

Nuclear 'dustbin' going for disposal

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ONE OF Britain's smallest nuclear reactors is to be decommissioned and removed from its site at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich.

The Jason reactor, no bigger than a domestic dustbin, has been used to train nuclear submarine officers since its installation in 1962. Now, with the planned closure of the college, the fuel and structure of the reactor will be taken away by about the end of 1998.

The fuel will go to Scotland's Dounreay reprocessing plant, while waste of low activity will go for disposal at Drigg, Cumbria. The cost of decommissioning and removal is estimated at £5-£7 million and will be managed by AEA Technology.

Project officer, Cdr Howard Broadbent, said that the Navy's nuclear safety standards were extremely high and followed guidelines laid down by the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate.

the RNC, will operate from RAF Bracknell from September next year until a permanent site becomes available. A decision on the college's final location has yet to be made.

Trusteeship

Meanwhile former Director General of the National Trust, Sir Angus Wilson, has been named as chairman of the Trust set up by the Government to protect the buildings at present occupied by RNC Greenwich.

One of the nine members of the Trust will be the former First Sea Lord, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Benjamin Bathurst. The other members will be appointed later.

Announcing Sir Benjamin's acceptance of the trusteeship, Defence Secretary Michael Portillo said his appointment "will ensure that the Royal Naval College's proud associations with the nation's Naval history are carried forward in the planning for the future of the site."

The 17th-century buildings at Greenwich will be taken over by the University of Greenwich and the National Maritime Museum when the RN College vacates the site next year.

The new tri-Service college, which will absorb the functions of