Policy Title:
LP32 - Radioactive Waste

Existing Policies Which adopted Core Strategy or Policies Sites and Places (PSP) policy would eventually be replaced	**Core Strategy policy CS37 Nuclear related Development** (covers the overall approach to nuclear related development, including paragraph 12 on radioactive waste).
Non-Strategic / Strategic	**Non-Strategic**

Purpose

This policy is intended to be read in combination in particular with policy LP31 on decommissioning, although it may also be relevant to any future proposals for disposing of radioactive waste on or off site, and the development of preferred principles for the decommissioning of a new nuclear power station.

The policy is framed to:

a. Support decommissioning of the existing station, and the identification of appropriate beneficial interim/end state uses;

b. Seek to ensure that an integrated approach is taken both to the overall land use planning of the existing power station site as well as, where possible in respect of nuclear new build;

c. Seek to secure a beneficial balance of socio economic and environmental outcomes from all radioactive waste related proposals including any proposal to dispose of low level or very low level waste on site.

Along with other relevant policies in the plan, this policy will be a material consideration in assessing individual planning and waste applications, notifications and any consultations related to the decommissioning of Oldbury power station.

All nuclear fuel has already been removed from site. This policy therefore relates to proposals for the interim management and/or storage and/or disposal of radioactive waste on site. The strategies for dealing with the different levels of waste vary according to their radioactivity and risk characteristics. The existing power station at Oldbury does not have its own Intermediate level waste store, and therefore these wastes may be treated and packaged at Oldbury prior to being moved to Berkeley for long term storage until such time as a national geological disposal facility is available. The Council's expectation is that rail is prioritised for the transportation of waste off-site.

Current Environment Agency (EA) guidance includes for the potential disposal of some Low or Very Low Level Waste (LLW and VLLW) on site, instead of transporting off site for disposal elsewhere. In line with this guidance, site operators are required to produce a Waste Management Plan, a Site Wide Environmental Safety Case, and strategies to keep the risk of radiation exposure to people as low as reasonably achievable, taking into account economic and social factors.

Nuclear Reclamation Services applies the Waste Hierarchy[6], Best Available Technique (BAT) and Best Environment Practice (BEP) to manage the waste from its nuclear liabilities. This includes pre-treatment, conditioning and decay storage processes prior to disposal to reduce the hazardous activity and volume of LLW and higher activity waste (HAW) in accordance with the principles of the waste hierarchy. This means that where radioactive waste generation cannot be avoided or minimised at source, it will be disposed of in accordance with the relevant national policy and strategies. The regulation and permitting of radioactive waste is the responsibility of the Office for Nuclear Regulation and the Environment Agency. The following policy therefore addresses only the planning aspects of radioactive waste proposals.

This policy may also be relevant to the proposals for radioactive waste coming forward as part of nuclear new build at Oldbury.

[6] NDA Radioactive Waste Strategy Figure 2 explains the Waste Hierarchy: preferred approach is prevention, then minimisation, then reuse*, then recycle and disposal only when necessary. https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/nda-radioactive-waste-management-strategy
*EA guidance as per footnote 2 sets out examples of reuse, including filling voids on site or forming bunds/landscaping https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/decommissioning-of-nuclear-sites-and-release-from-regulation

