STONEHAVEN

LESSONS FOR NUCLEAR POWERED REINDUSTRIALISATION

September 2025



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01 Introduction

It has been a good year for civil nuclear power in the UK, with milestone achievements for Sizewell C, SMRs and political commitment to civil nuclear cooperation between the US and UK.

While it has taken over 10 years to get to Final Investment Decision (FID) for Sizewell C and nine years since the first iteration of the SMR competition, the Labour Government and the developers should be commended on getting both efforts over the line. But if Britain is going to significantly grow its nuclear fleet, we need to reflect on how we improve this development cycle so that we can go faster and deliver future projects.

Following previous Stonehaven policy papers on Great British Energy / Great British Nuclear and US-UK nuclear cooperation 'Atombridge', both of which have helped shape the direction of nuclear policy thinking, this paper takes stock from working with Sizewell C for the last five years. It sets out the lessons we have learnt, and suggestions to ease nuclear deployment of all types to match future industrial demand.

We have been through the period of the DCO, the Nuclear Financing Bill, the Energy Security White Paper (with its commitment to 24GW of nuclear by 2050), a new government, the ongoing development cost investment in the development process and now the Final Investment Decision. This has given us a front-row seat to the political and policy lessons that should be applied to wider UK nuclear deployment. Without understanding and correcting for these lessons, the use of nuclear as a vehicle for energy security and wider reindustrialisation will be hampered.

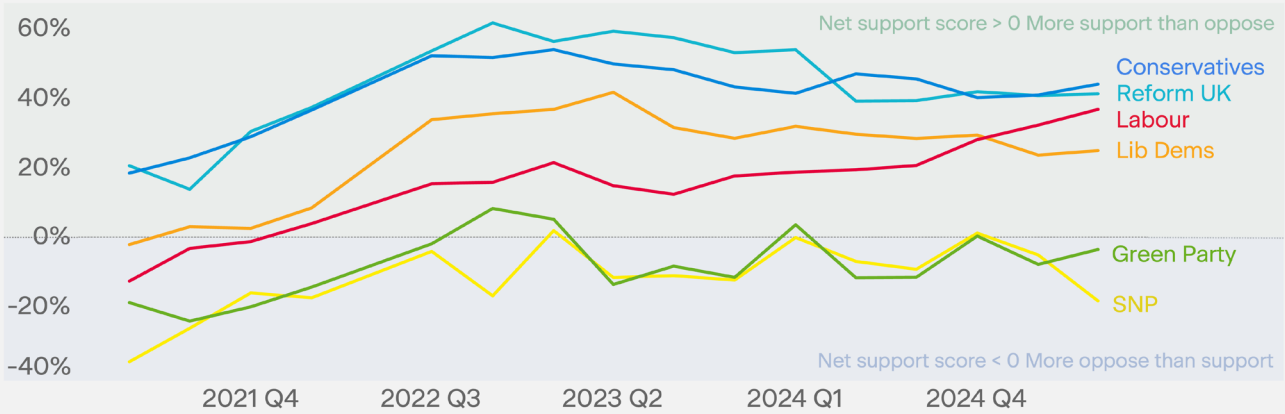
02 NUCLEAR POWER IS A PROXY FOR GOVERNMENT DELIVERY

At a macro level, Stonehaven have tracked support for nuclear for close to five years. Nuclear has net support from all supporters of different political parties. Support from Conservative voters has remained steadily strong through the five-year period. Support from Labour voters has grown considerably with net support tripling over the period. Even the pragmatic environmentalists in the Green Party are now driving net support.

The analysis becomes more nuanced when Labour's "Hero Voters" are analysed. These are the voters that voted Labour in 2024 having previously been Boris Johnson voters in 2019. They are increasingly attracted to Reform since the 2024 General Election, as the recent May 2025 Local Elections demonstrated.

The Government should support the building of new nuclear power plants

For each political party, voters' net support score for nuclear was calculated as % supporting nuclear – % opposing nuclear



Source: Stonehaven Nat. Rep. Polling 2021-2024

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Labour "Hero Voters" support nuclear strongly but, importantly, almost two thirds (62%) agree that 'the UK's ability to build new nuclear power stations is a key test of the country's capacity to complete major infrastructure projects' (only 8% disagree). Government intent alone is not enough. Visible action and the ability to communicate that "shovels are in the ground" is key to building positive public support. Medium-term timelines, such as five years, to deliver new nuclear power stations, do not significantly diminish backing for immediate policy decisions. Nearly two thirds (63%) of Labour's "Hero Voters" agree with the statement "the Government should commit to building new nuclear power stations now, even if they won't be operational for another five years,' while only 10% disagree. The real test is public confidence in delivery, the sense that the Government can break the gridlock and simply "get it done".

