



Joint Berkeley/Oldbury Site Stakeholder Group

Oldbury Conference Centre, Oldbury Naite, Thornbury, BS35 1RQ

Wednesday 5 February 2025

Meeting starts at 13.00, refreshments served from 1230.

A G E N D A

- | | | |
|-------|-----|--|
| 13.00 | 1. | Welcome |
| 13.05 | 2. | Apologies for absence |
| 13.10 | 3. | Minutes of Meeting held on 11 th September 2024
a) Accuracy
b) Matters arising |
| 13.15 | 4. | Site Director Reports
Berkeley – Mike Heaton (Site Director)
Oldbury – Billy Adcock (Waste and Site Integration Manager) |
| 13.45 | 5. | NRS Update – Bill Hamilton |
| 13.55 | 6. | NDA Update – Alastair Findlay |
| 14.10 | 7. | ONR Reports – Paul Jenneson |
| 14.25 | 8. | Environment Agency Reports – Tracy Braithwaite |
| 14.40 | 9. | NDA – Guest Speaker (Nuclear History at Berkeley and Oldbury)
– Elizabeth Norton |
| 15:00 | 10. | AOB |

After the meeting, you are welcome to visit the NRS trailer that will be parked outside the OCC. The trailer will be visiting the local community between 5th – 14th February. Our community exhibition aims to increase awareness about our sites at Berkeley and Oldbury, highlighting key themes such as safety, sustainability, and our commitment to protecting the communities and local economies that we are part of. This exhibition is an opportunity for local residents to learn about the socio-economic benefits, job opportunities, and skills development associated with our work, while also gaining insight into our efforts towards environmental stewardship.

SSG Meetings 2025 dates:

- 28th May (No ONR report available. Discuss if a meeting is still required)
- 10 September

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
JOINT BERKELEY/OLDBURY SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP (SSG)
HELD AT OLDBURY CONFERENCE CENTRE, OLDBURY NAITE, THORNBURY, BS35 1RQ
WEDNESDAY 11 September 2024**

Attendance/Apologies list

Attendance

Members

John Stanton	Chair, Berkeley
Cllr Steve Chandler JP	Vice Chair, Berkeley
Cllr Matthew Riddle	Chair, Oldbury
Cllr Chris Jennings	Vice Chair, Oldbury
Cllr Chris Bloor	Thornbury Town Council
Cllr Chris Davies	South Gloucestershire
Cllr Maggie Dutton	Stroud District Council
Cllr Hugh Johnson	Tytherington Parish Council
Cllr Dominic Power	Chepstow Town Council
Brian Roberts	Thornbury Chamber of Commerce
Cllr John Crook	Monmouthshire County Council
Cllr Demelza Turner-Wilkes	Stroud District Council

Operators and Officers

John Alderton	Site Director, Oldbury
Tracy Braithwaite	Environment Agency
Stephen Bray	GBN
Emily Ciezarek	Site Integration Manager, Berkeley
Alistair Findlay	NDA
Bill Hamilton	NRS
Paul Jenneson	ONR
John McNamara	GBN
Vicki Simms	NRS
Rebecca Austin	Minute Taker

Members of the public

Peter Barrett	SGS
Diana Gash	STAND
Peter Hazelwood	
Janet Hellen	TRAPP'D
Trevor Hellen	Berkeley Research Group
Bill Otto	STAND
Cllr Turner-Wilkes	Stroud District Councillor'
Geoff Wheeler	Berkeley Research Group
Jon Severs	Officer South Gloucestershire Council
Angela Presdee	Officer Gloucestershire County Council

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Apologies

Barbara French
Elizabeth Norton
Mike Heaton
Cllr Kevin Evans
Cllr Tony Williams
Tony Acton
Cllr Brian Tipper
Peter Reynolds

STAND
NDA
NRS
Oldbury on Severn Parish Council
South Gloucestershire Council
Oldbury Parish Council Nuclear New Build Committee
Gloucestershire County Council
EA

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1. WELCOME

The Chair (John Stanton) opened the meeting. He noted that the meeting in June had been cancelled due to the election. No appropriate date had been found to reschedule prior to 11 September. There had been some issues with booking the SGS college, and it was hoped that the next meeting would be held there.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Barbara French, Elizabeth Norton, Mike Heaton, Kevin Evans, Tony Williams, Tony Acton, Brian Tipper and Peter Reynolds. Emily Ciezarek was standing in for Mike Heaton and Vicki Simms for Sharon Fry. Tracy Braithwaite would provide the Oldbury Environment Agency report on Peter Reynolds' behalf.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2024

A. Accuracy

Brian Roberts noted that he had been erroneously recorded as a member of the public rather than a member of the SSG. The Chair stated that Nick Easby had been incorrectly recorded as Nick Beasley.

B. Matters Arising

The Chair stated that the letter of appreciation to Eirian Vaughn-Lewis referred to at the previous meeting was in hand.

Cllr Matthew Riddle noted that the rationale behind the holding of joint Oldbury and Berkeley SSG meetings had been raised at the previous meeting. Communities located between the sites would be interested in operations at both and joint meetings prevented members having to attend twice. It was also interesting for those at Oldbury to hear the Berkeley perspective, as the Berkeley site was ahead in terms of decommissioning. The Chair concurred.

4. SITE DIRECTOR REPORTS

A. Emily Ciezarek – Site Integration Manager, Berkeley

Emily Ciezarek highlighted that the Berkeley site was no longer in enhanced security measures. The recent out-of-hours security exercise, witnessed by the regulator, had been a success.

Berkeley contributed between 50% and 60% of the company's overall target for intermediate-level waste retrievals. The site also dealt with low-level waste shipments, with a further six shipments planned for the 2024/2025 period. The target for the ISF waste store was 50 tonnes. Cllr Chris Jennings asked how much more needed to be done to reach the target. Emily Ciezarek explained that just under 50% of Vault 2 FED had been emptied and around 50% of Vault 1 FED. Vault 3 had only recently been opened. She approximated a small percentage of the total waste had been cleared as yet. The programme would run until 2032.

Emily Ciezarek added that there were two contracts in place for Blower House: the first to remove metallic waste and conduct asbestos cleaning, and the second to build a waste management facility, where waste would be cleaned, packaged and removed. The facility would be operational in early 2025.

The Chair asked how the Blower House waste would differ from the intermediate-level waste being dealt with elsewhere on the site. Emily Ciezarek explained that Blower House primarily had metallic-type waste. Asbestos contamination also meant that it was characterised differently. Waste would be treated and would go off-site for cleaning at Nuclear Waste Services (NWS). The Chair asked how waste would be transported. Emily Ciezarek said that this was being determined. It was possible that waste would be size-reduced into drums and containers. As waste was processed and brought out, the transport plan would be finalised.

Emily Ciezarek summarised recent sustainability activities at the Berkeley site. A number of apprentices had been recruited from the local area. £1 million was available in soc-ec funding and Berkeley had had 10 requests, totalling just over £20,000.

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Cllr Chris Jennings asked if waste was moved to a national waste centre. Emily Ciezarek explained that waste was currently moved to an interim storage facility on site, until geological disposal facilities were established.

Peter Barrett asked how neighbours were communicated with when security exercises took place. There had been a simulated exercise over the summer and SGS college had not been contacted. Emily Ciezarek said that this had been an oversight. There had been a change in the security team and she would ensure that this was fed back. There was a list of parties the site contacted in the event of a security exercise.

Cllr Chris Davies questioned how much waste product could be loaded onto a 40-tonne truck. Emily Ciezarek explained that waste was currently packed into a concrete box before being loaded onto a truck. The weight of the concrete box would therefore have to be taken into account. She added after the meeting that a concrete box alone weighed 27 tonnes.

B. John Alderton – Oldbury Site Director

John Alderton introduced himself, noting that he had taken up his post in April 2024. The safety team had recently interrogated the data regarding a spate of hand injuries across the organisation in the past 12 to 18 months. While there had been no trends determined, the exercise had stimulated a successful hand safety campaign at the Oldbury site in July.

