

Nuclear & Energy News



Artists impression of Keekle head

UK's capacity challenge

Alongside the raft of measures relating to electricity market reform announced 27 June, UK energy regulator Ofgem released its report into electricity capacity. According to the report, electricity margins could tighten in the winter of 2015-2016 to between around 2% and 5%, resulting in a supply disruption being a one-in-twelve-year event. The probability of a supply disruption is currently one-in-47 years.

By 2015-16, Ofgem expects total installed capacity to fall to 76.8 GW, from the 77.9 GW capacity estimated for this coming winter (2013/14). In its earlier Electricity Capacity Assessment Report published in October 2012, Ofgem had projected installed capacity to be 79.3 GW by 2015-16.

The heightened risk to the UK's electricity security of supply over the next few years is a result of the closure of about 20% of the country's ageing conventional plant over the next decade combined with low levels of investment in the sector due to uncertainty over government policy

Inquiry over Keekle Head LLW

A public inquiry commenced on the 25th June in Kendal into Cumbria County Councils decision to refuse an application for Very Low Level Radioactive Waste to be received at Keekle Head.

Cumbria County Council had rejected proposals by Endecom UK to build the repository on the site of

a former coal mine at Keekle Head, near Distington. The council said the plan would have an "unacceptable impact" on the surrounding landscape.

But Endecom, owned by recycling giant Sita UK, appealed, triggering the week-long inquiry in Kendal.

Copeland Borough Council objected to the original application.

Hinkley C

The Government has announced a £10 billion guarantee for the proposed new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point to help get the major project moving.

Ministers have offered the money to French energy giant EDF to help finance the £14 billion construction of the new reactors on the Somerset coast.

EDF has already prepared the site next to the two existing stations, but has insisted it will not commit to the project unless the Government guaranteed a minimum price for the electricity the new reactors will produce



ONR serves Improvement Notice to Sellafield Ltd

The investigation has highlighted systematic faults with quality management and oversight of the Evaporator D project that Sellafield needs to address. This is a nuclear construction project to replace three existing evaporators that are approaching the end of their operational life.

As a result, ONR has today (6 June 2013) served Sellafield Ltd with an Improvement Notice for non

compliance with legal requirements associated with the quality management arrangements for the Evaporator D project

The Improvement Notice requires Sellafield Ltd to put measures into place to correct shortfalls in legal compliance by 6 December.

ONR will not agree to commissioning or operation of Evaporator D until we are fully satisfied that it will meet its design intent and deliver the safety functions required of it.

Fracking & On shore Wind Farm Community Benefits

The government unveiled a new assessment of Britain's shale resources that will reinforce hopes of a US-style shale gas boom in the UK.

A report by the British Geological Survey said the [Bowland Shale, which covers 11 counties](#) in northern and central England, contains about 1,300tn cubic feet of gas – though ministers warned the amount that was technically or commercially recoverable would be “substantially lower”.

A package of community incentives were also unveiled – designed to overcome sometimes strong local opposition to “fracking”, the technique that has unlocked vast reserves of shale gas in the US. Shale companies will pay communities £100,000 per well where fracking takes place and 1 per cent of revenues once production starts.

The [Government announced](#) communities will have a greater say over the siting of onshore wind farms, and reap increased benefits from hosting developments that do proceed.

The Government will be expecting the industry to revise its Community Benefit Protocol by the end of the year, to include an increase in the recommended community benefit package in England from £1,000/MW of installed capacity per year, to £5,000/MW/year for the lifetime of the windfarm.

New planning guidance supporting the need for renewable energy does not automatically override environmental protections and the planning concerns of local communities is due out later this year.

The inspector examining Copeland's Core Strategy is awaiting the guidance before proceeding with making a decision on adopting the document