

# CWMNI EGINO

## UPDATE

May 2024

Cwmni Egino was established to build on the work of the Snowdonia Enterprise Zone by looking at options for sustainable job creation and socio-economic regeneration – with a core aim of facilitating future development at the former nuclear power station site in Trawsfynydd.

New nuclear in north Wales presents a huge opportunity to drive social and economic growth regionally and across Wales, and to help reverse the trend towards outward migration by retaining and attracting back local talent. This potentially offers substantial economic benefits, and can also contribute to creating socially and environmentally sustainable, thriving communities – including supporting the Welsh language and culture.

However, there is ongoing uncertainty regarding the future of the Trawsfynydd site in particular, and many decisions to be made at UK Government level which will impact the prospects for new nuclear in north Wales.

As we reach the end of our second operational year, we hope that this update explains the current state of play in relation to Trawsfynydd as well as give some information about Cwmni Egino's activities and potential future role.

## OUR WORK AT TRAWSFYNYDD

Over the past two years, our focus has largely been to explore future opportunities at the Trawsfynydd nuclear site. We developed a business proposition which evidences the potential of deploying small scale nuclear at Trawsfynydd, and be one of the first SMR sites in the UK. This was presented to both Welsh and UK Governments in May 2023.

Since then, we have carried out further work to look in more detail at the suitability of the site for a range of technologies. This work will culminate in a site information pack that will summarise its key features and enable potential developers to assess its merits.

We continue to make the case for small-scale nuclear projects to be located at Trawsfynydd but recognise that the decision is beyond our direct control.

## UK LEVEL DEVELOPMENTS

In parallel with our work at Trawsfynydd, there have been a number of developments at the UK level – most notably the establishment of Great British Nuclear (GBN) to drive the UK's new nuclear programme.

The first task for GBN set by UK Government is to decide on the technologies and siting of two SMR projects to be taken forward with the aim of approval in the next parliament (i.e. by the end of the decade). There is a process underway by GBN and a decision is expected later this year.

GBN have stated that they are focusing initially on sites designated in the existing National Policy Statement for Nuclear, EN-6, which doesn't include Trawsfynydd. Therefore, our proposition to be one of the first sites to deploy SMR in UK will not be delivered as part of the GBN programme.

The UK Government is currently running two consultations: 1) a new approach to siting beyond 2025; and 2) alternative routes to market for new nuclear projects.

The first consultation is expected to lead a new national policy statement for nuclear that will broaden the range of sites that could enable Trawsfynydd. The second consultation may open opportunities outside of the GBN process for development at Trawsfynydd.

We fully recognise the frustration of not having firm plans for development at Trawsfynydd. Whilst we continue to explore a range of options, this uncertainty is likely to continue – at least until GBN confirms the sites and technologies it intends to adopt, and the revised siting policy is finalised.

## MAXIMISING REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

There are positive prospects for significant investment in new nuclear in the UK over the next decades as part of the UK Government's response to energy security and net zero priorities. This potentially paves the way towards a huge opportunity for north Wales – including Meirionnydd – to benefit from the UK new nuclear programme.

In addition to our site-specific work at Trawsfynydd, Cwmni Egino is playing a role in facilitating the maximum benefits that future nuclear projects can offer for Meirionnydd and the wider north Wales region – wherever (and whenever) they might be sited.

We are developing a handbook to guide short term actions that will contribute towards capturing region-wide social, economic and environmental benefits from inward investment in nuclear in the future. We will be sharing our approach with stakeholders over the coming weeks and will be inviting comments and feedback to help us shape it further.

## OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Alongside our ongoing engagement activities, we've been collaborating with Gwynedd Council on two important outreach projects, supported through the NDA socio-economic fund:

- Working with M-SParc, we have designed and piloted the Egni schools initiative which has already been delivered in a number of Meirionnydd schools and will continue through the 2024-25 academic year. The programme teaches young people about the low carbon energy sources and encourages critical thinking around meeting modern day demands for electricity.
- Local company Lafan has been appointed to conduct some community-focused research looking at the value that the Trawsfynydd site has, does and will hold for local people. This will deepen our understanding of the community's aspirations for the future, and inform discussions around the design of any future solution for the site and wider regional opportunities.

We also look forward to launching a series of explainer videos very shortly to support outreach activities. These digital resources will be publicly available and will help ensure a broader level of understanding of nuclear-related concepts, and hopefully inspire wider conversations about the opportunities for north Wales.

## CWMNI EGINO'S FUTURE

The site-specific development work carried out by Cwmni Eginno to date – coupled with the organisational expertise and stakeholder relationships which we've developed – offer a solid foundation for new nuclear development in north Wales.

We continue to liaise with our sponsors at Welsh Government and stakeholders at UK Government level to ensure ongoing commitment and support for Cwmni Eginno to play a continued role in delivering the UK's nuclear ambitions – securing socio-economic benefits here in north Wales being our top priority.

We have already established a good relationship with the GBN team, and there is real potential for us to work together for mutual benefit. Positive discussions are taking place between the two Governments at Ministerial and Official level to explore how our working relationship could evolve over the coming months/years. Welsh Government have extended sponsorship of Cwmni Eginno for a further 6 months (April-September 2024), whilst these discussions evolve.

In the meantime, we will keep doing all we can to make sure that north Wales, including Trawsfynydd, remain firmly on the map.



**Should you wish to discuss any matter further with us, please contact:**

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