

Insights

NUCLEAR HERITAGE

Sep 17, 2024

On 13 September 2024, the Government published a heritage and vision statement to commemorate, celebrate, preserve and safeguard the history and cultural heritage of the UK's civil nuclear industry and those associated with its creation, progress and development^[1]. The scope of preservation will apply to civil nuclear establishments from the early 1940s through to now and beyond.

Social value is a core component of the preservation strategy. Accordingly the process will identify and safeguard significant UK heritage assets as well as engage with local communities to celebrate the UK's civil nuclear heritage and understand the immense contribution the civil nuclear industry has made to the UK.

The Energy Act 2004 imposes an obligation on the Nuclear Decommissioning Agency (the “**NDA**”) to establish measures to encourage and support those activities that benefit the social or economic life of local communities near to civil nuclear sites. As such, the NDA adopted a “Local Social and Economic Impact Strategy” in July 2020 which enshrines that decommissioning works should benefit local communities and provide a positive legacy once completed. Preserving our civil nuclear heritage is a core foundation of this ambition and its impact on tourism and local economies has been to date and is expected to continue to be hugely beneficial to local communities.

This follows on the heels of the new Labour Government committing to (i) increase the lifetime of existing nuclear plants and (ii) complete the construction of the twin unit 3,260 MW Hinkley Point C nuclear power station in Somerset. The Labour Government also acknowledge that new projects (such as Sizewell C in Suffolk, another 3,260 MW project) and small modular nuclear reactors are critical to the UK's energy mix and to achieve our own energy security. In their manifesto, Labour were critical of the Conservative Government for dragging their heels with nuclear projects, which has been part of the cause of the energy crisis we face today and the shortage of generation capacity.

Hinkley Point and Sizewell will be the UK's first ever third generation nuclear plants. Third generation nuclear technology includes improved fuel technology and thermal efficiency and more

developed safety systems with a reinforced core which is designed to withstand plane crashes, earthquakes and extreme flooding.

Whilst it remains early days under the Government, it seems fairly clear so far that under Labour, nuclear power is here to stay and will form a large part of the solution to our current and future energy requirements.

Should you have any questions or queries about the UK nuclear sector or UK infrastructure projects, please do not hesitate to contact a member of [BCLP's Energy Transition team](#).

[1] [Heritage vision and strategy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

MEET THE TEAM



Kevin Atkins

London

kevin.atkins@bclplaw.com

[+44 \(0\) 20 3400 4693](tel:+442034004693)



Alexander Hadrill

London

alexander.hadrill@bclplaw.com

[+44 \(0\) 20 3400 4740](tel:+442034004740)

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