

West Cumbria Sites Stakeholder Group

Minutes of the 11th Meeting of the LLWR Sub Committee Wednesday 12th September 2007 held at Drigg Village Hall

Attendees:

Sue Brown (chairman)	Cumbria County Council
Cath Giel (secretary)	Low Level Waste Repository
Adrian Dalton	Drigg & Carleton Parish Council
Kneale Thompson	Drigg & Carleton Parish Council
David Moore	Copeland Borough Council
David Davies	Copeland Borough Council
Andrew Fairhurst	Environment Agency
Richard Evans	Cumbria County Council
Sue Brett	Cumbria County Council
Lesley Sewell	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Chris Halliwell	Low Level Waste Repository
James Millington	Low Level Waste Repository
James Fisher	Low Level Waste Repository
Chuck Conway	UK Nuclear Waste Management
Paul Pointon	UK Nuclear Waste Management

Apologies:

Steven Shepherd	Drigg & Carleton Parish Council
Jimmy Naylor	Drigg & Carleton Parish Council
Dave Weatherburn	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Glyn Davies	Nuclear Installations Inspectorate

Observers:

David Millington	Drigg & Carleton Parish Council
Marjorie Higham	Drigg Resident
Penny Hitchin	UK Waste Monitor
John Jennings	Drigg & Carleton Parish Council
Graham Love	Turley Associates
Jean Parke	Energy Solutions

1. Welcome/Introductions/Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, asked those around the table to introduce themselves and acknowledged the apologies. She welcomed Chuck Conway and Paul Pointon from UK Nuclear Waste Management (the preferred bidders for the Low Level Waste Contract) and thanked them for agreeing to address the meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting held on 13/06/07

David Moore informed the group that the minutes from the special joint meeting between LLWR Sub Committee and the Emergency Planning Meeting held on 13/06/07 were ratified at a meeting of the Emergency Planning Group on Monday 10/09/07. The LLWR Sub Committee agreed the minutes as an accurate record.

The minutes from the ordinary LLWR Sub Committee held on 13/06/07 were agreed as an accurate record.

3. Update on Vault 9 Planning Application

Richard Evans briefed the meeting that subject to one or two outstanding issues being resolved the planning application would be heard by CCC's Development, Control and Regulatory Committee (DC&R) on 23/10/07.

He reported that two objections had been received: one from Natural England and the other from the Environment Agency both connected with the proposal to divert the Drigg Stream. He added that wildlife issues and aspects regarding waste issues had also featured in the objections.

He confirmed that Seascale Parish Council welcomed the application and that Copeland Borough Council had still to respond but was awaiting revised drawings.

He also mentioned that he had attended the Drigg & Carleton Parish Council (D&CPC) meeting the previous evening where several issues had been raised predominantly around transportation.

David Millington confirmed that D&CPC had six observations/areas of concern:

- The impact of site preparation for construction.
- Suitability of existing infrastructure.
- Use of trains welcomed – 1 train equivalent to 33 HGV's.
- Additional Private Vehicles.
- Expectation to see Traffic Management Plan prior to planning hearing.
- Inadequate coverage of impact on residents.

Richard Evans confirmed that he had requested a statement through the NDA from the preferred bidder outlining any impacts their proposals would have on Vault 9.

James Fisher explained that revisions to the original application allowed for a longer and thinner vault to address objectors concerns and avoid the diversion of the Drigg stream and tree felling. He confirmed that there were no changes to the Vault design.

Andrew Fairhurst clarified the EA's position stating that supporting evidence had been requested regarding:

- Potential impact on existing disposal in terms of ground water flow.

- How radio nuclides will behave.
- Increased run off from additional vault.
- Capacity to discharge from Marine Holding Tanks.

He confirmed that the EA are taking a longer term view with regard to suitability for disposal in the future.

David Millington questioned whether the decision to change the shape of the vault would result in an extension to the consented area. Richard Evans replied that the application would be judged on its own merits and confirmed that the consented area was no longer relevant as it was based on an authorisation granted over 50 years ago (1957) which had extremely limited relevance to the current application which was for a different type of development.

In response D&CPC concerns regarding transportation, James Fisher explained that LLWR were confident that more material/items would be able to come in by rail, this now included re-bar and drainage pipes which had previously been excluded. He confirmed that additional slots with DRS/Network Rail had been reserved for the receipt of materials. James explained that requirements for a Traffic Management Plan had been included in the tender specification and that the tender process would drive out this information. He added that significant weighting had been placed on a robust Traffic Management Plan.

4. Update on Community Benefit Package

Lesley Sewell explained that DEBBR have no objections to the Community Trust but are concerned about setting a precedent. It is at their request that NDA have been exploring options with CCC with regard to the Community Benefit Package being covered by a Section 106 Agreement connected to the Vault 9 application.

David Moore responded by saying that the WCSSG and the LLWR Sub Committee had been clear that they did not want the Community Benefit Package coming under a Section 106 Agreement. They had hoped that the fund would be covered by a "Precept Package". He expressed concern about this turn of events especially when the Repository was getting closer to coming under new management and disappointment in the delay to reaching agreement.

The Chairman commented on the situation saying she was extremely disappointed in the lack of delivery and stressed the importance of a robust community benefit package for the community.

Lesley Sewell agreed to appraise NDA of the comments received and the feelings of the group.