Policy wording

1. **Proposals for the management or storage of radioactive waste, or the disposal of low level and or very low level waste at the Oldbury licensed site, will only be permitted where they are strongly justified and it is demonstrated that all of the following criteria are met:**
    a. **Waste is managed at the highest practicable level of the waste hierarchy; and**
    b. **Regard has been given to the proximity principle, and the need to minimise impacts on communities along transport routes from the site, and**
    c. **Habitats Regulation Assessment of the proposal(s) confirms that development will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of SAC, SPA or Ramsar sites, or functionally linked habitats; and**
    d. **The environmental, social and economic impacts, including how waste is to be transported off-site, are acceptable and the benefits outweigh any negative effects; and**
    e. **Mechanisms are put in place to ensure appropriate records are kept and knowledge of the location, extent and nature of material remaining on site is available to plan makers, regulators, owners of the land and decision makers into the future, and**
    f. **The site will be controlled and regulated appropriately to ensure public health and environmental safety; and**
    g. **Measures are in place to mitigate risks from flood and climate change; and**
    h. **Issues such as perceived risk are fully addressed and explained, and**
    i. **Appropriate Community Benefits are secured to offset the intergenerational delay in the release and restoration of any part of the Oldbury site, and to counter-balance any perceived impacts and negative perceptions from the presence of LLW on the site.**
2. **Where it is proposed that capacity is provided for the management of waste from other sites, it must be demonstrated it is strongly justified that the facility will meet a need that is not met elsewhere that better accords with the proximity principle, and also that accords with the above criteria.**
3. **This policy will be applied in consideration of both on and off-site issues, including impacts arising as a result of the transport of radioactive waste off site.**
4. **Proposals for waste management or disposal should form an integral part of the strategic decommissioning masterplan for the existing Oldbury site, in accordance with Policy LP31 of this plan. The above policy and criteria will also be applied to any relevant aspect of NNB development proposals.**

Supporting text

1. Policy LP32 will be applied in conjunction with other relevant policies in this plan, in particular policies on NSIPs, new nuclear development and decommissioning. This suite of policies should also be read in conjunction with policies relating to climate change, nature recovery and biodiversity and also policy LPS9 - Sustainable Movement & Transport Infrastructure. Since the disposal of radioactive waste on site is likely to constrain future land uses and activities and result in the need for security/regulation, waste management or disposal proposals should form an integral part of master planning for decommissioning of the site at Oldbury as set out in the Decommissioning policy.
2. This policy may also be relevant to informing the Council's planning response to any consultations on consents, licenses or permits from other organisations, as well as in determining planning applications to South Gloucestershire Council.
3. Any proposal to dispose of such waste on site will require planning consent as well as consent from the Environment Agency. The management and/or disposal of wastes on site will only be acceptable where it is demonstrated that public and environmental safety is adequately and appropriately secured into the future through licensing, regulation and permitting from the relevant statutory body.
4. In considering proposals relating to radioactive waste the Council will have regard to other relevant guidance and policy including for example on the waste hierarchy, the proximity principle[7], a masterplan for decommissioning and/or nuclear new build at Oldbury, as well as assessments of the potential impact in the wider community and environment, including those arising from alternative disposal routes. Given the proximity to the estuary, due consideration must also be given to impacts on designations and protected species, including in relation to the timing of works and any potential for disturbance.
5. Given the intergenerational timeframes involved with decommissioning and radioactive decay, and any potential hazards associated with low and very low level radioactive materials proposed to be disposed of on site, it will be vital to ensure that mechanisms are put in place to ensure that records are available and signposted to future organisations, land owners, decision makers and regulators, and to inform land use planning into the future.
6. Nuclear power stations are national infrastructure sites, hosted by local communities on behalf of the nation. Unlike for example domestic waste streams, radioactive waste from a nuclear power station is not generated by that local community, it is generated by that national infrastructure facility and any on site disposal would again be hosted by that local community on behalf of the nation. Given potential community concerns and perceptions relating to radioactive waste, security requirements and limitations on future use that would be imposed by disposal of low level and very low level waste on site at Oldbury, that would endure for many generations into the future, but without any benefits of employment opportunities on the site, it is appropriate that Community Benefits are secured to offset these impacts. An appropriately governed Community Fund should be established to provide positive financial support for projects that improve the amenity, accessibility and social infrastructure of the Oldbury site environs.
7. It should be noted that the decommissioning of Oldbury will also potentially result in other hazardous wastes such as asbestos which will require disposal at a hazardous landfill site. In addition significant volumes of conventional waste such as concrete and

hardstanding may also arise from the demolition and clearance of buildings and hardstandings.

Additions	
Key evidence	
Other relevant policies to cross-reference?	

[7] Planning Portal definition of Proximity Principle: Waste should be managed as near as possible to its place of production, reducing travel impacts.
https://www.planningportal.co.uk/directory_record/452/proximity_principle/category/7/glossary_of_planning_terms