

STEP siting process update



The STEP (Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production) programme is a UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) programme to design and build a prototype fusion energy plant in the UK, targeting operations around 2040.

We have, this week, confirmed that we will cease assessment of the Ratcliffe-on-Soar site, one of our five shortlisted sites, and restart assessment of the West Burton site, named as a reserve site when the shortlist was announced in Autumn 2021.

Tris Denton, STEP's Head of Commercial and Programme Development, said: "Since last autumn we've been assessing Ratcliffe-on-Soar in Nottinghamshire along with four other sites across the UK in the search for a home for our prototype fusion power plant.

"Ratcliffe is a very good site with several potential development options and plans. However, with new information now before us on land availability we think other sites on our shortlist will likely be more suitable for the specific needs of the STEP programme. As such we will not be continuing assessment at this location, but we'd like to thank Uniper and the other parties involved in the nomination for the excellent collaboration and support to date.

"The site of the West Burton A coal fired power station, also in Nottinghamshire, was also proposed as a candidate for STEP and has been held in reserve based on a number of strong features. The potential for this site to compare favourably with the remaining sites on our shortlist means that we will now restart assessment at this site to further consider its merits. This will maintain the strength and diversity of the options we have. We look forward to continuing to work with the nominating partnership, including Nottinghamshire County Council and the site owner, EDF."

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