5. Update on Competition Process

Lesley Sewell gave an update on the NDA competition process reminding the group of the high level concerns associated with the LLW Repository:

- Resolve Post Closure Safety Case (PCSC) issues.

- Construction programme for disposal beyond Vault 8.
- Cost of current process.
- Capacity constraints.

She went on to explain that NDA had conducted a fact finding mission looking at various elements related to the operation and reputation of the short listed bidders:

- Waste minimisation techniques.
- Operational techniques.
- Socio-economic management.
- Re-use, Re-cycling.
- Reduce cost of LLW management to UK tax payer.

In summary Lesley explained that UK Nuclear Waste Management's proposals are:

- Compliant with UK policy and regulatory frameworks.
- Based on over 40 years of safe, secure and compliant operations in UK and internationally.
- Capable of delivering a successful PCSC on time.
- Provide a managed interim storage plan.
- Details an optimised National LLW Programme.
- Founded on a partnership with regulators and stakeholders.

The Chairman asked what measures NDA had taken to confirm that stakeholders and the relevant communities were satisfied with operations and community involvement at the respective sites.

Lesley replied that NDA had interviewed approximately 50 representatives from the local communities, asking them to comment on the behaviour of the operators, what could be improved upon and what the community considered the operators do well. She added that in addition to community representatives NDA spoke to customers and the Department of Energy.

6. Introduction to Preferred Bidder for LLWR Contract

Chuck Conway opened the presentation by apologising for the absence of Mr Dick Raaz, Director of UK Nuclear Waste Management Limited and proposed Managing Director for LLWR SLC. He explained that Mr Raaz had been delayed in the USA and was extremely disappointed to miss the opportunity of addressing key stakeholders.

Chuck went on to give a history of Dick's career and outlined the make-up of the consortium - Washington Group International, Areva, Serco Assurance and Studsvik. He talked about their collective experience in the Low Level Waste area and the individual attributes and expertise each company brought to the consortium. He also featured on the importance of community involvement/engagement and referred to UK Nuclear Waste Management's vision for the Low Level Waste Repository:

The LLWR will be an enduring World Class Repository at the heart of an optimal NDA National LLW Programme

David Millington asked how many people from the consortium would be employed at the LLWR. Chuck Conway replied that nine individuals would be involved.

Marjorie Higham asked how close the sites they currently operated were to the host communities. Chuck Conway replied that the sites Washington operated had been chosen for their remoteness but added that their partners had operated Repositories in very close proximity to communities.

Marjorie explained some of the history behind the creation of the LLWR and stated that it was probably by default rather than design that Sellafield Waste ended up at the Drigg site. She asked what UK Nuclear Waste Management would do for the community. Paul Pointon responded saying that they would endeavour to reduce traffic impact on the village.

Kneale Thompson asked if they envisaged bringing waste in from the other side of the country. Chuck Conway replied that the issue of National waste would be addressed in the National Strategy which NDA had been charged with the responsibility of producing. Lesley Sewell confirmed that the contractor would be involved in National Strategy and the decision on how best to manage Low Level Waste.

Richard Evans expressed disappointment in the NDA's lack of progress in searching for alternative sites.

7. Any Other Business

James Fisher provided an overview of the LLWR's proposals to enable continuous receipt of Low Level Waste. He reminded the group that these proposals were accepted in principle by stakeholders in 2005 and had been shared with stakeholders on a number of occasions since their inception.

He detailed the main proposals and gave an update on progress:

- Backlog waste removal – Complete.
- Higher stacking in Vault 8 – Ongoing.
- Vault 9 Construction for storage – Planning Application submitted June 2007.
- Buffer storage of Low Level Waste at LLWR.
- Store LLW at Consignors – Contingency measure.
- Reuse of B726 compound – Contingency measure.

James explained that LLWR had decided to defer construction of the Rail Sidings due to the acceleration of the Vault 9 project and confirmed that subject to the necessary permissions and approvals being in place, LLWR were on target to commence construction of Vault 9 in March/April of 2008.

He went on to describe the proposals for waste receipts and construction materials by rail during the construction programme, stating that approximately 130 trains would be involved. He confirmed that bentonite and cement powders could be brought in by rail and stated that there would be no compromise to the existing commitment to

reduce the impact of road traffic on the village. He stressed that the fundamental commitments made by LLWR are still being honoured.

Adrian Dalton asked if LLWR had any plans to build a second grouting facility. James Fisher confirmed that the lifetime plan has made provision for either refurbishment of the existing facility or construction of a new one.

Richard Evans confirmed that these details will be incorporated into the revised submission for the Vault 9 application. This also included train details and noise assessments.

David Millington asked why it was considered impractical to build the Rail Sidings at the same time as Vault construction. James Fisher replied that the volume of materials for the Rail Sidings was the same as those for the Vault which would result in double the receipts.

Chris Halliwell stated that it was his intention to build Vault 9 and assess the need for Rail Sidings he warned the group that he would delete it from the programme if it was not required.

Richard Evans informed the group that in the interests of making the best use of Vault 9 he had asked the applicant (LLWR) to consider 6 high stacking instead of 4 high. He confirmed that LLWR have said that they do not want to do this. He has asked them to re-consider. He also confirmed that he had raised this with D&CPC and that they are not happy with his proposals.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the WCSSG LLWR Sub Committee will be held on Wednesday 12th December at 2.00pm in the Drigg Village Hall.