The C3 ponds de-planting work had concluded. Electrical isolation carried out over a number of weekends had significantly shortened the timeline for the cable cutting project in the Turbine Hall, with more than 1,900 of 2,130 cables cut. Waste projects were in the early stages. Mechanical installation had been completed and site acceptance activities and setting to work had commenced. Once this was finalised, the project would be paused until the advanced vacuum drying system was ready in summer 2026.

Environmental concerns had been taken into account throughout. “For example, an existing concrete slab will be used for the AVDS (Advanced Vacuum Drying System) which will help to significantly reduce vehicles on local roads”. The fuel element debris (FED) project was in its early stages, with radiological and material information sought to inform the future design and build of the main retrieval projects. This work was due for completion around July 2026.

John Alderton highlighted the launch day held at Oldbury in April, where there had been a focus on sustainability. The business case for a bio-processor for food waste had been completed and a purchase would be made in due course. Waste would be used on the site’s wellbeing garden and any surplus offered to local organisations.

James Hennessy was working on the Silt Lagoon 3 project, which was out to contract for design, with a view to implement work in the drier months of 2025. The team was also investigating the possibility of switching off vent plants where appropriate once de-planting work was fully complete. This had the potential to reduce the site’s electricity usage by between 10% and 30%.

The site’s soc-ec funding numbers were presented alongside a number of local initiatives funded in Oldbury in the past. A video of the Oldbury site launch day was played. Another day was planned for 2025.

Brian Roberts thanked John Alderton for his continued support of Thornbury Christmas lights.

Cllr Matthew Riddle asked if the electrical isolation had gone as planned and if there was any further work planned. John Alderton stated that the isolation had been a success. While there were no plans for further electrical isolations at Oldbury, there would be a lessons learned session held, which would be supported by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), with a view to rolling out similar projects across the NRS estate.

The Chair questioned whether there was a need to run vent fans at all if they had been successfully turned off during the electrical isolation. John Alderton clarified that the vents had been shut off only for a short period. The ongoing trial would switch them off for longer timeframes and determine if this was feasible.

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Cllr Chris Jennings noted that there had been a consultation held in Oldbury about the ongoing usage of Lagoon 3. He asked which proposed option had been taken up. John Alderton explained that the site would become wetlands. The civil design work coming up was intended to prevent water leakage. Cllr Chris Jennings asked about the level of water. Hugh Johnson observed that no feedback had been received after the consultation. John Alderton said that he was unsure as to the end state of the site once water leakage was halted. He would find out and circulate further details through Cllr Matthew Riddle.

Geoff Wheeler asked about the recycling of cables and other non-nuclear waste. John Alderton stated that a consideration for the Turbine Hall demolition contract would be the realisation of scrap value.

5. NRS UPDATE – INTRODUCTION TO THINKS INSIGHT

Bill Hamilton explained that NDA had long supported NRS reviewing its 'care and maintenance' strategy to create something site-specific. This required engagement and knowledge-building within the community, of which the Thinks Insight project was part.

Thinks Insight were an independent polling company engaged to speak to ordinary people in the communities surrounding NRS sites about their knowledge of nuclear power and possible future options for their nearest site. Next, there would be deep dives carried out in individual communities. Bill Hamilton would liaise with the respective SSG chairs on this.

A video was played sharing the views of participants from the first round of focus groups and surveys conducted by Thinks Insight. Bill Hamilton noted that the more detailed results circulated were not yet statistically significant at the local level. The survey supported the notion that the UK overall had a positive view of nuclear power.

Geoff Wheeler highlighted that participants had been particularly interested in what might happen to their local site. He recommended that this be seen as a new chapter of the history of nuclear power in the UK. The Chair encouraged attendees to read the detailed statistics provided. Bill Hamilton noted that attendees were welcome to contact NRS with any specific queries.

Cllr Chris Jennings asked which area had been targeted by the survey. Bill Hamilton explained that the first round of surveys had been deliberately general. The upcoming deep dive would likely target a radius of 10 miles around NRS sites.

Trevor Hellen noted the importance of educating the general public on energy as a whole, including consideration of the picture outside of the UK. It would be beneficial to put nuclear power into proper perspective by considering other energy sources, as all had positives and negatives. Bill Hamilton observed that views on renewables, for example, and the broader energy landscape naturally came through during NRS's surveying efforts. However, it was not NRS's place to lead the conversation beyond nuclear power.

Janet Hellen added that, although clean energy was highly desirable, the general public did not understand the costs involved or the unreliability of sun and wind.

Peter Barrett stated that more non-partisan information would be beneficial. This might be an ask that NRS could make of the government. Alistair Findlay noted that the Climate Change Committee gave government advice on the energy mix. Peter Barrett suggested that such bodies must engage more with the public. Awareness was low.

6. NDA UPDATE

Alistair Findlay reported that the new Minister of State for the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), Lord Hunt, had worked on nuclear under the past Labour government and understood the NDA mission. He had visited Sellafield in recent months.

The newly appointed chair of the NDA board had previously been chair at NWS. The upcoming NDA summit would provide an opportunity for the organisation to engage with its stakeholders. SSG reviews were ongoing, with an update meeting held in July 2024. The outcome would

be shared with SSG chairs shortly, and the annual stakeholder survey would be circulated in due course.

The government had published a new decommissioning policy in April, the first for almost 20 years, presenting a unified policy across the UK and tasking the NDA with considering intermediate-level waste stores. The NDA's next five-year strategy would be published in 2026, with consultation due to start in 2025. A National Audit Office report on the NDA would be published towards the end of October 2024, with a Public Accounts Committee session expected in January 2025.

Bill Otto urged the NDA to take into account the views of the new intake of south Wales MPs who had a keen interest in Oldbury and Berkeley, such as Matt Bishop MP. Alistair Findlay stated that Matt Bishop MP would be added to the existing list of stakeholders with whom the NDA interacted.

The Chair asked if the NDA had a specific engagement programme for MPs. Alistair Findlay explained that a new member of staff had been brought on board specifically to focus on political engagement and understanding, although, as a public body, the NDA did not lobby. For example, an MPs dinner was held every year. Bill Hamilton highlighted that the new Berkeley and Oldbury MPs would be visiting the sites in November.

7. ONR REPORTS

Paul Jenneson explained that the recent CNI visit to Berkeley had been a routine meeting with the NRS CEO and not related to any issues at Berkeley. ONR reports would be provided twice yearly going forward. Site managers provided regular updates on any live issues and the ONR email conveyed any Oldbury or Berkeley-related topics to Paul Jenneson directly.

The Oldbury de-cabling work had been a positive example of collaboration between the NRS, ONR and site staff on a new and novel approach outside of established practice. NRS had worked with the regulator from the start to manage risk. A recent inspection on FED had been positive with high-quality safety submissions. There had been no issues found since the SSG had last met.

The Berkeley site had moved back into routine measures. There had been good work done on the safety case for stacking concrete boxes in the ISF, with no overall issues noted since the last SSG meeting.

Bill Otto asked if the ONR had any knowledge of the gaseous release of C14 and beta particulate at the Berkeley site. Paul Jenneson explained that he was responsible for the Health and Safety at Work Act and anything related to the nuclear licence. Environmental impact and off-site concerns were under the remit of the Environment Agency (EA). Tracy Braithwaite noted that she and Paul Jenneson were in regular contact.

8. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY REPORTS

A. Berkeley

Tracy Braithwaite stated that she had taken over regulation of the Berkeley site in April. There had recently been changes made to the guidance issued alongside permits, but Berkeley and Oldbury guidance had not been impacted. No events of concern had been noted at either site. Both had stayed well within the environmental discharge limits permitted and monitored by the annual discharge dose assessment.

Increases in C14 and beta particulate levels had been noted at Berkeley and an investigation launched. Staff had reported that the levels were due to a spreadsheet error. The EA would seek to determine for itself whether or not this was the case. Tracy Braithwaite had begun her own investigation and had not found that any particular facility was responsible for the change. Despite ongoing investigations into the issue, the reported C14 and beta particulate levels were nowhere near the upper permitted limits.

