



Newsletter November 2017

58,000 people sign petitions to stop radioactive mud being dumped off Cardiff

County Gazette 16 Oct

PETITIONS to stop 300,000 tonnes of 'radioactively contaminated' mud from Hinkley C being dumped into Cardiff Bay have gained more than 58,000 signatures.

One petition was created by Tim Deere-Jones, an independent marine pollution expert, who says that the dumped sediment could expose people in South Wales to radioactivity. <https://www.assembly.wales/en/gethome/e-petitions/Pages/petitiondetail.aspx?PetitionID=1243>

The sediment is being dredged off the Somerset coast to help create the water cooling system of the £20 billion new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point.

Mr Deere-Jones argues that the soil is potentially more radioactive than reports from the government suggest, and is calling for the licence to dump the mud to be suspended until more research is undertaken.

"The available evidence implies that only surface samples (0 to 5cms deep) of the sediment have been analysed, despite the fact that core sample research from elsewhere in the Irish Sea demonstrates that, at depths below 5cms, radioactivity concentrations may be up to five times higher." Mr Deere-Jones said.

"We note the absence of research on the fate of such radioactivity in South Wales inshore waters. In this context we are concerned that the environmental and human health risks from the proposed disposal have not been adequately researched and that any conclusions based on the current incomplete data, are unreliable."

Mr Deere-Jones is calling on the Welsh Government to direct Natural Resources Wales to suspend the licence it has granted NNB Genco to dump the mud.

The campaigners also want a full environmental impact assessment carried out, complete radiological analysis and core sampling, as well as a public inquiry and public consultation take place before any material is dumped.

However French energy giant EDF say they have taken the right steps to ensure the process 'poses no threat to human health or the environment'.

There are two petitions, one of which has over 7,000 signatures, and a second separate one on <https://actions.sumofus.org/a/edf-toxic-waste-dump-cardiff?source=campaigns> which has over 51,000.

An EDF Energy spokesman said: "We will be dredging sediment from the seabed off the Hinkley Point C site ahead of drilling six vertical shafts for the cooling water system for the new nuclear power station.

"We consulted a number of stakeholders, some for more than 12 months, before making an application to the Welsh Government Marine Consents Unit for a Marine Licence to deposit this material at the Cardiff Grounds licensed disposal site.

"We have undertaken a number of assessments as part of this application which concluded the activities pose no threat to human health or the environment."

EDF say all activities on the Hinkley C site are strictly controlled and regulated by a number of statutory bodies to ensure the environment and public are protected.

Seasons Greetings

This will be the last newsletter in 2017, so we would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members and supporters a very happy Christmas and best wishes for 2018. Thank you all for your support.

If you are not already a member, please consider joining us to help show the government the folly of backing the publicly funded environmental loser that is nuclear power. This is not problem on someone else's doorstep, this is a choice about how we live our lives now and how we decide the future for those that come after. Join today <http://stophinkley.org/JoinDon.htm>

Time to Cancel Hinkley Point C

Stop Hinkley Press Release 25 September

Reflecting much of the media comment, since offshore wind costs as low as £57.50/MWh were announced earlier this month, The Guardian's editorial said the precipitous drop in the price of electricity from offshore wind turbines should "blow away" the UK's nuclear plans. It describes Hinkley Point C as "like a dinosaur even before it arrives on earth". Ministers should "open the door to a greener, cleaner future where Britain meets greenhouse gas targets without more expensive nuclear plants."

Now, in a new report, Emeritus Professor of Energy Policy, Steve Thomas, says it is time to cancel Hinkley Point C. EDF and the French and UK governments may try to suggest that it's too late to stop and will talk up the costs which have already been incurred. But the start of construction, is still between 2 and 4 years away. Preliminary works are conspicuous but relatively cheap. EDF Energy will have incurred expenses since signing the deal with the UK Government in October 2016 and some of these may be compensatable. But these costs would be dwarfed by the costs of going ahead.

If wholesale electricity prices do not rise, the extra cost to consumers over the 35 years from opening the plant would be about £50bn. If the wholesale price rises to, say £70/MWh, the cost would be about £27bn.

Thomas says it would be surprising if there aren't further delays and cost increases. EDF's claim it will take the risk of cost increases does not seem credible, so further costs could fall on electricity consumers and taxpayers.

Thomas continued "Hinkley Point C would use a technology unproven in operation – the EPR - which has run into appalling problems of cost & time overruns in the 3 projects using it. It would be supplied by Areva NP, which is in financial collapse and might not be saveable and has been found to be falsifying quality control records for safety critical items of equipment for up to 50 years – a bizarre situation."