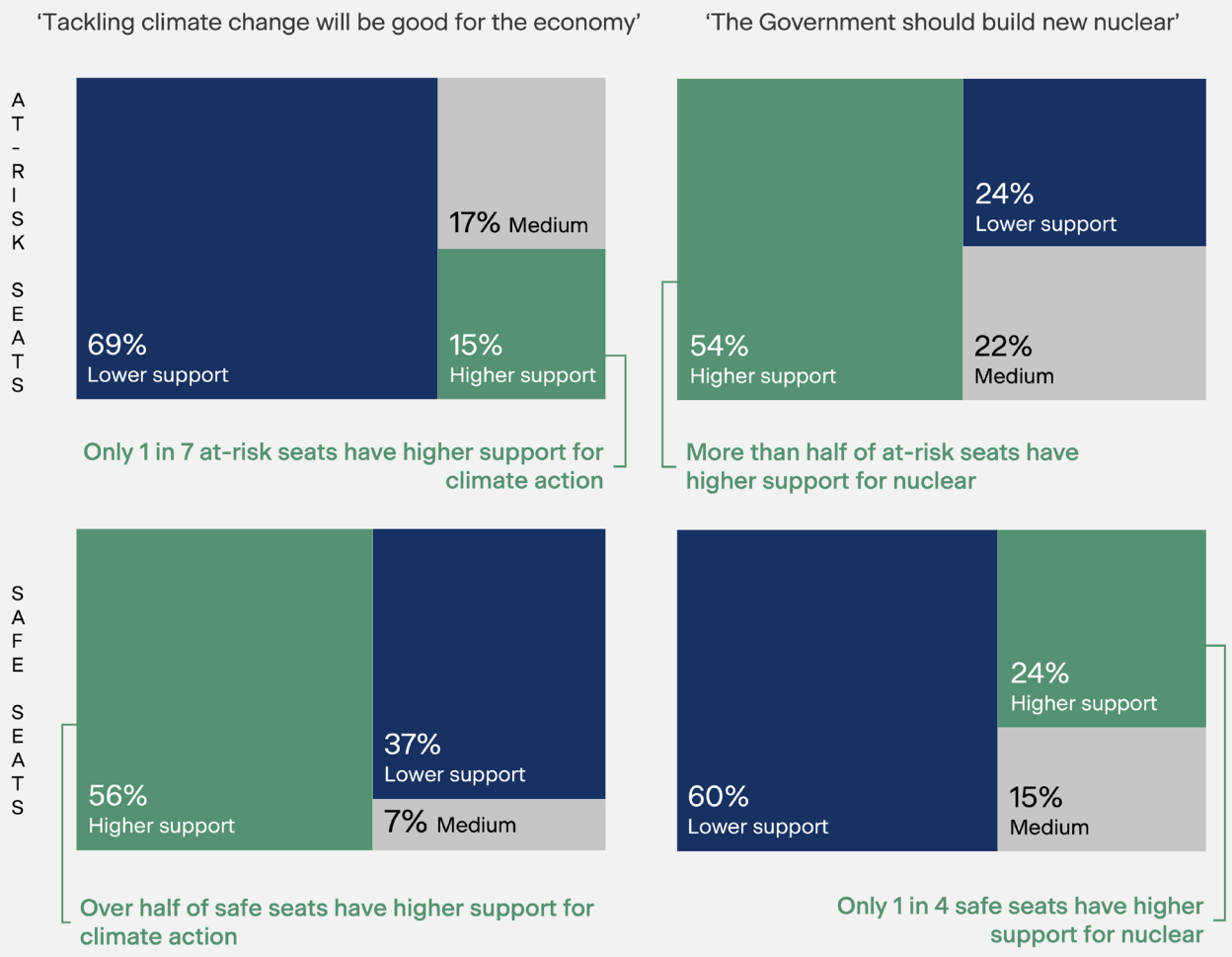
The Government's decisions on SZC and SMRs signal intent and show that it is starting to "get it done". But one decision alone is not enough. To build public confidence and reinforce the message of accelerated delivery, progress on nuclear must be sustained and visible. That means moving faster than one major decision per decade. The challenge is that the shadow of Hinkley Point C makes it all the more important to prove that this time, things are different.