During the last quarter, the environmental safety case for Berkeley and the site's waste management plan had been reviewed. The results would be reported in due course. In the

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following month an inspection into solid waste management would be conducted. An aqueous and gaseous waste management inspection would take place in Q3. An EA report describing the previous year's sampling would be published in November. The generic design assessment (GDA) process underway had created a resource squeeze for the EA.

The Chair questioned the systems and management behind the C14 and beta particulate reporting, if indeed there had been a spreadsheet error. Tracy Braithwaite confirmed that management arrangements and methodologies would be part of her investigation. The personnel in place at Berkeley had long tenures and were well qualified. She would report back at the next SSG.

Dominic Power noted that it had been suggested in the past that environmental discharge levels would naturally increase as the Berkeley site began to process more waste material. Tracy Braithwaite said that this was broadly true and would clearly explain increasing environmental discharges. However, in this case, no specific facility had been found to be responsible for the C14 and beta particulate increase. When there was such a small change, it was challenging to determine whether it might be related to, for example, weather conditions.

Cllr Steve Chandler expressed concern that the investigation had made such little progress since the last SSG meeting. Tracy Braithwaite explained that she had restarted the investigation upon taking over responsibility for the Berkeley site. She was not willing to accept an explanation unless she had seen the evidence for herself. Cllr Steve Chandler asked about cooperation from site staff. Tracy Braithwaite confirmed that relevant site staff were cooperating with her enquiries. There had been some delays over the summer due to staff leave.

Cllr Steve Chandler observed that a spreadsheet error might have led to underreporting in other areas. Tracy Braithwaite said that this was possible. She was due to visit the site in October to discuss the matter and had been meeting with the head of environment every two weeks.

B. Oldbury

Tracy Braithwaite summarised Peter Reynolds' report in his absence. He had visited the Oldbury site in March, looking into runoff PCBs in light of the Hinkley Point B fire. This would also be considered during the upcoming aqueous waste inspection at Berkeley. At Oldbury, there had been adequate generic arrangements, but Peter Reynolds would prefer to see site-specific plans put into place. His July inspection into solid waste management had evidenced the sufficient and compliant measures in place. Projects underway were utilising the best available techniques.

Peter Reynolds held fortnightly meetings with the head of radiological protection to consider events and EA recommendations. Discharges at the Oldbury site were equal to less than 1% of the upper limit. Tracy Braithwaite invited attendees to utilise the contact details provided at the end of the EA reports if they had specific questions.

9. Great British Nuclear

Stephen Bray stated that, as of July, Great British Nuclear had acquired two sites, including one at Oldbury, for the purposes of nuclear rebuild. GBN was an arms-length body of DESNZ and delivered, enabled and advised on the nuclear programme, including developing a programme for small modular reactors (SMR). The GDA process was underway in this regard with final decisions yet to be made. The possibility of a further gigawatt station would form part of secondary deliberations.

GBN would be the parent organisation and would form subsidiary development companies through which SMRs would be built. There was around £20 billion in available funding for two SMR projects. Government investment was anticipated to bring forward additional private investment. Once two vendors were finalised, each would be allocated a site.

Stephen Bray noted that the Oldbury GBN site had been previously run well by Hitachi. Colleagues were staying on for 18 months to ensure a smooth transition. Current site activity

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was low level and non-invasive. Into 2025, depending on a variety of factors, ground investigation work might begin and more of a site presence would be evident. Engagement programmes were in their infancy. The intention was to develop a community forum wherein strategic conversations could be held. GBN's aim was to have the first SMRs to be commissioned before 2035. The purpose that the Oldbury site would be used for would become clear over the coming months.

The Chair asked how many SMRs would be placed on each site. Stephen Bray explained that this would depend on which design was chosen. The submissions ranged from 200MW_e to 450MW_e. John McNamara added that SMRs could be stacked together. The Chair questioned whether multiple SMRs placed on the same site would be housed in the same building. Stephen Bray stated multiple SMRs would share services on the same site, though on separate nuclear islands.

Brian Roberts suggested that a deal be struck between the various parties at Oldbury to stockpile second-hand material until it was needed. Stephen Bray noted that any decisions of this nature would have to wait until a final design was selected. All options were on the table and the more sustainable an approach taken the better. Tracy Braithwaite added that a permit would be required to reuse material at a different facility. The EA, alongside the NDA and DESNZ, were considering how legislation might be changed to facilitate more stockpiling on site.

Cllr Matthew Riddle urged close cooperation between those at the NRS and GBN Oldbury sites to reduce inconvenience and disruption to the local community. Trevor Hellen asked about transmission lines. Stephen Bray explained one existing connection would likely be upgradable but, as regulation currently stood, another connection point would be required. This was the responsibility of the National Grid. The full context of connection requirements would be provided in ongoing consultations carried out by both GBN and the National Grid.

Bill Otto asked if the proposed designs would be made public. Stephen Bray highlighted that all requesting parties were required to share an overview of their submission to the regulator via their own websites.

Angela Presdee noted the Severn Edge team were keen to work with GBN to ensure that benefits were felt across the wider area. Stephen Bray replied that there would likely be a GBN presence at Severn Edge meetings going forward. The STEP bid had provided a good starting point in terms of pulling together appropriate parties for consultation.

Cllr Steve Chandler highlighted reports that the previously college-owned land at Berkeley might be utilised for SMRs in future. Stephen Bray explained that at least one of the vendors under consideration had talked about the Berkeley site in various contexts, such as its use as an administrative or training centre. It was hard to see a future for the Oldbury site without some connection to Berkeley.

The current GDA process was not the only way that SMRs might come to market. It was hoped that developers would start to move towards such project independently. DESNZ was considering a policy statement for 2025 that looked at the possibility of bringing multiple new sites along on the journey. Advanced modular reactors (AMR) were also on the horizon.

Cllr Dominic Power asked if there was anything share in terms of steelworks. Stephen Bray stated that any future strategy in this regard would depend on which reactor vendors were successful. The Chair invited Stephen Bray and John McNamara to attend future SSG meetings.

10. AOB

A. Railhead Issue

Cllr Steve Chandler explained that a productive meeting had been held between relevant Nuclear Transport Solutions (NTS) staff and the Vale of Berkeley Railway (VoBR). Although no operating system had been established, NTS staff had seen no reason in principle to oppose some joint use of the line, subject to appropriate assessments and processes. VoBR

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were in the process of developing proposals for their use of the line. The Chair added that he had made notes at the meeting if any attendees wanted more information.

B. Berkeley History Book

Geoff Wheeler and Trevor Hellen presented their book on the history of Berkeley labs, which included contributions from around 100 ex-colleagues at Berkeley. They sought to finance a printing of 100 copies if there was interest. Bill Hamilton recommended that the book's authors contact NRS, as there was a possibility of up to £2,000 in funding to this end.

C. SGS College

Peter Barrett explained that the science park had been sold to Chiltern Vital Group (CVG). He was now an interested part of the college, rather than a landowner at Berkeley. CVG was significantly better funded and connected to take the site forward.

D. Oldbury Technical Centre (OTC) Demolition

John Alderton noted that final negotiations with the contractor were ongoing, with mobilisation to start in November 2024.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed.

Next meeting dates: TBC



NDA Update for
Oldbury/Berkley SSG
January 2025



Contents

1.0 NDA Stakeholder Update January 2025

**NDA Stakeholder Update**

Please find below a brief update on main points of interest since the last meeting.

Government Update

Following the reestablishment of Parliament in the Autumn the running of government the selection of representation for select committees has concluded alongside familiarisation visits for key Ministers and officials into their appointment areas.

Key appointments include local Sellafield MP Josh MacAlister, as Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Nuclear with David Mundell, MP for the area covering Chapelcross, as Vice Chair. The Energy and Net Zero Committee (ESNZ) has also made appointments which include site MPs Josh MacAlister and Julie Minns and there are three MPs with NDA sites located in their constituencies sitting in the Public Accounts (PAC) and ESNZ.