Stop Hinkley Spokesperson, Roy Pumfrey said: "We keep hearing warnings about the so-called energy gap. But when the government first endorsed Hinkley Point C, (HPC) it was projecting an increase in electricity consumption of 15% by now, whereas in practice we are consuming 15% less than a decade ago. In other words it made a 30% error. We don't need worry about the gap left by HPC – there isn't one. The news has focused on the rapidly falling cost of offshore wind, but last week we learnt that Energy efficiency improvements could reduce the average householders bill by £270 a year and save the equivalent to the output of six Hinkley Point Cs".

3rd Antinuclear World Social Forum:

Paris, 2-4 November 2017

On the road to the Antinuclear World Social Forum 2017

This month the third Antinuclear World Social Forum will take place in France, the most nuclearized country in the world.

Stop Hinkley are sending two delegates who will share our experiences and discuss with other groups the means to make possible the emergence of a world free of nuclear weapons and nuclear power generation.

Since the first World Social Forum (WSF) held at Porto Alegre in 2001, the anti-globalization movement has expanded and consolidated. The first Antinuclear Social Forum was held in spring 2016 in Tokyo, where a Call for a nuclear-free world network was launched. The second Antinuclear Forum took place in Montréal within the WSF.

Hinkley Point C could be replaced by energy efficiency and renewable energy systems more cheaply, more quickly and without radioactive discharges to the environment or the generation of radioactive waste.

Stop Hinkley Report by Pete Roche

Discharges from the proposed Hinkley Point C nuclear Power station could cause around 200 deaths across the globe over its 60-year lifetime.

The radioactivity of spent fuel from Hinkley Point C would amount to around 80% of the radioactivity of waste already produced in the UK.

This could be stored at the Hinkley Point C site until around the year 2185. A major fire in a spent fuel pond "could dwarf the horrific consequences of the Fukushima accident."

Energy efficient improvements could reduce the energy consumed in UK households each year the equivalent to the output of six nuclear power stations the size of Hinkley Point C.

Offshore wind and solar are now both able to generate electricity more cheaply than nuclear power. If the UK had continued renewable expansion at the same rate as between 2010 and 2015 it could have achieved an all-renewable UK electricity supply by 2025.

More>>

<http://stophinkley.org/EngRevu/HPC%20Environment%20Impact%20AssessmentSep2017.pdf>

Dodgy Decommissioning Deals

The UK Government has been forced to pay out £97m in a settlement with two US companies – Energy Solutions and Bechtel - for mishandling the way it awarded the £6.1bn Magnox nuclear decommissioning contract.

The BBC's File on Four has been delving in to some of the details of the contract, and what they have discovered suggests what went on was more than just "dramatic levels of incompetence", as the Labour Party called it, but was, in fact, a deliberate attempt to manipulate the outcome of the tender process.

In 2012 the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) put the second stage of the decommissioning process for the ten Magnox sites and two research reactor sites at Harwell and Winfrith out to tender. Up for grabs was a 14 year contract to take these sites to an Interim End State. The contract was expected to be worth £6-7bn. Energy Solutions – the company which did the early decommissioning work at these sites – bid for the contract along with Bechtel. About £20m was spent on putting the bid together with a team of up to 100 people working on it. The final bid included 750 pages of text; a cost estimate of up to 2,000 pages and 11,000 pages of supporting documents.

The bid was scored according to around 700 criteria. In the end the contract went to the Cavendish Fluor Partnership (CFP). But in September the NDA formally gave CFP 2 year's notice that the contract would end 9 years early. It blamed a significant mismatch between the work outlined in the tender and what actually needed doing.

BBC Reporter Jane Deith continued: "But more serious than that – the NDA rigged the tender. It was only caught because Energy Solutions smelled a rat and took them to Court".

Ian Bowes, who was working for Energy Solutions until March 2016, told the BBC that the Company identified a series of areas that technically they believed the NDA had got wrong in their evaluation. They also looked at the scoring of CFP and it seemed that Energy Solutions were not getting equal treatment. Documents from the NDA tracked how the scoring had been carried out. Someone had gone back into the computer and changed the scores initially awarded to the Energy Solutions bid.

A High Court Judge agreed with Energy Solutions. He said 22 of the scores awarded to Energy Solutions were wrong. Had the right scores been awarded, the results of the competition would have been reversed. CFP should have been disqualified according to the technical criteria, and the NDA knew that. In the words of the Judge –

Justice Peter Fraser – the NDA fudged it in order to keep CFP in the competition.

"By the word fudging I mean choosing an outcome and then manipulating the evaluation to reach that outcome."

And, he said the NDA limited any permanent record of what it was up to, at one stage telling the evaluators to shred their notes. The NDA had acted unlawfully. It was forced to pay Energy Solutions and Bechtel £97m. Adding other costs such as the £8.5m cost of fighting the case in court, the National Audit Office says brings the total cost to the taxpayer to £122m.