"Getting it done" not only reinforces the Government's ability to deliver and lead, but also signals a focus on voters' core priorities, tackling the cost-of-living crisis and driving economic growth. 64% believe that Labour's plan for economic growth cannot be achieved without an expansion of clean energy. While support for renewables is high, the majority believe that nuclear can deliver where renewables solutions (wind and solar) cannot and see the expansion of nuclear as a natural progression, with over two thirds (68%) believing that nuclear energy has been a 'critical part of our national energy supply in the past'. A majority associate expanding nuclear energy in the UK with 'bringing down bills for people like me' (59% support, 8% oppose).

In addition, almost three quarters (71%) believe increasing nuclear power as a part of the UK's clean energy generation will 'make us less reliant on other countries', an underlying concern amongst this voter group. 61% (against 9%) believe that shifting to more nuclear energy would mean the UK is less vulnerable to global crises. While these voters believe that decarbonising the economy is the right course of action, they are principally concerned with how the UK gets there, and require continuous persuasion and reassurance that Labour in government will align this agenda with their own interests (cost of living) and values (energy security).

For these "Hero Voters", support for net zero is secondary to a transition that protects incomes and delivers energy security. Our MRP shows that all constituencies have net positive support for both 'Tackling climate change will be good for the economy' and 'The Government should build new nuclear'. However, post-2024 election data reveals that constituencies more optimistic about the economic benefits of climate action tend to be less supportive of nuclear energy, and vice versa. Among Labour's at-risk seats - those with less than a two-thirds chance of being retained if an election were held tomorrow - support for nuclear is notably high, with over half of these constituencies in the highest support bracket. The opposite trend appears in safer Labour constituencies.

At-risk Labour seats show higher support for building new nuclear over climate action; safe seats show higher support for climate action over building new nuclear



Source: Stonehaven MRP Programme | 157 total at-risk, 254 total safe Labour constituencies

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Put simply, if Labour make progress on nuclear, their Hero Voters will recognise this achievement. They will judge a Government that is (1) getting it done, (2) bringing bills down and (3) protecting our energy security. Going further and normalising the delivery of nuclear (instead of once in a decade announcements), in the same way renewables delivery is now normalised, will be recognised as having broken the deadlock and is the ultimate demonstration of "getting it done".

Unfortunately, to demonstrate this requires a lot more than the SZC and SMR decisions. These are just the tip of the slow-moving nuclear "iceberg". There are decisions that are needed in this Parliament to help make this happen. Drawing lessons from SZC as well as other observations from selected industry interviews experience working with SZC, we have 5 recommendations that will further demonstrate Labour is "getting it done":

Recommendation 1: Consistent delivery on nuclear commitments

The UK has made landmark nuclear commitments with the FID for Sizewell C and launch of the SMR programme. The priority now is to follow through consistently, maintaining supply chains, fostering collaboration with new industries and providing investors with confidence. Delivering on these commitments will reduce risk, help reduce delays and ensure nuclear remains a stable and enduring part of the UK's energy system.

Recommendation 2: Enable multiple public and private developers

To create an enduring nuclear industry, expertise needs to exist not just in one company, but in Government, the supply chain and multiple providers. This means that Government through Great British Nuclear (GBN) should take a stronger role in encouraging nuclear supply chain development, ensuring it has the appropriate skills in house to analyse projects through a more commercial lens. We should continue to build out our existing GW-scale design, while opening the door to multiple SMR providers - and microreactor providers - to create a nuclear sector that works for multiple end uses.

Recommendation 3: Make civil nuclear regulation more proportionate

Within the generic and detailed design assessment stages, limit regulatory interventions once agreed safe levels are demonstrably met. SZC's safety case was frozen at 2015 (based on the safety case for HPC) giving a static technical design foundation upon which plant, site and organisational capability could be developed. This "fleet-based approach" should apply to all future GW, SMR and AMR builds. Further reform is needed in site selection to further facilitate the "fleet" approach.

Recommendation 4: Simplify and carve out environmental approvals for nuclear

Like all "critical national infrastructure" planning applications, SZC had to navigate significant regulatory duplication and waste across numerous agencies in pursuit of its environmental permit. The first environmental assessments started in 2012 and eventually covered 40,000 pages in the DCO. There is an opportunity to expedite this process for future nuclear plants by enabling a carve-out for nuclear projects within UK Law.

