



XA04C1406

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**PIME '95 CASE STUDY**

By Martin J. Kay

'Decommissioning Trawsfynydd: how public consultation shaped the strategy'

**Slide 1**                    **Why consult the public on decommissioning?****Slide 2**                    **Pic of Trawsfynydd****BACKGROUND**

When Trawsfynydd power station in North Wales closed down in July 1993, Nuclear Electric's strategy for decommissioning its stations was not clearly defined.

The company had altered its corporate policy on decommissioning from the strategy referred to as the 'Reference Case', which had been approved by the Government, to the preferred 'Deferred Safestore' strategy, which was awaiting Government approval.

Deferred Safestore is preferred as it simplifies the engineering work involved by capitalising on the basic strength and integrity of the reactor building. It minimises the radiation exposure to workers and radioactivity released to the environment, reduces the amount of radioactive waste produced and significantly cuts the total decommissioning costs.

**Slide 3**                    **Pic of Berkeley**

At the same time, Berkeley power station in the South West of England was already in the first stages of decommissioning - following a variation of the 'Deferred Safestore' strategy.

**Slide 4**                    **Circumstances at Trawsfynydd**

The closure and the decommissioning of Trawsfynydd power station was a sensitive issue as:

- The station lies within a National Park of outstanding beauty
- The economic circumstances in the area are such that employment opportunities are very limited

At a crucial time when the company was approaching a Government review which would decide its future, Nuclear Electric could not afford to lose any credibility.

The company needed to be seen to be adopting a clear & well defined decommissioning strategy. Openness is a key part of the company's communications strategy and it was believed Nuclear Electric should consult widely in the Trawsfynydd region.

**Slide 5**                    **What did the public consultation involve?**

A public consultation programme was launched in the vicinity of the power station to gauge the reactions of the public and elected local government bodies to a series of decommissioning options

**Slide 6                    The Options**

Nuclear Electric presented three main options with details on the employment opportunities, the costs, and the lorry loads of material involved with each.

- Early Site Clearance
- Safestore - early or deferred
- Mounding - early or deferred

**Slides 7 - 10            Artists impressions showing station;**

- i.                    As it is
- ii.                    As green field site
- iii.                    During safestore (normal height)
- iv.                    Under mound

**Slide 11                    Pic of Consultation area**

We identified the people on whom decommissioning Trawsfynydd power station is likely to have an environmental or socio-economic impact.

**Slide 12                    The Audience**

- People living within an approximate 25/30km radius of the station
- Three locally elected county/district councils and the statutory body responsible for the Snowdonia National Park
- Trawsfynydd station employees and trade union representatives

**Slide 13                    The Deliverables**

- Brochure outlining the options illustrated with artist impressions
- Video explaining the options using a graphics sequence
- Mobile and visitor centre exhibitions explaining the options
- Full page adverts in the local press detailing the touring exhibition
- Questionnaire to gauge the opinion of local people
- Supporting technical brief  
(Slot to show footage of video graphics - 2 min)

**Slide 14                    The Strategy**

- Announcement of the public consultation at a special station meeting with representatives of local authorities and the media
- A three-week touring exhibition visiting 13 local venues, supported by fully briefed Nuclear Electric technical and visitor centre staff
- Separate managerial presentations to the three county and district councils, including representatives of the Snowdonia National Park
- Questionnaires available to the local public at the visitor centre and mobile exhibition - design and analysed independently

Slide 15What were the results?**Slide 16            The Feedback**

Nuclear Electric received feedback in two ways.

- Formal feedback from the local councils
- Independent analysis of the completed questionnaires

**Slide 17            Aspects viewed as most important by the public**

The number of questionnaires completed by the public (224 out of 1300 visiting the exhibition) seemed small but in fact this level of co-operation in a survey such as this was viewed as very satisfactory. The views reflected in the questionnaires therefore represented a significant response

- 78%    Job creation for local people
- 76%    Visual impact of the site in the longer term
- 70%    Amount of radioactivity dealt with by dismantling workers
- 61%    Returning the site to its original state
- 58%    Height and shape of safestore structures
- 53%    Leaving radioactivity to decay for as long as possible
- 49%    How soon the process can start
- 40%    How long the process will take
- 27%    Cost
- 21%    Amount of site clearance traffic
- 16%    Visual impact of site during dismantling
- 14%    Job creation for non local people

**Slide 18            Interpreting the results**

The company was wholly committed to a meaningful consultation. We promised to listen to the views of those consulted and took these views into very careful consideration before identifying a strategy.

- One local council, the trade unions and the majority of those who completed questionnaires favoured the Early Safestore option
- They also expressed a strong desire to reduce the visual impact of the site
- Two local councils (including the Snowdonia National Park) favoured Early Site Clearance

**Slides 19-21       Artists impressions of station:**

- i.            As it is
- ii.          During normal height
- iii.         Reduced height Safestore

**Slide 22            The compromise**

Nuclear Electric modified its corporate decommissioning strategy (Deferred Safestore) for Trewsfynydd in direct recognition of public opinion and the view of local government bodies.

The company will undertake additional measures to reduce the visual impact of the station by lowering the height of the safestore structures by almost half - a significant amount of work over and above that planned.

Commitment was also given to the issues that the questionnaires indicated were viewed as important by the public.

**Slides 23-24** Two diagrams showing extent of height reduction

**Slide 25** Feeding back the results into the community

- Announcement of the results at a special station meeting with representatives of local authorities and the media
- Brochure outlining the results and the modified strategy
- Exhibition in visitor centre reflecting the brochure
- Full page advertisements in the local press outlining the results and availability of brochure and exhibition
- Detailed report on independent questionnaires analysis
- Letter to all questionnaire respondents with copy of brochure

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The Conclusion

Before consultation

Nuclear Electric set out with a preferred corporate strategy but presented three feasible decommissioning options for Trawsfynydd

After consultation

There was clear evidence that the local community;

- recognised the significance of radiation dose to workers, storage of waste and the economics
- supported the Nuclear Electric approach, but with two caveats that resulted in a modified strategy
  - i. early instead of deferred safestore
  - ii. reduced instead of full height structures

**Slide 27** Ultimate Outcome

By practising its policy of openness, Nuclear Electric gained the acceptance of the public and is now able to proceed with decommissioning Trawsfynydd unhindered, safe in the knowledge that the chosen strategy represents the wishes of the local community