David Peattie, along with Corhyn Parr and Euan Hutton, appeared before the ESNZ committee on the 18th December and answered questions on a wide variety of subjects connected to the NDAs mission. The hearing is available to view online [here](#).

The Department remains in discussion with DESNZ regarding the NDA group settlement for 25/26 and are incorporating lessons learnt as we prepare for phase 2 of the Spending Review.

Board updates

- The NDA group's All Boards Event took place over 3 and 4 December 2024. It brought together board members from the NDA, Sellafield, NRS, NWS and NTS to network and welcome new appointments to the group. The programme's main topics of discussion included mission delivery and strategy, future funding challenges and opportunities, and further group alignment under the One NDA model

Outreach activities

- On the 15th and 16th January the UK decommissioning sector came together in Telford. On the 15th DECOM 25 took place with delegates from across the decommissioning sector discussing a whole range of topics, including the development of the UK sites and the opportunities for the supply chain, the skills needed to succeed, decommissioning in other sectors and the challenges of preparing for the future of decommissioning. On the 16th January there was an NDA supply chain event proving 1700 delegates the opportunity to connect with 300 exhibiting companies.



- We are in the process of developing and designed our next broad **stakeholder survey**. More details will be available in due course.
- The latest **CPG** took place in the **Scottish Parliament** with the main topic being 'Radioactive Waste - dealing with the legacy'. Topics including how waste was generated, how it is dealt with in Scotland, movement of waste located in Scotland and non-energy sources of radioactive waste. There were around 40 attendees both in person and via Teams.

Engagement priorities for 2025

- As mentioned in previous updates, our independent review into the SSGs is underway. This exercise will provide an opportunity to reflect on the successes of the stakeholder voice in the local community over the last 20 years. It will also allow us to consider how best to address some of the challenges that face us as we think about the future. Following the conclusion of the report we are working with the chair and vice chair of the National Site Stakeholder forum on implementation.
- Nuclear week in Parliament takes place from the 27th January with the NDA and NDA group Operating Companies hosting events
- As you will be aware preparation is underway for **Strategy V** which we expect to publish in March 2026. Our strategy document is published every 5 years and describes our high-level approach to delivering our mission. Within that we identify several critical enablers essential to the successful delivery of our mission including public and stakeholder engagement. The strategy will go out to consultation in May 2025.
- We are working closely with the Nuclear Industries Association (NIA) to establish a **Cross-Party Group on the Civil Nuclear Industry in the Welsh Parliament**. The first meeting took place on the 21st January.

Publications, public service and policy updates

- We have now published our **Annual Report** which has also been laid in Parliament. The Annual Report sets out the progress made against our mission, from safely decommissioning existing sites to preparing to take responsibility for more, while managing radioactive waste for our existing programme and new nuclear
- As previously advised we expect the Scottish Government to start its review into its policy for higher activity radioactive waste (HAW). The policy



framework is set out in a 2011 Policy and the 2016 Implementation Strategy. The anticipated timeline is: Commence review – late 2024, hold a public consultation – early 2025, issue a revised Policy document – late 2025.

- The **NAO value for money study** into whether Sellafield and the NDA are taking a sustainable approach to decommissioning, leading to permanent hazard reduction has now been published and can be found via the following link [Decommissioning Sellafield: managing risks from the nuclear legacy - NAO report](#). The Public Accounts Committee will visit Sellafield in February with a hearing taking place later this Spring.
- We have recently published our [Nuclear Heritage Strategy](#). The NDA are tasked with decommissioning the UK's legacy nuclear sites, sites and facilities which have been at the heart of delivering nuclear benefits for the UK, including national defence programmes and supplying safe, low-carbon power, for decades. The heritage strategy enables the NDA group to identify and preserve the tangible and intangible assets, objects, and memories of the nuclear industry, the people who worked in it, and the communities that supported it.
- NDA has published its **Socio Economic Report for 2023/24**, detailing a record investment in projects across the UK - [NDA group investing in our communities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Following the publication of the Chapelcross masterplan in August 2024 the NDA has been leading work to identify a strategic partner for the development that will deliver the vision for the sites transformation into a green energy hub. We are now evaluating the proposals from potential partners and hope to be able to make an announcement this Spring.
- The NDA funded a [project](#) in North Wales which has delivered a range of successful outcomes for the low-carbon sector across North Wales. M-SParc's Egni team, based on Anglesey, has worked with a range of partners throughout the three-year programme to deliver impactful projects that support businesses, drive investment and educate the next generation.
- The Egni team was created in 2021 with a £360,000 grant from the NDA's Socio-Economic Fund. The team is now permanently established - with four full-time team members, four associate members and two interns - and will continue to meet the needs of the low-carbon sector as it develops in the future.



Mission delivery

- The NDA recently launched its brand-new, specialised cyber facility to accelerate collaboration and innovation across nuclear operators and the supply chain, enhancing the collective ability to successfully defend against cyber threats. The Group Cyberspace Collaboration Centre (GCCC) provides a space for experts in cyber, digital and security to come together and share knowledge and learning on how best to defend against evolving threats. The centre is a multi-functional space for collaborating, brainstorming, workshops, talks, learning and tutorials, cyber exercising, incident management and more. It aims to encourage our cyber, digital and security experts to think and work differently, with our shared future foremost in mind.
- Future plans for our Chapelcross site in Dumfries and Galloway were unveiled in August, with a long-term vision to develop the site into a Green Energy Hub: [Chapelcross Masterplan - CX Project](#)
- NWS and the NDA have established an innovative partnership for the enhanced management of asbestos waste, awarding two contracts to establish the **Asbestos Innovation Partnership**. This partnership will work with the NDA group and the supply chain, to test and develop new solutions to treat asbestos waste, helping to deliver efficiencies and enable more effective waste management.
- A collaboration between NRS, NTS and NWS has achieved a significant milestone by transporting the final waste from the Treated Radwaste Store (TRS) in Winfrith to the LLWR for disposal. The completion of this project ahead of schedule means that the need for **waste storage at Winfrith** which closed in 1990 has been removed, leaving the site ready for decommissioning.
- NDA and NRS have underlined their commitment to Government to, where possible, safely accelerate **land release at Harwell** site to maximise the economic impact of decommissioning. We have identified clear areas of strategic importance and will work together with the Harwell Campus joint venture on developing options for those areas. We are at early stages and still progressing the current release of plots, aiming to have a broader plan for land release this autumn.

Thank you for taking the time to read our update. If you have any questions, please feed-back through the Secretariat or raise with the NDA official at the SSG meeting.



Nuclear
Decommissioning
Authority

ONR Site Report

NRS Ltd – Berkeley

ONR Site Report

NRS Ltd - Berkeley

Report for period: 1 July – 31 December 2024

Authored by: Nominated Site Inspector

Approved by: Superintending Inspector

Issue: 1

Published: January 2025

Record reference: 2025/495

Foreword

This report is issued as part of ONR's commitment to make information about inspection and regulatory activities relating to the above site available to the public. Reports are distributed to members for the Berkeley Site Stakeholders Group and are also available on the ONR website (<https://www.onr.org.uk/publications/regulatory-reports/site-specific-reports/lcsvg-reports/>).

Site inspectors from ONR usually attend Berkeley Site Stakeholders Group meetings where these reports are presented and will respond to any questions raised there. Any person wishing to inquire about matters covered by this report should contact ONR.

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1. Inspections

1.1. Date(s) of inspection

The ONR site inspector made inspections on the following dates during the report period 1 July to 31 December 2024:

- 4 September 2024
- 22 & 23 October 2024

2. Routine matters

2.1. Inspections

Inspections are undertaken as part of the process for monitoring compliance with:

- the conditions attached by ONR to the nuclear site licence granted under the Nuclear Installations Act 1965 (NIA65) (as amended);
- the Energy Act 2013;
- the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA74); and
- regulations made under HSWA74, for example the Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017 (IRR17) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR99).