Recommendation 5: Allow nuclear to be used for electricity and heat

In producing electricity using thermal (gas and coal) and nuclear sources, there is always a by-product of heat. Historically, the UK has not used this heat and has classified it as a waste product. The waste heat output of a nuclear power station can be considerable; a Royal Society report in 2020 estimated about 65% of a plant's total output is lost as waste heat.[1] This wasted energy is being paid for by British billpayers. The practice and regulations of not using heat needs significant reform to end this approach.

Nuclear and the CCGT Price Setting Dilemma

We have a single national price that reflects the scarcity of power in half hour slots. This price is set by the most expensive plant that is necessary to turn on in that window, invariably gas CCGTs.

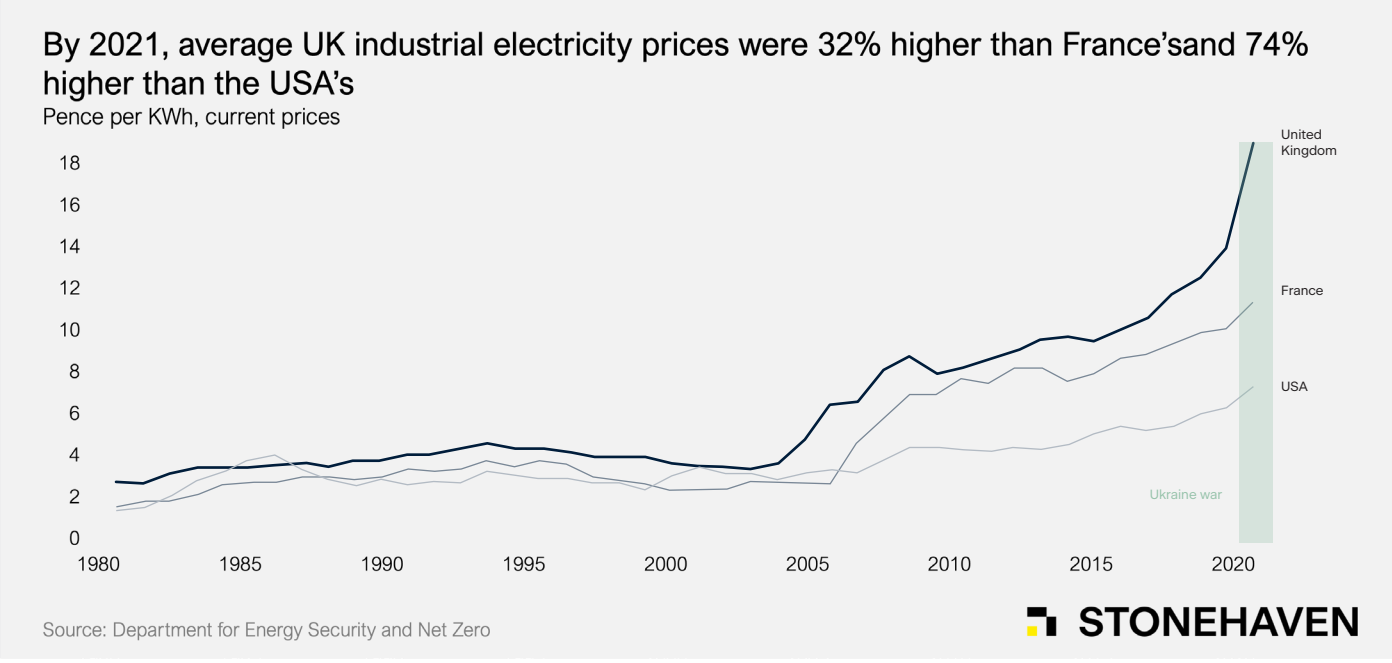
Therefore, as gas has been subject to geopolitical volatility in recent times which has constrained available supplies, this has resulted in price volatility and 'spiky' energy prices that industry and consumers alike have had to absorb with little alternative available for the provision of foundational electricity supply. Adding an abundance of nuclear will reduce the dominance of gas in the market and reduce spiky costs. This is especially important for those industrial processes that cannot switch on and off easily either for economic or safety reasons. You can't be a world leading manufacturer if your factories only work when the wind blows and the sun shines.

