presdee	-	Gloucestershire County Council
Mr M Heaton	-	Oldbury and Berkeley Sites Director
Ms G Coombs	-	Magnox Communications
Mr B Hamilton	-	Magnox Communications Director
Ms S Postans	-	UKAEA
Ms J Callander	-	Magnox, SSG Secretariat
Ms S Williams	-	SGS Berkeley Green UTC
Students Berkeley Green UTC	-	SGS Berkeley Green UTC
Helen Smith	-	Marick Communications
Rebecca Chesworth	-	Marick Communications
Ms B French	-	STAND
Dr J McHugh		
Mr G Vaughan Lewis		
Mr G Wheeler	-	Berkeley Historical Group
Dr J Cordwell		
Mr P Hazlewood		
Mr T Hellen		
Mr M J Davis (Secretary)		

## **WELCOME**

- 1 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 Cllr G Langdon, Rev S Godsell, Ms V Heselton, Mr J Mills, Ms R Frett and Cllr Mrs H Molyneux.

## **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

### **(a) Accuracy**

- 3 The minutes of the joint meeting of the Berkeley and Oldbury SSGs held on 28 July 2021 were approved as an accurate record subject to the following:

### **Environment Agency inspection of environmental monitoring programme arrangements (para 16(vi) refers)**

- 4 It was agreed that the final sentence of this paragraph should be amended to read:

“Ms Cleverley referred to the possible need for improvement of operational instructions relating to the collection of environmental samples.”

### **Bid for hosting a STEP facility (paras 22-24 refer)**

- 5 Mr Vaughan Lewis said that at the previous meeting he had made the following statement which he wished to be recorded:

"I look forward to the development of the STEP fusion project, depending on its success it could well be a major factor in the fight against climate change. Good luck with the project and finding a suitable location.

I have doubts if the Severn estuary is a suitable location for the project as a number of individuals are rightfully concerned about the flooding issues in the area.

Will an attempt be made by this lobby to hold the Step project responsible for flood defences as they are with Magnox which would make the project more expensive than it should be?"

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

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

## **SITE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- 7 Mr Heaton reported on recent activities at the Oldbury and Berkeley Sites, drawing particular attention to the following:

- (i) There had been no significant safety or environmental events at either Site since the time of the previous meeting. Precautions relating to the spread of coronavirus remained in place at the Sites.
- (ii) Planned security arrangements had been implemented at Berkeley following the receipt of a suspect package. Investigations by the emergency services had shown it to be safe but the event had been regarded as a good test of the company's arrangements.
- (iii) During routine inspections, Site staff at Oldbury had identified that pond skip crane striker plates had been inadvertently removed during de-planting works. This had been reported to the ONR and the attention of other Sites had been drawn to the need for clear identification of safety significant items in areas which were being de-planted.
- (iv) The failure of a brake on a transporter used for conveying waste packages across the Berkeley Site had been reported to the ONR.
- (v) Freedom of Information requests regarding issues relating to flooding and flood defences had been dealt with.
- (vi) The primary focus at Berkeley remained the programme of work associated with the retrieval and packaging of waste from the storage vaults. The MILWEP waste encapsulation plant was in the final stages of commissioning; 6 m<sup>3</sup> concrete boxes were being delivered to the Site and it was planned that operations to fill these boxes would start during the current financial year.
- (vii) At Oldbury the current focus was upon de-planting the former cooling ponds area and making preparations for demolition of the former turbine hall. Good progress was being made with the cutting up of pond skips to reduce their volume as waste for storage. Work in the turbine hall included the isolation of electrical supplies to the area. Preparations were being made for the demolition of the 132kv equipment building which contained asbestos; it was currently planned that the building would be demolished in May 2022.
- (viii) The company continued to make donations within its socio-economic support scheme and surplus office equipment from the Oldbury Technical Centre was being donated to local causes and charities.

6 Ms French declared her interest in issues associated with flooding and sea defences; she had been seeking information on these matters for some years. Mr Heaton said that the plants on both of the Sites had been built up above the previous ground levels and procedures for dealing with any flooding risk were well established. Cllr Riddle described the flood protection measures which he understood had been considered by Horizon in relation to its proposed development and referred to a group which had been established by local councils to campaign for improvements to flood defences irrespective of future power plant development. Ms Ellis-King said that information was available on issues relating to sea defences which had been addressed by Horizon; in relation to the potential fusion plant development, she said that flood defence

requirements were being addressed and there would be consultations in due course. Mr Lynden emphasised the importance of this issue to local residents. Ms Cleverley said that a representative of the Environment Agency would be available to attend meetings of the local authority group if required. Mr Stanton suggested that these issues were more appropriate for consideration by the local authority group than by this stakeholder group. He suggested that Ms French might get in touch with the local authority flood defence group.

- 7 In reply to a question from Mr Stanton, Mr Heaton confirmed that a substantial cover was placed on the 6 m<sup>3</sup> concrete boxes after they had been filled and before they were transported across the site to the encapsulation plant where a permanent lid was cast in place. In reply to a question from Mr Lynden, Mr Heaton said that facilities for retrieving, and handling wastes at Oldbury would be contained within the reactor-controlled area.