The inspections entail monitoring the licensee's actions on the site in relation to incidents, operations, maintenance, projects, modifications, safety case changes and any other matters that may affect safety. The licensee is required to make and implement adequate arrangements under the conditions attached to the licence in order to ensure legal compliance. Inspections seek to judge both the adequacy of these arrangements and their implementation.

In this period, routine inspections of NRS Ltd Berkeley covered the following:

- emergency preparedness
- decommissioning
- security

Members of the public, who would like further information on ONR's inspection activities during the reporting period, can view site Inspection Records on our website: www.onr.org.uk.

Should you have any queries regarding our inspection activities, please email contact@onr.gov.uk.

2.2. Other work

The site inspector attended the Nuclear Restoration Services' Oldbury, Berkeley and Hinkley Point A Quarterly Regulator Interface Meeting on the 10 October 2024 to discuss issues, events and project milestone updates at the sites. The second meeting included an annual review of safety, security and environmental performance. The overall site performance across the NRS Ltd southwest region remains adequate and no new issues which would significantly impact our purposes were identified.

The site inspector held regular meetings with the Site Director and weekly keep-in-touch meetings with the operational staff on site. During these meetings they discussed regulatory issues, site incidents, future permissioning and progress with significant decommissioning milestone delivery.

The site inspector held a periodic meeting with safety representatives, to support their function of representing employees and receiving information on matters affecting their health, safety and welfare at work.

3. Non-routine matters

Licensees are required to have arrangements to respond to non-routine matters and events. ONR inspectors judge the adequacy of the licensee's response, including actions taken to implement any necessary improvements.

There were no such matters or events of significance during the period.

4. Regulatory activity

ONR may issue formal documents to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. Under nuclear site licence conditions, ONR issues regulatory documents, which either permit an activity or require some form of action to be taken; these are usually collectively termed 'Licence Instruments' (LIs) but can take other forms. In addition, inspectors may take a range of enforcement actions, to include issuing an Enforcement Notice.

- No LIs, Enforcement Notices or Enforcement letters were issued during this period.

5. News from ONR

For the latest news and information from ONR, please read and subscribe to our regular email newsletter 'ONR News' at <https://www.onr.org.uk/news/newsletter/>.

6. Contacts

Office for Nuclear Regulation
Redgrave Court
Merton Road
Bootle
Merseyside
L20 7HS
website: www.onr.org.uk
email: Contact@onr.gov.uk

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ONR Site Report

NRS Ltd – Oldbury

ONR Site Report

NRS Ltd - Oldbury

Report for period: 1 July – 31 December 2024

Authored by: Nominated Site Inspector

Approved by: Superintending Inspector

Issue: 1

Published: January 2025

Record reference: 2025/469

Foreword

This report is issued as part of ONR's commitment to make information about inspection and regulatory activities relating to the above site available to the public. Reports are distributed to members for the Oldbury Site Stakeholders Group and are also available on the ONR website (<https://www.onr.org.uk/publications/regulatory-reports/site-specific-reports/lcsvg-reports/>).

Site inspectors from ONR usually attend Oldbury Site Stakeholders Group meetings where these reports are presented and will respond to any questions raised there. Any person wishing to inquire about matters covered by this report should contact ONR.

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References**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

1. Inspections

1.1. Date(s) of inspection

The ONR site inspector made inspections on the following dates during the report period 1 July to 31 December 2024:

- 23 July 2024
- 7 November 2024

2. Routine matters

2.1. Inspections

Inspections are undertaken as part of the process for monitoring compliance with:

- the conditions attached by ONR to the nuclear site licence granted under the Nuclear Installations Act 1965 (NIA65) (as amended);
- the Energy Act 2013;
- the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA74); and
- regulations made under HSWA74, for example the Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017 (IRR17) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR99).

The inspections entail monitoring the licensee's actions on the site in relation to incidents, operations, maintenance, projects, modifications, safety case changes and any other matters that may affect safety. The licensee is required to make and implement adequate arrangements under the conditions attached to the licence in order to ensure legal compliance. Inspections seek to judge both the adequacy of these arrangements and their implementation.

In this period, routine inspections of NRS Ltd Oldbury covered the following:

- radiological protection
- security

Members of the public, who would like further information on ONR's inspection activities during the reporting period, can view site Inspection Records on our website: www.onr.org.uk.

Should you have any queries regarding our inspection activities, please email contact@onr.gov.uk.

2.2. Other work

The site inspector attended the Nuclear Restoration Services' (NRS) Oldbury, Berkeley and Hinkley Point A Quarterly Regulator Interface Meeting on the 10 October 2024 to discuss issues, events and project milestone updates at the sites. The second meeting included an annual review of safety, security and environmental performance. The overall site performance across the NRS Ltd southwest region remains adequate and no new issues which would significantly impact ONR's purposes were identified.

The site inspector held regular meetings with the Site Director and weekly keep-in-touch meetings with the operational staff on site. During these meetings they discussed regulatory issues, site incidents, future permissioning and progress with significant decommissioning milestone delivery.

3. Non-routine matters

Licensees are required to have arrangements to respond to non-routine matters and events. ONR inspectors judge the adequacy of the licensee's response, including actions taken to implement any necessary improvements.

There were no such matters or events of significance during the period.

4. Regulatory activity

ONR may issue formal documents to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. Under nuclear site licence conditions, ONR issues regulatory documents, which either permit an activity or require some form of action to be taken; these are usually collectively termed 'Licence Instruments' (LIs) but can take other forms. In addition, inspectors may take a range of enforcement actions, to include issuing an Enforcement Notice.

- No LIs, Enforcement Notices or Enforcement letters were issued during this period.

5. News from ONR

For the latest news and information from ONR, please read and subscribe to our regular email newsletter 'ONR News' at <https://www.onr.org.uk/news/newsletter/>.

6. Contacts

Office for Nuclear Regulation
Redgrave Court
Merton Road
Bootle
Merseyside
L20 7HS
website: www.onr.org.uk
email: Contact@onr.gov.uk

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Environment Agency Report

Berkeley Site Stakeholder Group

January 2025

This report covers our regulation of Nuclear Restoration Services (NRS) at the Berkeley Site and related issues over the period October 2024 to December 2024.

Radioactive substances regulation

We regulate radioactive waste disposals and discharges to the environment. We do this by placing limits and conditions in environmental permits, which helps us to ensure that radioactive waste discharges are minimised, and that the environment is protected. We conduct regular checks of Nuclear Restoration Services' compliance with our regulatory requirements.

We also regulate and control other activities through our environmental permits, including surface water discharges to surrounding water bodies and emissions to air.

We make our Radioactive Substances Compliance Assessment Reports (RASCARs) summarising our inspections and any non-compliances found available to the public on request.

Permitting

Nuclear Restoration Services holds a radioactive substances activity permit under the Environmental Permitting Regulations (EPR) at the Berkeley site (EPR/ZP3893SG). No changes have been made to the permit since the last SSG meeting.

We are currently meeting with NRS to discuss future permitting of decommissioning activities at the Berkeley site. You will be kept informed of progress via NRS and this report. Currently NRS propose to backfill the older boiler houses with demolition materials and waste from existing stockpiles, and EPR permits will be required for this. A site end state will be needed should this include radioactive materials.

Compliance activities

We keep in contact with Berkeley site via remote meetings at monthly intervals to stay up to date on the status of decommissioning projects, progress on actions and recommendations arising from previous interventions and any emerging issues at the site.

We review Nuclear Restoration Services' reports of operational events and incidents that have occurred on site on a weekly basis. We follow up on these reports where events have the potential for significant environmental impact or are an indicator of

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wider issues. There have been no events or incidents of concern to us in the period since the last Site Stakeholder Group meeting in January 2024.

We had requested information on the soil and groundwater quality from the infill of the former ponds area as part of a planning application for the new waste sorting building. We have now agreed further investigation of the waste materials that were deposited in the former ponds area comprising the construction of boreholes and chemical analysis of soil and groundwater prior to waste operations commencing. We expect the drilling and sampling of boreholes to start in January 2025.