However, nuclear not being commissioned quickly means increasing our reliance on gas. A robust and cost-effective electricity system is an optimal system that has a range of technologies with different characteristics (baseload, intermittent, flexible, storage). Every technology is needed. This includes filling the 'floor' of our electricity system to provide constant availability when needed to underpin renewables. As of 2023 there is a total generating capacity of 35.7GW of active gas fired combined cycle power plants and open cycle power plants. However, around 15GW are due to come offline in the coming years.[2] Whilst the government has set out plans to build 5GW of new gas fired power plants to replace some of the retiring capacity, the economics of a new build gas power plant are very difficult. Unabated gas generation is not part of the Green Taxonomy, the threat of decarbonisation requirements are ever present and the volume risk as the use of these plants decreases over time will make the risk profile and recovery of investment unappealing. It will be increasingly expensive to commission these plants.

If we are to have a clean power system beyond the fixed target of 2030, we need to have a plan to accelerate nuclear rollout now, to mitigate the significant lead times for nuclear technology and to allow for a renewables "plus" world – where renewables are complimented by constant technologies like nuclear. This is why critical decisions on nuclear power must be considered now alongside the SZC and SMR decisions.

The British public want nuclear energy to be part of their energy mix. Nuclear is a demonstrable, manifest statement of Government's capability to get things done. Nuclear can play a significant role in insulating the UK from volatile gas prices.

Our five recommendations will help make this happen quickly.





03 Recommendation 1: Consistent Delivery on Nuclear Commitments

With Sizewell C approved and the SMR programme now launched, the priority is to maintain a stable supply chain and foster collaboration between nuclear energy and new industries. Developers and investors alike need clarity that the regulatory and political environment is stable enough to deliver consistently over time.

The government has rightly made landmark commitments with Sizewell C and the launch of the SMR programme. The priority now is to follow through, ensuring these commitments are without disruption. Reducing risk, avoiding delays and managing development costs effectively will increase investor confidence and improve the chances of timely delivery. The stop-start nature of nuclear development over the last 30 years must not be repeated.

Strong visibility over the path ahead will give greater confidence to industrial investors, unlocking the capital necessary to deliver. With FID on Sizewell C secured and a winner selected for the SMR programme, the next steps, such as incorporating Great British Nuclear into Great British Energy, must continue to place nuclear at the centre of Britain's energy system.

Just as renewables receive year-on-year political and policy support as their growth continues, so too must nuclear. This starts with a target: a clear strategic intent to maintain 24GW nuclear ambition in the Spatial Energy Plan would send a definitive message to potential investors. Including within this ambition the ability to develop new large GW plant alongside securing FID on SMR projects and enabling First-of-a-Kind (FOAK) in-country financing support for new AMR technologies would show Britain is open to all nuclear pathways, whether government-backed or privately financed.

Historically, each Parliament has its nuclear moment. This needs to end. Support for nuclear needs to be enduring, not episodic.

04 Recommendation 2: Enable Multiple Public and Private Developers

To unlock a programme of delivery, ultimately the timeline to reaching FID has to be reduced and streamlined. GW-scale nuclear takes eight years to reach FID in the UK; SMRs are predicted to take at least six. In contrast, a new decarbonisation-ready gas CCGT could achieve FID in a few years, and be commissioned within two to three years. Critical regulatory and planning reform is going to be required.

But cutting red tape is only part of the story. Nuclear projects are by their nature complex and require expertise. At the moment, only the EPR development and delivery team possess UK-specific nuclear delivery experience. This team originated in EDF and traces its lineage back to the Atomic Energy Authority in the 1950s which heralded the first successful era of nuclear delivery. To deliver at scale under a reformed regulatory regime more capacity is required.

One way to do this would be to enable multiple private developers and publicly owned entities to participate in the market.

Historically, Britain has had only one nuclear development company. GBN's role in co-ordinating development makes it tempting to suggest that it should become the development company for the next fleet. But this ignores the widening of the available technology selection occurring with the development of SMRs and AMRs and ignores the fact that large private businesses are increasingly able to become long-term off-takers for these smaller engines. Large-scale GW nuclear is required to support a whole UK system but smaller SMRs and AMRs can both support the whole system and provide dedicated generation for a specific site such as a data centre or a high electricity use industrial site.

In the public sector, currently, the sense that GBN's delivery programme is nearly there, but not quite there, permeates. There is no plan for a subsequent GW-scale reactor, or how more novel nuclear technologies like AMRs will be deployed. GBN has purchased land for SMRs, but there is no development company for the SMRs currently going through design selection. Nonetheless, the design selection process has been hampered by a legal obligation to consider every design that is put forward, subject to a modest filtering process and no appointment of a delivery body, and if any changes are sought, the process restarts.

