



# information

For immediate release

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## **Wylfa: Welsh and Irish Councils unite to say no to new nuclear build**

Local councils on both sides of the Irish Sea have pledged to oppose any plans to build a new nuclear power station at Wylfa or to extend the life of the current plant at the site.

Councils in the Republic of Ireland are joining the Irish government to highlight the risks a new reactor at Wylfa would pose in the light of the fact that the plant is just 60 miles from Dublin.

Welsh anti-nuclear councils are also raising their voices against a new nuclear power station at Wylfa, which they believe would undermine efforts to fight climate change by diverting resources from investment in energy conservation and renewable energy schemes. This could result in a net economic cost to Wales.

19 members of Ynys Mon / Anglesey Council recently voted to back a new reactor at Wylfa if the UK Government decides to build a new generation of nuclear power stations.

However, members of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) network in Wales and Ireland believe that a new nuclear power station at Wylfa is not in the broader interests of communities in either country.

NFLA point out that, as well as posing obvious safety and security threats, a new generation of nuclear power stations would lock the UK into a centralised electricity distribution system for the next 50 years. This investment could be used more effectively to promote schemes for generating renewable energy, including small-scale community based micro-generation and energy efficiency schemes which are ideally suited to Welsh needs and could provide economic and employment benefits across the whole nation.

Leading anti-nuclear Councillor Tony McDermott of South Dublin County Council said: “The nearest large city to Wylfa is not in Wales or even England, but is Dublin, the capital of Ireland, just 60 miles away across the Irish Sea.

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**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES**

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Manchester City Council, Town Hall, Manchester, M60 3NY

Tel: 0161 234 3244 Fax: 0161 234 3379 E-Mail: [office@nuclearpolicy.info](mailto:office@nuclearpolicy.info) Website: <http://www.nuclearpolicy.info>

“Keeping Wylfa open exposes Dublin and towns in the East of Ireland to unnecessary and unacceptable risks from pollution and accidents. Building another reactor there is out of the question.”

Louth County Councillor Michael O’Dowd, Chair of the All Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities Forum, said: “We will be calling on the Irish government to join with us to ensure that the Welsh Assembly Government and the Department of Trade and Industry understand why we oppose building a new nuclear power station at Wylfa or prolonging the life of the existing reactor, given the strategic importance Wylfa has for Ireland.”

Councillor Peter Lloyd from Neath – Port Talbot County Borough Council in Wales, and Chair of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities National Steering Committee, said: “There are worries about the economic impacts of closing the Wylfa nuclear power station for local businesses, and certainly no-one wants to see jobs go, but investment in renewables and energy saving creates new employment opportunities.”

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For more information please contact:

Tony McDermott on + 353 86 832 7450

Michael O’Dowd on + 353 87 224 5532

Peter Lloyd on + 44 7814 392519

Note for editors:

1. The Nuclear Free Local Authorities network represents five Irish local authorities, including the Dublin Regional Authority and South Dublin county council, and ten local authorities in Wales. For more information please see [www.nuclearpolicy.info](http://www.nuclearpolicy.info).
2. A recent article in the specialist industry magazine ‘Nucleonics Week’ reported that the extension of the life of the existing Magnox nuclear power station at Wylfa faced ‘three major obstacles’ and ‘would involve a huge amount of cost at significant risk’, according to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), who are responsible for the site. The NDA are preparing a business case for consideration by the Department of Trade and Industry to extend the plant’s life by nine months beyond its currently scheduled closing date of March 2010 (Nucleonics Week Volume 47 / Number 7 / February 16, 2006).