The review of the site wide environmental safety case and waste management plan has been completed and is undergoing internal peer review prior to sharing our findings with the Head of Environment and Radiological Protection. We will feed back on this at our next Site Stakeholder Group meeting.

Environmental impact

The site environmental permit requires the operator to monitor and assess the impact of discharges on the environment. The results of Nuclear Restoration Services' environmental monitoring programme continue to be consistent with our independent programme and do not indicate any results of concern or significant change from previous years.

The Environment Agencies and Food Standards Agency carry out independent environmental monitoring around nuclear sites. These monitoring programmes support our regulatory function and provide reassurance that public radiation exposures are low and within legal limits. The results of this work are published annually and the latest report, "Radioactivity in Food and the Environment 2022" (RIFE 28), is now available on the GOV.UK website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/radioactivity-in-food-and-the-environment-rife-reports>

Berkeley and Oldbury sites are considered together for the purposes of environmental monitoring because the discharge effects from both sites impact on the same area. The most recent habits survey was undertaken in 2014 (Clyne, Garrod & Papworth 2015). We have recommended a further habits survey for 2025.

In 2023, the 'total dose' from all pathways and sources of radiation was less than 0.005mSv (Table 4.1 in RIFE link above), or less than 0.5% of the dose limit to members of the public. This is unchanged from 2022 (as amended in the RIFE 28 Errata). The representative person was an adult spending time over sediments, a change from 2022 (infant milk consumers).

Discharges from site

The site's environmental permit requires Nuclear Restoration Services to use best available techniques (BAT) to manage its operations and to ensure their impacts on the public and wider environment are minimised. Disposal of wastes – as solids, liquid or gases can only be made via permitted routes or by transfer to permitted sites. Nuclear Restoration Services must also conduct a programme of environmental monitoring. They submit a report of the liquid and gaseous discharges to the environment, and the results of the environmental monitoring programme to us at quarterly intervals. We assess these against the requirements of the permit and record this in a RASCAR.

Nuclear Restoration Services have reported an increasing trend in carbon-14 and beta emitting particulate emissions to atmosphere since the third quarter of 2022, although emissions remain well below permit limits. NRS have found an error in the use of a spreadsheet used to calculate discharges that NRS have stated has led to the activity of beta emitting particulate discharges being overreported for several months. We have recently received a copy of their report on their investigation into the cause of the error, and we will be meeting with them shortly to review the calculations spreadsheets. We believe that the error has not had a material impact on the environment. We are considering what further action we need to take. We will report on our enforcement response at the next SSG meeting following the next inspection on gaseous wastes.

Enforcement

We have not taken any enforcement action at Berkeley in the period since the previous SSG meeting.

For information: New nuclear power stations

Public consultation: Regulation of solid radioactive waste disposal facilities - proposed guidance

The Environment Agency, NRW and NIEA are consulting on proposals to update the guidance on how we regulate near surface and geological disposal facilities. The draft guidance documents explain what an operator must show us to obtain an environmental permit or permits for such a radioactive waste disposal facility. The draft guidance we are consulting on consists of:

- Disposal facilities for solid radioactive waste: guidance on the requirements for authorisation (GRA)
- Guidance on staged regulation

The consultation on the draft GRA applies to England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. There will be a separate consultation on a version of the GRA for Scotland.

The consultation on our staged regulation guidance is for England only.

We held an online consultation event for anyone with an interest or question about the documents in January.

There's a public summary available on both links below (HTML on gov and ODT on Cit space).

The consultation closes on 28 February 2025.

GOV.UK [Regulation of solid radioactive waste disposal facilities: proposed guidance - GOV.UK](#)

Consultation response page [Guidance on the requirements for authorisation and staged regulation for the disposal of solid radioactive waste - Environment Agency - Citizen Space](#)

Radioactivity in food and the environment report

Our annual report was published in November 2024 on GOV.UK

[Radioactivity in food and the environment \(RIFE\) report - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

This report gives a detailed assessment of radioactivity in food and the environment and the public's exposure to radiation during a specific year. It shows that the public's exposure to permitted discharges and direct radiation near nuclear and non-nuclear sites is low and within dose limits.

The report brings together the nationwide monitoring programmes of the UK's food standard agencies and environment agencies. This monitoring is independent of, and is also used as a check on, the monitoring carried out by site operators.

This is now the second year we've published the whole report as a HTML document with associated ODS files. We no longer issue a PDF or print copy. Previous reports are on the [National Archives website](#)

Main messages

- Overall, between 2022 and 2023 there were no significant changes to the radioactivity measured in food and the environment.
- The dose received by the public near to nuclear licensed sites and industrial and landfill sites in the UK is low and again well within legal limits.
- Food remains safe and the public's exposure to artificial radiation is within legal limits.

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- Radioactivity from natural background, rather than nuclear sites, continues to be the more significant source of exposure to communities in all areas of the UK.
- Around 10,000 analyses and dose rate measurements were completed in 2023.
- The data from our monitoring programme in this report demonstrates that radioactivity in food and the environment is safe.

Geological disposal: scrutiny of Nuclear Waste Services' work - annual reports

Our annual report was published on GOV.UK in October 2024.

[Geological disposal: scrutiny of Nuclear Waste Services' work - annual reports - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/geological-disposal-scrutiny-of-nuclear-waste-services-work-annual-reports)

Through our joint scrutiny work, the Environment Agency and the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) provide regulatory advice to Nuclear Waste Services about implementing geological disposal.

These annual reports explain what we examined through our scrutiny work and the main comments provided to Nuclear Waste Services. They also highlight areas where Nuclear Waste Services needs to improve.

The Environment Agency and ONR will make sure that any future geological disposal facility meets our high standards for environmental protection, safety, security, radioactive waste transportation and safeguards.

Assessing new nuclear power station designs – Have your say

Generic Design Assessment (GDA) is an open and transparent process. A nuclear power station design company going through GDA must set up a website to:

- publish information about the design
- invite the public to ask questions and make comments

The design company must respond to any comments or questions they receive. The regulators will see the comments and questions and the responses provided. We can also use this information to help inform our assessment work.

The Environment Agency has:

- completed step 2 and started step 3 of the [Generic Design Assessment](#) on Rolls-Royce SMR Limited's 470MWe small modular reactor on 30 July 2024. The [public comments process](#) for this GDA opened at the start of Step 2 and you can make a comment through the company website.

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- completed step 1 and started step 2 of the [Generic Design Assessment](#) on Holtec International's small modular reactor SMR-300 on 1 August 2024. The [public comments process](#) for this GDA opened at the start of Step 2 and you can make a comment through the company website.
- completed step 1 and started step 2 of the [Generic Design Assessment](#) on GE-Hitachi Nuclear Energy's BWRX-300 small modular reactor on 12 December 2024. [GDA Step 1 of the GE-Hitachi SMR: statement of findings - GOV.UK](#) The [public comments process](#) for this GDA opened at the start of Step 2 and you can make a comment through the company website.

Learn more about assessing new reactor designs [New nuclear power stations: assessing reactor designs - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Read our blog [Ensuring nuclear reactor designs meet high standards of environmental protection – Creating a better place \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)

Updated guidance: Regulatory expectations for successful land quality management at nuclear licensed sites

The environment agencies and the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) have [published updated guidance](#) that sets out our high-level regulatory expectations for the prevention and management of radioactive and non-radioactive contamination of the ground and water on nuclear licensed sites.

It updates joint guidance issued in 2014, reflecting how some land quality issues can also now be covered through the Site Wide Environmental Safety Cases and Waste Management Plans created under our guidance on “Management of radioactive waste from decommissioning of nuclear sites: Guidance on Requirements for Release from Radioactive Substances Regulation” (the GRR).

The guidance highlights the five key principles that we expect operators / licensees to consider when preventing and managing land and water contamination, namely:

1. establish strategies and plans for land quality management
2. prevent new contamination of land or the water environment
3. understand the land quality and contamination characteristics of the site
4. manage land quality to mitigate safety and environmental risks
5. work with stakeholders and other interested parties

The guidance describes our shared and complementary interests in land quality matters, explains how we expect climate change and sustainability to be taken into account and provides a reference list of further reading.

