

6 February 2024

Robert Dakin
Principal Inspector, Nuclear Safety
Office for Nuclear Regulation
Redgrave Court
Merton Road
Bootle
Merseyside
L20 7HS

Chief Executive
West Berkshire District Council
Council Offices
Market Street
Newbury
RG14 5LD

Our Ref: nl/rae
Your Ref:

Tel: 01635 519101
e-mail: nigel.lynn1@westberks.gov.uk

By email: rob.dakin@onr.gov.uk

Dear Mr Dakin

Offsite Emergency Plan for the AWE Nuclear Licensed Sites

Thank you for your feedback in relation to Aldex 23 and I am pleased that the authority met the legal requirements as set out in REPP19. The officers from this authority and indeed from the AWE Off-Site Planning Group undertook a great deal of work to put the exercise in place and deliver not only on the day but ensuring the debrief and recommendations for improvement were identified.

Your points in relation to the pressure on the AWE Off-Site Emergency Plan are well made and is something that we too fully recognise. We do have a detailed work plan which officers from the Joint Emergency Planning Unit (JEPU) and other responders are working to. It is extensive but I would summarise it as follows:

1. Overhaul of the AWE Off-Site Emergency Plan to include a public version to assist the public to understand what the responders will be doing therefore closing an information gap.
2. Development of 'handbooks' in order to make it easier for responders to navigate their way around the specific sections. These are being progressed as subgroups and include:
 - Communication
 - Transport
 - Displaced People & Evacuation and Shelter
 - Early Scientific Advice
 - Monitoring (Environmental & People)
 - Recovery
 - Educational Establishments

3. Revision and development of specific advice to vulnerable sites such as schools, care homes and event organisers.
4. Revision of the development control process which when including information in relation to evacuation and shelter, and the current numbers will ensure the responses to applications within the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone will be more robust therefore protecting further the health and wellbeing of the current residents and businesses in the area but also ensuring as far as possible that no new development will go ahead where the plan cannot accommodate it therefore protecting any proposed new residents or businesses.

We do not underestimate the amount of work in relation to the above with at least 1.5 FTE from JEPU, along with the many other responding agencies, working on this project. The intention to have the final draft versions of documents will be in place by 30th May 2024 when there is an AWE Plan and Handbook workshop in place to ratify the documents in advance of any final changes and formal sign off which should be in June 2024.

We acknowledge this is a few months away, but the intention is to move the plan on to a more robust status and along with the other workstreams identified above place us, and other agencies in a better place to respond, recovery in order to protect the existing population and indeed defend more robustly decisions in relation to any proposed future developments within the DEPZ.

We also note the intention to undertake regular targeted formal regulatory interventions and welcome them not only to satisfy yourselves we are progressing the activities as set out below but we trust as an opportunity for us to raise areas of concern that we may not be able to address if it is outside the scope of the Council to resolve.

I trust the above is satisfactory, but if you have any queries please let me know.

Yours sincerely



Nigel Lynn
Chief Executive