Internationally, the private sector and other governments are beating us to it. If another European SMR creates opportunities for nuclear delivery specialists before we can this risks the UK not having a highly skilled nuclear specialist when the time comes to build the fleet.

Britain needs to create a supportive environment for nuclear development. As is common with energy infrastructure, the Government supporting FOAK projects (and FOAK in country) provides the risk-share required for investment confidence to deploy the first AMRs and SMRs, which will enable efficient replication for subsequent deployment. The simultaneous development of large-scale and SMR nuclear projects will create a robust nuclear ecosystem, facilitating easier deployment of both technologies.

To enable this to happen requires a wide array of developers across the nuclear technologies. This will include:

1. The EPR development team needs to continue to be given support to deliver HPC and SZC as well as given the opportunity to develop a 3rd EPR if this is required.

2. GBN should become the developer for a fleet based on the winner of the SMR competition, bringing forward the development into the planning and regulatory system, designing and building at a cheaper cost of capital than accessible to private developers. This is critical when the cost of borrowing in the UK is 9.5% compared to the 6% of South Korea.

3. GBN should support new private sector developers with FOAK projects to enable the first build of new SMR and AMR technologies in the UK (provided the developer commits to fleet deployment). By supporting FOAK, this provide a catalyst for a new developer to "get going" in the UK.

These three actions would enable direct investment into UK based supply chains delivering a strong ecosystem that finally breaks the "stop-start" nature of previous nuclear build.



05 Recommendation 3: Make Civil Nuclear Regulation More Proportionate

The ever-shifting standards for civil nuclear safety and siting requirements form a not insignificant part of the story behind the expensive pathway to FID for nuclear development in the UK.

Apply the SZC safety case approach to all designs

The UK has one of the safest and most robust nuclear regulatory regimes in the world: post-Fukushima, nuclear safety is paramount across nuclear energy design, construction and operation. Restoring a programme of nuclear energy delivery is contingent upon the ability to significantly reduce the time and cost associated with developing projects – and an acceptance of what is safe enough, given that the UK has one of the safest nuclear regimes in the world. To be clear, this is not a call to place cost savings above safety – the pendulum that swings between institutions responsible independently for cost, time and safety need to collectively find an equilibrium between the three for nuclear to thrive.

One way this would be possible is adjusting the way we approach safety. SZC provides a strong example of best practice in action. SZC's safety case was frozen at 2015 (based on the safety case for HPC) giving a static technical design (GDA) and static safety rules upon which plant, site and organisational capability could be developed. This "fleet approach" applied to SZC but it has not be formally adopted for other technologies. Rolls Royce is currently passing through three steps of the Generic Design Assessment (GDA) process. Once approved, Rolls Royce (and other SMR and AMR technologies) should be afforded the same principle. The GDA is fixed at the moment of approval and the safety and environmental rules applicable at that moment of approval should also be fixed (and not subject to future change). This gives the developer a static foundation on which to deploy their technology for the next 10-20 years. ALARA and ALARP should apply at the point of design approval but they should not be continually updated over the 10-20 years of fleet build-out.

Technology First GDA

While the baselining of SZC's safety case helps a fleet approach, it does not help with the initial GDA approval of the technology. The current design stage is 'non prescriptive', and follows the principle of ALARA/ALARP which is either as low as reasonably achievable or practical. What this means in practice is that risk and safety standards are continuously increased to a goalpost that will continue to move as nuclear technology evolves, and incremental improvements to safety and risk reduction can be sought and met. This has historically caused significant delays during the design and build process. There is no trade-off between the incremental improvement that has to be created, and the time, cost and impact on delivery that is causes.

There are two suggested improvements:

1. Require regulators to assess technical design first, then the plant, site, and organisational capability. This is a more modern approach that shifts focus from excessive documentation to radiological and industrial safety outcomes.

2. Apply proportionality requiring the ONR to limit regulatory intervention once agreed safe levels under IRR17 (Ionising Radiation Regulations 2017) are demonstrably met instead of constantly moving the goalpost with ALARA/ALARP. (This is consistent with the optimisation principle specified in ICRP 103 (the International Standard)). This can be achieved by issuing a ministerial direction under Section 112 of the Energy Act 2013.