The BBC asked the NDA why it manipulated the tender process. Was it because it was under pressure to select the cheapest bidder? If not, what was the reason? But it didn't get an answer. Chief Executive, David Peatie, who arrived after the Magnox mess, apologised for past mistakes and said procedures have now changed.

Business Secretary, Greg Clark, has ordered an independent inquiry. Steve Holliday, former boss of the National Grid, is interviewing witnesses and will report next year. But the fallout could be huge because Ministers gave the whole Magnox contract approval. The NDA says the Government should take some share of the blame. Emeritus Professor of Energy Policy, Steve Thomas, says he thinks the NDA feel resentful that the Department of Energy (now the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy – BEIS) has loaded the blame onto them rather than taking some responsibility themselves because the contract was approved by the Treasury and the Department of Energy and Climate Change, but only if it achieved savings of at least 10%. The bidding process and the overly complicated criteria were things they should have looked at.

The House of Commons Public Accounts Committee will look at this at the end of November. Meg Hillier, chair of the committee, says the fiasco rings many alarm bells about how it could have happened with so many people in the NDA and Government looking into this contract.

The Government says it monitors the NDA more closely now. The 10% saving target was meant to secure value for money and the right level of commercial expertise. In 2015 the Government cancelled a contract to clean up Sellafield saying it was too complicated for a private sector contract. It took back control of Sellafield and may do the same with the Magnox sites.

Cavendish is also decommissioning Dounreay as part of a consortium. It won the £1.5bn contract in

2012 beating a bid by Energy Solutions and Amec. The BBC revealed that Energy Solutions believe, just like with the Magnox contract, the scores for the Dounreay bid were "fudged". Energy Solutions didn't go to Court at the time because it didn't want to upset the NDA and ruin its chances of winning the Magnox contract.

People in the NDA confirmed to Energy Solutions that scores had been changed for the purpose of ensuring that it did not win the contract. The Magnox inquiry has spoken to witnesses about the Dounreay contract tendering process. If the inquiry seriously criticises the Dounreay contract it would mean the NDA had mishandled three multi-billion contracts. The NDA didn't respond to allegations that scores for the Dounreay contract had been manipulated.

The NDA hasn't decided what to do about the Magnox contract, but the fiasco raises serious questions about the NDA's capability to handle the complex and dangerous job of safely taking apart ageing nuclear reactors. Steve Thomas says if the contract is to come back in house the NDA would clearly need a major shake-up. One of the serious issues about long delays to decommissioning is that there are lots of things that can go seriously wrong. What's clear is that our atomic past will still be part of tomorrow's world.

BBC File on 4, The Nuclear Option - Powering the Future and Cleaning Up the Past, 31st October 2017 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09byv6k>

A tribute to Cecily Collingridge

by Katy Attwater

On behalf of Stop Hinkley I would like to honour one of our most passionate and hardworking campaigners, Cecily Collingridge, who recently died. Cecily had been involved in the Stop Hinkley campaign for many years. She was one of the most knowledgeable people in our group on the science of radiation and its effects on the human body.

Cecily was very critical of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for setting such low safety levels for radiation and for not distinguishing the effects on women and children from that on adult men. She worked closely with Dr. Chris Busby to produce a Green Audit scientific paper on the abnormally high levels of radiation found in the land surrounding Hinkley, which was presented to DECC, EDF and the Environment Agency. <http://stophinkley.org/Health/HinkContamJan2010.pdf>



In spite of her failing health she continued to attend demos and was once chauffeured by police car to and from the gates of Hinkley. She was a talented artist and pianist, well known locally for the amazing murals she painted on walls throughout the Bridgwater Arts Centre.

She had close associations with the RAF, given her father and son were both RAF pilots. I remember working with her in her dining room next to a baby grand piano underneath a beautiful mural of the sky with a Harrier Jump Jet emerging from the clouds, her favourite plane.

Cecily had a wonderful sense of humour and was a great thinker, an activist and a radical feminist. She was an occasional and honoured visitor to the Full Moon Witch Watch at the gates of Hinkley. This is a link to her hilarious rendition of the Shipping Forecast which she presented to us on her last visit. <https://www.facebook.com/witchwatchatHinkleyPoint/videos/1345146108834963/>

Goodbye Cecily. Thank you for the great energy and humour you brought. We won't forget you.

Events

Stop Hinkley meetings
Mondays 20 Nov & 18 Dec at 7pm
West Bow House, Milton Place
Off West Street, Bridgwater TA6 7RT

Contacts

Press & Spokespersons: Pete Roche:
pete@stophinkley.org
01749 860767 or 07821 378 210

Local Information: Allan Jeffery
ajjeffery@talktalk.net 01278 425451

Street Stalls: Jo Smoldon:
josephine.smoldon@virgin.net 01278 459 099

Membership/Treasurer/Website: Val Davey:
val@stophinkley.org

www.stophinkley.org