[Land quality management | Office for Nuclear Regulation](#)

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We've published the first Chief Regulator's report. It summarises the performance of the businesses and activities regulated by the Environment Agency in England in 2023-24. It outlines key outcomes of our regulation, providing assurance and transparency across our wide regulatory remit, and it sets out the aims and ambitions of our Chief Regulator, Dr Jo Nettleton.

The report covers our work regulating the nuclear industry and radioactive substances during 2023-24.

[Environment Agency Chief Regulator's report 2023-24 - GOV.UK](#)

Follow our Environment Agency Linked in page for news and information about regulating radioactive substances

<https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/regulating-radioactive-substances>

All our open consultations will appear on this webpage [Nuclear consultations - Environment Agency - Citizen Space \(environment-agency.gov.uk\)](#)

Tracy Braithwaite is the Environment Agency's lead nuclear regulator for the Berkeley site. Tracy is part of the national Nuclear Regulation Group (South) (NRG South) which is based at the Environment Agency's Wallingford office in Oxfordshire.

NRG South undertakes environmental regulation of radioactive substances on nuclear licensed sites in southern England. It works closely with the local Environment Agency teams in those areas as well as external bodies such as the Office for Nuclear Regulation.

Members of the local Wessex Environment Agency team cover the site for general (non-radioactive substances) environment protection matters such as regulation of groundwater, contaminated land, waste management and water abstraction.

Address: Environment Agency, Red Kite House, Howbery Park, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 8BD

Email: tracy.braithwaite@environment-agency.gov.uk

Environment Agency Report

Oldbury Site Stakeholder Group

February 2025

This report covers our regulation of Nuclear Restoration Services (NRS) at Oldbury Site, and related issues, from September 2024 to December 2024

Radioactive substances regulation

We regulate radioactive waste disposals and discharges to the environment. We do this through environmental permits that contain limits and conditions aimed at minimising wastes and protecting the environment. We check compliance with the permits by making regular site inspections.

We also regulate and control other activities through our environmental permits, including surface water discharges to surrounding water bodies and emissions to air.

We record our regulatory compliance interactions in Radioactive Substances Compliance Assessment Reports (RASCARs). These summarise the type of work we have undertaken, describe any non-compliance or observations of good practice, and include actions or recommendations from our findings. They are public register records, which are available on request. Please see the 'further information' section at the end of this document to find out how to request public register records.

Permitting

NRS holds a radioactive substances activity permit under the Environmental Permitting Regulations (EPR) at the Oldbury site (EPR/GB3435DG). We set additional requirements in the site's CEAR (Compilation of EA requirements). We varied the CEAR in December to remove the requirement that Oldbury site prepare an annual bulk sample and have this analysed for 26 radionuclides for the purposes of Pollution Inventory reporting. In future Oldbury will report an estimate based on volumetric discharges and average activity concentrations measured over the past four years. This is consistent with our guidance and reflects the ongoing decrease in active liquid effluent discharges since the site ceased to generate power in 2012.

Compliance activities

We check compliance with the permit by making regular inspections at Oldbury. We issue RASCARs for inspections to summarise the findings of the inspection. This includes any identified non-compliances, actions, recommendations and observations of good practice.

We visited Oldbury site in November to review environmental leadership at the site. Before the inspection the site provided us with relevant documents so that we could assess policy, reporting metrics management arrangements. On the day of the inspection, we met with the environment team and some members of the lead team to discuss how they ensured operations at Oldbury minimised harm to the environment. We concluded that NRS has sound systems in place to review risk to the environment and monitor environmental performance. We reviewed the site's environmental enhancement plan and believe this could be more ambitious.

A secondary purpose of our visit in November was to review the site's organisational baseline of roles critical for environmental safety. We noted that there is redundancy in radiation protection and engineering roles that are environmentally significant but that singletons occupy core environmental roles. We recommended that Oldbury train additional staff to increase resilience in this area.

We had fortnightly 'keep in touch' meetings with the Head of Radiological Protection and Environment to ensure we are aware of progress on decommissioning, progress on actions and recommendations and any emerging issues at the site.

We attended a quarterly regulatory interface meeting with Office for Nuclear Regulation and NRS. This meeting covers Oldbury, Berkeley and Hinkley Point A sites. NRS presents programme updates, and answers questions on performance indicators for each site covering areas of interest such as environmental protection, sustainability, waste, asset management and maintenance.

We also reviewed weekly NRS reports of operational events and incidents that have occurred on site. We followed up on these where appropriate. There was one event that affected permit compliance in the period since the last SSG. This is described in this report under the section titled 'Enforcement'.

Environmental impact

The site environmental permit requires the operator to monitor and assess the impact of discharges on the environment. NRS submits an environmental monitoring programme report to us on a quarterly basis.

The results of NRS's environmental monitoring programme (EMP) indicate that the environmental impact from permitted discharges remains low. NRS's results continue to be consistent with our independent programme, and do not indicate any results of concern or significant change from previous years.

The Environment Agencies and Food Standards Agency carry out independent environmental monitoring around nuclear sites. These monitoring programmes support our regulatory function and provide reassurance that public radiation exposures are low and within legal limits. The results of this work are published annually and the latest report, *Radioactivity in Food and the Environment 2023 (RIFE 29)*, was published on the GOV.UK website in November 2024.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/radioactivity-in-food-and-the-environment-rife-reports>

The report gives a detailed assessment of radioactivity in food and the environment and the public's exposure to radiation during a specific year. It shows that the public's exposure to permitted discharges and direct radiation near nuclear and non-nuclear sites is low and within dose limits.

The RIFE report presents an assessment of annual radiological dose to individuals in the local population who are most exposed to radiation from each nuclear licensed site (known as the 'representative person'). Berkeley and Oldbury sites are considered together for the purposes of RIFE because the effects from both sites contribute to the same area.

This is now the second year we've published the whole report as a HTML document with associated ODS files. We no longer issue a PDF or print copy. Previous reports are on the National Archives website.

Overall, between 2022 and 2023 there were no significant changes to the radioactivity measured in food and the environment.

The dose received by the public near to nuclear licensed sites and industrial and landfill sites in the UK is low and again well within legal limits.

Food remains safe and the public's exposure to artificial radiation is within legal limits.

Radioactivity from natural background, rather than nuclear sites, continues to be the more significant source of exposure to communities in all areas of the UK.

In 2023, the attributed total dose to the representative person from all pathways and sources of radiation from the Oldbury and Berkeley sites combined was 0.005 millisieverts. This is the same as in 2022. (The total dose in 2022 was initially reported as 0.006 millisieverts but this was corrected to 0.005 millisieverts in the errata to RIFE 28). This dose is less than 1% of the UK National dose limit of 1 millisievert. (A dose of 0.041 millisieverts was calculated for houseboat dwellers. However, this was not considered to be representative and was not included in the total dose.)

Further information, including the most recent breakdown of the average individual dose to the UK population by source of exposure, is available on the UKHSA website at <https://www.ukhsa-protectionservices.org.uk/radiationandyou/>

Discharges from site

The site's environmental permit requires NRS to use best available techniques (BAT) to minimise the generation of radioactive waste and minimise any permitted releases into the environment. Disposal of solid, liquid or gaseous wastes can only be made via permitted routes or by transfer to permitted sites. Limits are set in the permit to control the maximum level of radioactivity that can be discharged to the environment as gaseous or liquid discharges over a rolling 12-month period. NRS submits monthly reports to us of the liquid and gaseous discharges to the environment from Oldbury site. We assess these against the requirements of the permit and record our findings in a RASCAR once per quarter.

Both liquid and gaseous discharges from Oldbury continue to be at levels well within permitted limits. Discharges of all measured gaseous and liquid radionuclides reported in the period since the last SSG meeting remained below 1% of their relevant annual limits. Discharges from Oldbury may fluctuate in future as the decommissioning programme evolves.