Improve siting requirements

The UK Government's EN-7 National Policy Statement represents a significant evolution from its predecessor, EN-6, in how to manage nuclear power station siting. EN-6, introduced as a government-led framework, identified eight specific sites for nuclear development with a target completion date of 2025. In contrast, EN-7 shifts to a developer-led, criteria-based model that allows developers to propose sites for projects extending beyond 2025. This transition grants developers greater autonomy to select locations that meet rigorous safety, environmental, and operational standards, offering particular advantages for innovative technologies such as SMRs and AMRs. The benefits of this new approach are substantial. By empowering developers to pinpoint cost-effective and strategically optimal sites, EN-7 encourages innovation and could accelerate project timelines through direct collaboration with local communities and high energy intensive businesses.

But EN-7 could go further:

- Provide more proportionate site selection criteria. The proposed methodology for site selection involves drawing a 30km radius circle around the proposed nuclear site and evaluating the number of people that fall into 30º degree segments of that circle. This is regardless of the actual risk the development represents. It could accidentally rule out installing a small nuclear reactor for the purposes of providing power and heat to the steel industry in Port Talbot, given the site's close proximity to Swansea.

- Establish a fast-track approval process for sites meeting these precise standards, reducing bureaucratic delays by setting a firm timeline, such as 6 months, for regulatory reviews.

- Financially, offering targeted incentives like £50 million grants for SMR projects or 10-year tax relief for developments in designated energy zones (such as the recently announced AI growth zones) could attract more investment.

- Be very specific to maintain a technology-neutral stance in EN-7 is vital to future-proof the policy, ensuring it can adapt to advancements beyond the EPR and the 2 chosen SMR reactors.

EN-7 can more efficiently drive the deployment of nuclear power stations, bolstering the UK's energy security and decarbonisation ambitions. The UK Government are on the right track but need to push the boundaries to obtain maximum benefit.

Change the sequence

The journey to FID in the UK for large scale nuclear is eight years, and for SMRs is expected to take around six. Poland in contrast announced the intention to pursue nuclear SMRs in 2021, and issued a fundamental decision to confirm investment in Poland's first nuclear power plant.[3] In Poland, the financing decision is reached prior to siting and construction permits being obtained. If that were to be adopted in the UK in parallel rather than in sequence, it would add a financial incentive to the speedy completion of these processes that otherwise take years. International competition for the race to be the first to deploy an SMR has implications for securing the supply chains and skilled workers required to deliver a nuclear portfolio in the UK, so there is a real jeopardy in continuing as-is – this is a supply chain and workforce in the UK that sits underutilised and ready.

The above recommendations are both core to moving towards the "fleet effect"; to continually reassess our strengths and weaknesses by learning from the past and providing the highest safety standards, efficiency and profitability to attract investment. As far as possible, we must standardise designs, learn from replicable successes here and internationally and drive down costs and timeframes.

This could include:

- A singular standardised gateway for multi developer applications across the Generic Design Assessment, environmental permitting and habitat protection, the planning process, and the Nuclear Site Licensing process – this should be more achievable given the smaller and modular nature of new technology.

- Ensure that siting requirements are considered within the Planning and Infrastructure Bill.[4]

- Encourage SMRs and AMRs to co-locate and integrate with specific local power generation needs, direct to industry, co-locating with data centres, for hydrogen production or industrial hubs, rather than simply straight to grid generation; and

- Use of standardised project design parameters on initial consents to avoid future delays in seeking consent variations on future scaling-up.

Many of these are already happening internationally such as data centre owners procuring Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs), or resolving to commission the build of their own SMRs, such as Amazon, Google, Microsoft and Westinghouse.[5] The UK should follow suit.

06

Recommendation 4:

Simplify And Carve Out Environmental Approvals For Nuclear

Like all “critical national infrastructure” planning applications, SZC had to navigate significant regulatory duplication and waste across numerous agencies in pursuit of its environmental permit.

The first environmental assessments started in 2012 and eventually covered 40,000 pages in the DCO. SZC has had limited success speeding up environmental permitting even though it is planned critical national infrastructure.

There are so many laws, regulations and rules across multiple agencies that it is difficult to know where to start in reforming environmental permitting. Many of the measures we adopt in developing nuclear projects are intended to meet statutory requirements and avoid the risk of judicial review. Managing the risk of judicial review is a “doom loop” of interpreting and second-guessing past, present and future legislative judgments.

All advanced democracies have this problem and the only fail-safe way to address this is through primary legislation. What is required is a mechanism that overrides specific legal provisions in specified circumstances, essentially providing a targeted and temporary suspension of legal and regulatory provisions where they are held to lead to perverse or undesirable outcomes.

The continual perverse outcome for nuclear is a delay in our energy security and a delay in carbon reduction – both primary needs of the nation – while the micro-managing of environmental and nature requirements continues to have limited discernible impact on biodiversity.

