



UK Decommissioning Policy

Recent developments toward enabling decommissioning and sustainability

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- Introduction and UK context
- UN sustainable development goals – *application to decommissioning*
- Updating UK policy and legislation – *an enabling framework for sustainable practices*

Social and Environmental contexts

Construction of Calder Hall. The first commercial nuclear power station in the world.

Operated 1956-2003



The Sellafield site today



Images like these demonstrate the intimate relationship between nuclear sites and their local environmental and social contexts

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- Launched in 2015
- Adopted unanimously by 193 countries
- Covers a broad range of social and environmental issues

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



How can nuclear decommissioning fit into this?

How can domestic policy enable better practice of the SDGs?

Updating UK policy

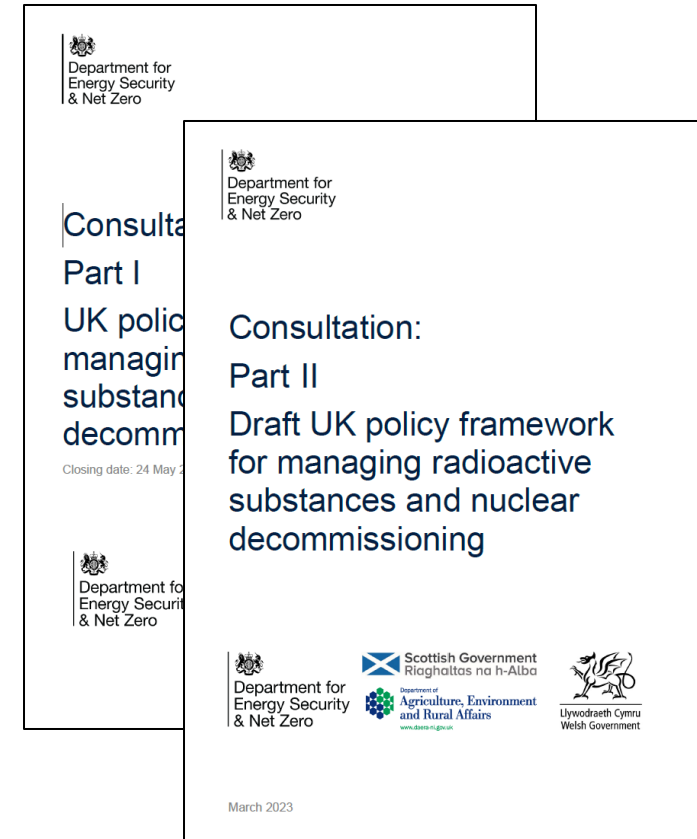
- UK decommissioning policy updated in 2004 – 19 years ago
- Whole surrounding policy on radioactive materials and waste last updated 28 years ago (!)

Since then:

- Formation of the NDA
- Formation of the Office for Nuclear Regulation
- Adoption of UN Sustainable Development Goals
- Net Zero by 2050
- British Energy Security Strategy and ambition for 24GW of new nuclear

This year:

- Launched Draft UK Policy Framework for Managing Radioactive substances and Nuclear Decommissioning



Key policy proposals - decommissioning

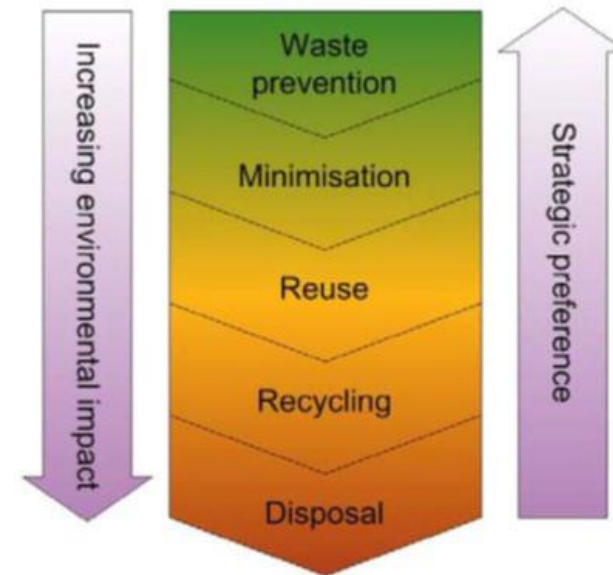
(subject to the outcome of the public consultation and final development)

- Proposals
 - Greater emphasis on building decommissioning into design of new nuclear power stations
 - Embedding sustainable practices throughout operator's decommissioning strategies and site plans
 - Acknowledges that accelerated decommissioning and site remediation is a significant contributor to sustainable development
 - Operators should consider the next use of the site including the beneficial reuse of sites sooner rather than later, taking into account local factors and the wishes of the local community
 - Publicly-owned land should be considered first for future national infrastructure

Key policy proposals – waste management

(subject to the outcome of the public consultation and final development)

- Proposals
 - To take a risk informed approach to disposing of all solid radioactive waste across the whole of the UK
 - Allow disposal of less hazardous intermediate level waste in near surface disposal facilities
 - On site disposal of suitable demolition waste
 - Extend the application of the waste hierarchy



Benefits of policy proposals

- Allow for greater innovation and lead to earlier and more cost-effective nuclear decommissioning with around £1 billion of savings
- make it easier for regulators, delivery bodies and industry to navigate the policy landscape
- bring greater consistency to the management of solid radioactive waste across the UK
- deliver more effective management of solid radioactive waste
- help clean up high hazard sites such as Sellafield more quickly

Changes to legislation - PRC

- In 2018 we consulted on proposals to amend the regulatory framework that applies in the final stages of nuclear decommissioning and clean-up, when the focus is on land remediation, rather than nuclear safety.
- Under these proposals, the site will exit the nuclear third-party liability regime once internationally agreed standards are met. The nuclear regulator will end the licence once satisfied that nuclear safety and security matters had been resolved.
- The sites will remain under regulation by the relevant environment agency and HSE and will be regulated in the same way as other industrial plant undergoing clean-up.
- The Energy Act 2023 has brought in the necessary changes in primary legislation to deliver this ***proportionate regulatory control***.
- These changes will deliver significant savings over the course of the NDA's decommissioning mission.

Thank you



*Dounreay
nuclear site on
the north
coast of
Scotland*