## **NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING AUTHORITY**

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

- (i) With the general easing of coronavirus restrictions, NDA staff would have greater access to offices, but a mix of home and office working would continue where appropriate. Consideration was to be given to a gradual return to more face-to-face external engagement with stakeholders.
- (ii) NDA had published a Sustainability Report, a Mission Progress Report, and a draft Business Plan. The period of consultation on the draft Business Plan was due to end shortly
- (iii) The Nuclear Waste Services organisation, which drew together all aspects of NDA's waste business was shortly to come into operation.
- (iv) A supply chain event which had been due to be held by NDA in February had been cancelled due to coronavirus precautions and had been rescheduled for 21 July.
- (v) A community partnership had been established in Allerdale. This was the third community partnership in Cumbria and would allow discussions with the local community about hosting a geological disposal facility.
- (vi) The Berkeley railhead, which had been the subject of discussions at the previous meeting, was regulated by the Office for Nuclear Regulation via its Civil Nuclear Security and Safeguards Division. NDA's Nuclear Transport Services were responsible for the transport of nuclear waste packages, but the containers were sealed by Magnox before despatch and were never opened during transport between Sites. There was a security inspection of the railhead before any waste movements.
- (vii) Consideration was being given to the feasibility of reducing water drainage from the Oldbury silt lagoon area in order to establish and maintain a wetland habitat.

- 10 Mr Lynden expressed concern at the possibility of the Oldbury silt lagoon area being used to create wetlands. He felt that the use of this land should be considered in relation to general discussions on flood defence arrangements and felt that these matters should be discussed with the local community. Mr Napper said that options were being considered at this stage and there would be engagement with the local community in due course.
- 11 Cllr Chandler said that local concerns about the use of the Berkeley railhead were related to radiological safety rather than security issues. He said that he would like information on the arrangements for ensuring radiological safety at the railhead and would like to know the nature of the waste which was transported from Harwell. Ms Coombes said that the use of the Berkeley railhead for transferring waste from Harwell was well established and had been referred to in meetings of this group over many years. Cllr Chandler undertook to discuss these matters further with Mr Napper outside the meeting.

## **OFFICE FOR NUCLEAR REGULATION**

- 12 Mr Morgan reported on ONR's regulatory and inspection activities in relation to the Berkeley and Oldbury Sites. Reports had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Mr Morgan drew particular attention to the following:
- (i) Inspections undertaken at the Sites since the previous meeting included fire safety, security, arrangements for dealing with incidents on site and the witnessing of a demonstration exercise at Berkeley. The inspections had all had provided satisfactory results.
  - (ii) Regulatory advice had been issued to Oldbury in relation to the unauthorised modification of safety system interlocks on the pond cranes as referred to earlier by Mr Heaton. ONR had noted the actions of site staff in identifying the error, reporting it, carrying out investigations and taking remedial action.
- 13 In reply to a question from Mr Stanton, Mr Morgan said that ONR sought to ensure that any regulatory action taken was proportionate to the circumstances of the event. The regulatory advice issued to Oldbury in relation to the pond cranes was at the lower end of the scale of possible regulatory action.

## **ENVIRONMENT AGENCY**

- 14 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) Agency staff were continuing to work largely from home in accordance with government guidelines; regulatory activities had been maintained using remote working and site visits where appropriate.
  - (ii) Recent inspections had included low level waste management arrangements at Berkeley and asset management arrangements at

Oldbury; inspections had given satisfactory results. Plans were in place for further inspections during the coming months.

- (iii) Discharges of radioactivity from the Sites were very low compared with permitted discharge limits. There had been no changes to permits since the previous meeting.
- (iv) A report on radioactivity in food and the environment produced by the EA in conjunction with the Food Standards Agency had been issued since the previous meeting. The results of the Agencies' monitoring were consistent with the results of the Sites' own monitoring. The assessed maximum potential dose to a member of the public in the vicinity of these Sites remained at less than 5 $\mu$ Sv (microSieverts) per year; this was less than 0.5% of the relevant limit.
- (v) The Sites' proposals for changes to the environmental management programme were considered to be proportionate and reasonable having regard to the current state of decommissioning.

### **SEVERN EDGE UPDATE**

15 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) Government had published its fusion power strategy for the UK. There was clearly committed political leadership.
- (ii) The nomination had received strong local support from the community, and industry and academia were well placed to meet the requirements of the project which was now one of the last five nominations being considered. The UK Atomic Energy Authority was carrying out its detailed assessments of the various competing nominations. A decision on the final choice of a site to host the facility was expected to be taken at the end of the current year.
- (iii) The nomination of Ratcliffe on Soar as a potential host site had been withdrawn and had been replaced by West Burton.
- (iv) A series of drop-in centres to provide opportunities for engagement with local communities were planned to be held in Oldbury, Berkeley and Thornbury. The UKAEA was organising webinars for public and stakeholder engagement. A Severn Edge webpage would be accessible shortly. Mr Bates undertook to provide members with details of these events; they were also to be publicised widely on both sides of the Severn.

16 Mr Stanton thanked Mr Bates for the update. He expressed members' support for the nomination and was confident that members would provide further help with any lobbying which might be considered appropriate.

## **CHAIR'S UPDATE**

- 17 Mr Stanton reported on recent activities on behalf of the Group including meetings with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of other SSGs.

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 18 No business

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

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

MJD

28 January 2022