Certain legal obligations should be treated as discharged in relation to very specific projects notwithstanding what the law actually requires. In effect, it allows for the provisions of specific laws to be switched off completely, in very specifically defined circumstances relating to a particular nuclear project. Within this would be laws and regulations relating to environmental protection, pollution control, wildlife and biodiversity, waste and resource efficiency, land and conservation, enforcement and governance.

Obviously, this puts a significant onus on nuclear developers to act as responsible citizens, but it is a necessary trade-off to accelerate our deployment of nuclear to protect our country’s energy security.



07 **Recommendation 5:** Allow Nuclear To Be Used For Electricity And Heat

In producing electricity using thermal (gas and coal) and nuclear sources, there is always a by-product of heat. Historically, the UK has not used this heat and has classified it as a waste product.

Our heating source has been natural gas developed in the 1970s from our North Sea supplies. There was no incentive or requirement to devise mechanisms to use both the electricity and heat output from our generation activities.

65% of the output of our nuclear power stations is wasted. The "regulatory justification" process within nuclear needs significant reform to end this practice.

That Hinkley Point C's heat is wasted when it could be utilised in, for example, a Bristolian heat network shows a level of disconnect caused by a regulatory barrier. Industrial heat that is needed for chemical processes, food processing and many forms of heavy manufacturing is otherwise generated using electricity. The main barrier in nuclear is the 'regulatory justification' from the Ionising Radiation Regulations 2004 and it is typical of a regime applied to nuclear that is not applied anywhere else. Nuclear operators are obliged to apply for a justification for every 'practice' they intend to use nuclear energy for using a single reactor design. If an operator has submitted a design intended to generate electricity and has received permission to do so, and then wishes to add another use to that design, they will need to go through what is a very laborious process all over again. This takes two years and can cost millions for a needless process.

The cost incurred is another direct regulatory barrier to innovation and to building an intelligent and efficient energy hub that takes full advantage of nuclear energy. For example, an SMR could theoretically be built in an industrial hub, providing power to a data centre to reduce pressure on the grid for housing, and heat for home heating or hydrogen production or to power direct air capture processes (both of which the Government is incentivising separately at cost to the taxpayer). This is not currently possible without enduring the regulatory justification process. In short, if you are a nuclear provider, you can only realistically have one end use in mind. Doing anything else costs massive amounts of money and time. This regulation needs reform.

The planning process already considers project justification in terms of the benefits outweighing the detriments and it considers all of the constituent parts of a nuclear power station's use of ionising radiation from its radiological safety to its environmental impact. The problem can be solved with an amendment to the Planning and Infrastructure Bill:

"Where a specified consent is granted for a nuclear generating station the practice of the generation of electricity or heat from that nuclear generating station which is so consented is deemed to be justified for the purposes of the Justification of Practices Involving Ionising Radiation Regulations 2004."

This solution allows the 'regulatory justification' requirement for uses of ionising radiation at generation stations to be fulfilled in a proportionate and thorough manner at a more effective point in development. This helps to remove duplicative regulatory requirements, saving both time and money, with no reduction in scrutiny or safety. By doing this, the radiological safety and environmental impact of a specific nuclear plant are properly covered but innovation is permitted on the wider uses of the outputs of a nuclear plant being electricity and heat.

08 Conclusion

FID for SZC and the approval of two SMRs is a major moment in Britain's nuclear history. But it only the start of a journey.

If Britain is serious about reindustrialisation, it has to tackle the fact we have the highest industrial energy bills in the world and, frankly, less secure energy supplies. The one-off costs of building a nuclear station are expensive. But the additional system costs are low, it provides significant volumes of always-on power for industrial or domestic uses and each individual station lasts for a minimum of 50 years – enough time for even Britain to re-industrialise!

Nuclear can be delivered faster and cheaper but it needs help to do this. These recommendations are our lessons from working with SZC for the last five years which we hope would enable nuclear to become faster, cheaper and better.

1. Consistent delivery on nuclear commitments
2. Enable multiple public and private developers
3. Make civil nuclear regulation more proportionate
4. Simplify and carve out environmental approvals for nuclear
5. Allow nuclear to be used for electricity and heat

The battle in UK politics in the latter half of the 2020s will be between Labour and Reform. While both parties disagree on climate change, both parties agree on nuclear. A Labour Government that pushes hard on expanding nuclear power and 'gets it done' could gain significant support from voters.



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