Enforcement

Oldbury informed us in September that they had not reported a liquid effluent discharge made in July, as required by their permit. We investigated and concluded that the cause of the error was recent staff turnover and a line missing from their operational instruction for discharge recording. The error had no environmental impact. In accordance with our enforcement policy we recorded this event as two category 4 (no impact) non-compliances against permit conditions 1.1.1(a) and 4.2.2 which set management system requirements and reporting requirements.

We reviewed public interest factors and concluded that the appropriate enforcement response was 'advice and guidance' only.

We set actions for Oldbury to update their management system, ensure staff were aware of the procedures and audit discharge reporting to confirm that the changes were being applied.

Oldbury were required to complete these actions by the end of December 2024. They wrote to us on 19 December to confirm that the actions had been completed. When we next visit site we will check a sample of records to confirm that the revised procedure is being followed.

Additional Items (for information)

Public consultation: Regulation of solid radioactive waste disposal facilities - proposed guidance

The Environment Agency, NRW and NIEA are consulting on proposals to update the guidance on how we regulate near surface and geological disposal facilities. The draft guidance documents explain what an operator must show us to obtain an environmental permit or permits for such a radioactive waste disposal facility. The draft guidance we are consulting on consists of:

- Disposal facilities for solid radioactive waste: guidance on the requirements for authorisation (GRA)
- Guidance on staged regulation

The consultation on the draft GRA applies to England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. There will be a separate consultation on a version of the GRA for Scotland.

The consultation on our staged regulation guidance is for England only.

We held an online consultation event for anyone with an interest or question about the documents in January.

There's a public summary available on both links below (HTML on gov and ODT on Cit space).

The consultation closes on 28 February 2025.

GOV.UK [Regulation of solid radioactive waste disposal facilities: proposed guidance - GOV.UK](#)

Consultation response page [Guidance on the requirements for authorisation and staged regulation for the disposal of solid radioactive waste - Environment Agency - Citizen Space](#)

Radioactivity in food and the environment report

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incident hotline **0800 80 70 60**

floodline **03459 88 11 88**

Our annual report was published in November 2024 on GOV.UK

[Radioactivity in food and the environment \(RIFE\) report - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/rife-report)

This report gives a detailed assessment of radioactivity in food and the environment and the public's exposure to radiation during a specific year. It shows that the public's exposure to permitted discharges and direct radiation near nuclear and non-nuclear sites is low and within dose limits.

The report brings together the nationwide monitoring programmes of the UK's food standard agencies and environment agencies. This monitoring is independent of, and is also used as a check on, the monitoring carried out by site operators.

This is now the second year we've published the whole report as a HTML document with associated ODS files. We no longer issue a PDF or print copy. Previous reports are on the [National Archives website](https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)

Main messages

- Overall, between 2022 and 2023 there were no significant changes to the radioactivity measured in food and the environment.
- The dose received by the public near to nuclear licensed sites and industrial and landfill sites in the UK is low and again well within legal limits.
- Food remains safe and the public's exposure to artificial radiation is within legal limits.
- Radioactivity from natural background, rather than nuclear sites, continues to be the more significant source of exposure to communities in all areas of the UK.
- Around 10,000 analyses and dose rate measurements were completed in 2023.
- The data from our monitoring programme in this report demonstrates that radioactivity in food and the environment is safe.

Geological disposal: scrutiny of Nuclear Waste Services' work - annual reports

Our annual report was published on GOV.UK in October 2024.

[Geological disposal: scrutiny of Nuclear Waste Services' work - annual reports - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/geological-disposal-scrutiny)

Through our joint scrutiny work, the Environment Agency and the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) provide regulatory advice to Nuclear Waste Services about implementing geological disposal.

These annual reports explain what we examined through our scrutiny work and the main comments provided to Nuclear Waste Services. They also highlight areas where Nuclear Waste Services needs to improve.

The Environment Agency and ONR will make sure that any future geological disposal facility meets our high standards for environmental protection, safety, security, radioactive waste transportation and safeguards.

Assessing new nuclear power station designs – Have your say

customer service line **03708 506 506**

incident hotline **0800 80 70 60**

floodline **03459 88 11 88**

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Generic Design Assessment (GDA) is an open and transparent process. A nuclear power station design company going through GDA must set up a website to:

- publish information about the design
- invite the public to ask questions and make comments

The design company must respond to any comments or questions they receive. The regulators will see the comments and questions and the responses provided. We can also use this information to help inform our assessment work.

The Environment Agency has:

- completed step 2 and started step 3 of the [Generic Design Assessment](#) on Rolls-Royce SMR Limited's 470MWe small modular reactor on 30 July 2024. The [public comments process](#) for this GDA opened at the start of Step 2 and you can make a comment through the company website.
- completed step 1 and started step 2 of the [Generic Design Assessment](#) on Holtec International's small modular reactor SMR-300 on 1 August 2024. The [public comments process](#) for this GDA opened at the start of Step 2 and you can make a comment through the company website.
- completed step 1 and started step 2 of the [Generic Design Assessment](#) on GE-Hitachi Nuclear Energy's BWRX-300 small modular reactor on 12 December 2024. [GDA Step 1 of the GE-Hitachi SMR: statement of findings - GOV.UK](#) The [public comments process](#) for this GDA opened at the start of Step 2 and you can make a comment through the company website.

Learn more about assessing new reactor designs [New nuclear power stations: assessing reactor designs - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Read our blog [Ensuring nuclear reactor designs meet high standards of environmental protection – Creating a better place \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)

Updated guidance: Regulatory expectations for successful land quality management at nuclear licensed sites

The environment agencies and the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) have [published updated guidance](#) that sets out our high-level regulatory expectations for the prevention and management of radioactive and non-radioactive contamination of the ground and water on nuclear licensed sites.

It updates joint guidance issued in 2014, reflecting how some land quality issues can also now be covered through the Site Wide Environmental Safety Cases and Waste Management Plans created under our guidance on "Management of radioactive waste from decommissioning of nuclear sites: Guidance on Requirements for Release from Radioactive Substances Regulation" (the GRR).

The guidance highlights the five key principles that we expect operators / licensees to consider when preventing and managing land and water contamination, namely:

1. establish strategies and plans for land quality management
2. prevent new contamination of land or the water environment
3. understand the land quality and contamination characteristics of the site
4. manage land quality to mitigate safety and environmental risks
5. work with stakeholders and other interested parties

The guidance describes our shared and complementary interests in land quality matters, explains how we expect climate change and sustainability to be taken into account and provides a reference list of further reading.

[Land quality management | Office for Nuclear Regulation](#)

We've published the first Chief Regulator's report. It summarises the performance of the businesses and activities regulated by the Environment Agency in England in 2023-24. It outlines key outcomes of our regulation, providing assurance and transparency across our wide regulatory remit, and it sets out the aims and ambitions of our Chief Regulator, Dr Jo Nettleton.

The report covers our work regulating the nuclear industry and radioactive substances during 2023-24.

[Environment Agency Chief Regulator's report 2023-24 - GOV.UK](#)

Follow our Environment Agency Linked in page for news and information about regulating radioactive substances

<https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/regulating-radioactive-substances>

All our open consultations will appear on this webpage [Nuclear consultations - Environment Agency - Citizen Space \(environment-agency.gov.uk\)](#)

Peter Reynolds is the Environment Agency's lead nuclear regulator for the Oldbury site. Peter is part of the national Nuclear Regulation Group (South) (NRG South) which is based at the Environment Agency's Wallingford office in Oxfordshire.

NRG South undertakes environmental regulation of radioactive substances on nuclear licensed sites in southern England. It works closely with the local Environment Agency teams in those areas as well as external bodies such as the Office for Nuclear Regulation.

Members of the local Wessex Environment Agency team cover the site for general (non-radioactive substances) environment protection matters such as regulation of groundwater, contaminated land, waste management and water abstraction.

Address: Environment Agency, Red Kite House, Howbery Park, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 8BD

Email: peter.reynolds@environment-agency.gov.uk