



Newsletter August 2016



July 28th: the ups and downs, twists and turns of the EDF Final Investment Decision (FID) day. Synchronising our movements, including interviews, protests, banners and public supported displays, with the announcements from EDF.

After a quiet start, Roy Pumfrey was already on his way to Paris with the 'Say No to Hinkley C' original Stop Hinkley Expansion banner, supporters and press assembled in King Square, Bridgwater outside the Sedgemoor District Council offices.

Never before have we had so much coverage and photos in TV and press, together with excellent interviews with all our press contacts. Roy in Paris awaiting the EDF decision captured on BBC Points West, and numerous other TV, Radio and news media. The phones for interview request were hot.

We heard that EDF had booked a marquee and party for their 'go ahead' decision, then we heard the resignation of the EDF board member throwing the whole thing in the air again. Then followed the decision by the

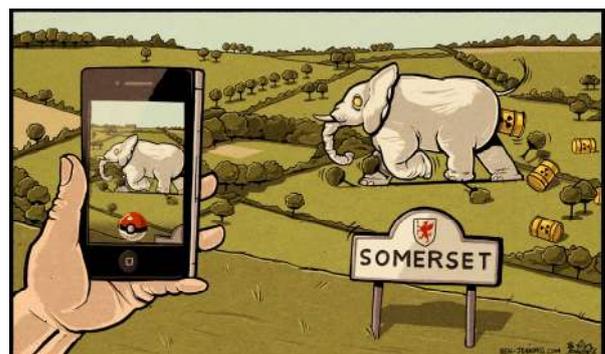
board voting 10 votes to 7 for HPC to go ahead.

Much celebration was covered by the media and then **shock** - everyone heard that our government needs more time to think!

The EDF marquee for the VIP visitors at Hinkley site could then only be used for the HPC wake.

More:

<http://stophinkley.org/EventsDocs/EventRep160728.htm>



Ben Jennings for the i newspaper

Why the delay?

Fears over cost and China role

The government's decision to delay final approval of the controversial Hinkley Point C nuclear power station has cast fresh doubt on the project.

This is what could have caused the government to launch a review:

Theresa May simply wants time to study the proposals

David Cameron and George Osborne promoted the project heavily. But there is a new team in charge.

Downing Street sources insist that May agreed the review and a new timetable with François Hollande, the French president, last week. If this is correct, why was EDF surprised? The company had planned a VIP party and an interview with its UK chief executive, Vincent de Rivaz, to celebrate the go-ahead. The EDF boss says he learned of the review on the internet.

China

The state-backed China General Nuclear Power Corporation has agreed to take a 33% stake in the project. But May could be having doubts about Chinese involvement in such an important domestic project. Last year Nick Timothy, her joint chief of staff and then aide, accused Osborne of "selling our national security to China". He has also warned of security fears over Chinese involvement.

Renegotiation of costs

EDF and China will pay for Hinkley Point C, but the cost will eventually be picked up by British taxpayers. The National Audit Office has warned this could be more than £30bn.

The government has guaranteed a price for power generated by Hinkley C - of £92.50 a megawatt hour for 35 years. This is more than twice existing wholesale prices. The government might look to renegotiate these terms.

Negotiating tactic for Brexit

The UK is a vital growth market for EDF, as other countries such as Germany and Japan close reactors. By delaying approval, No 10 may be looking for Brexit leverage with France.

The project is going to be scrapped

To its critics, Hinkley Point C is an expensive, unsafe and out-dated. Greenpeace claims the government would be better off developing cheaper renewable energy sources, while trade unions in France believe EDF cannot afford the project. The decision to delay could be a means of shelving the project without anyone losing face.

Graham Ruddick



Dame Vivienne Westwood becomes Stop Hinkley Patron.

With EDF Energy's plans to build two massive new nuclear reactors at Hinkley Point in Somerset looking ever more precarious, Dame Vivienne Westwood DBE has announced that she will become a patron of the Stop Hinkley Campaign.

The French Trade Unions have declared that they remain convinced the Hinkley project should be postponed until a litany of problems has been solved, and there is increasing speculation that the project will be ditched after the Brexit vote. Now the Stop Hinkley Campaign is re-doubling its efforts to ensure that this foolhardy scheme is cancelled as soon as possible.

Fashion designer and activist, Vivienne Westwood said: "Hinkley Point C is not a solution to the climate change problem. It will simply trap us into the same system that gave us fossil fuels. We need a different sort of economy - a fair economy founded on true human values, and cheap and infinite sustainable energy."

She continued: "Climate change is a global emergency, we can't wait around while the big utilities build expensive and dangerous nuclear plant, which is late and over-budget. We need to start building a sustainable energy system now. I tell my customers 'Buy Less - Choose Well'. We need to do the same with energy. Our priority should be saving energy first. It is perfectly feasible, quicker and cheaper, to replace all the proposed nuclear stations by reducing our energy consumption."

Stop Hinkley spokesperson Roy Pumfrey says: "Vivienne Westwood is a welcome addition to our growing list of patrons. She will be helping us to spearhead a drive for new members. Unlike Government Ministers, she understands that nuclear power is seriously damaging our efforts to tackle climate change. The campaign against the white elephant Hinkley Point C project is going from strength to strength."

Stop Hinkley's other patrons are:

Jonathon Porritt – environmental campaigner
Molly Scott Cato – Green Party MEP
Caroline Lucas – Green Party MP
Raymond Briggs – author
Julie Christie - actor
Terry Jones – ex Monty Python
John Williams – musician

Read more:

<http://stophinkley.org/PressReleases/pr160726.pdf>

<< Cutting from the Guardian July 30

How the first Hinkley reactor was weaponised

When the Calder Hall plant at Sellafield (then called Windscale) was opened by the young Queen Elizabeth in 1956, it was clearly stated in a remarkable little book entitled *Calder Hall: The Story of Britain's First Atomic Power Station* by the Government's Atomic Energy Research Establishment, that:

"Major plants built for military purposes such as Calder Hall are being used as prototypes for civil plants . . . the plant has been designed as a dual-purpose plant to produce plutonium for military purposes as well as electric power . . . it would be wrong to pretend that the civil programme has not benefitted from, and is not to some extent dependent upon, the military programme."

Interestingly, the first – nominally commercial - reactor at Hinkley, the Magnox 'A' plant, was operated for military production purposes too.

The first public hint came with a public announcement on 17 June 1958 by the Ministry of Defence, notably not the Ministry of Fuel and Power that oversaw the civilian nuclear programme - on: "the production of plutonium suitable for weapons in the new [nuclear] power stations programme as an insurance against future defence needs..." in the Hinkley reactor. .

A week later in the UK Parliament, the Paymaster General Reginald Maudling told MPs: "At the request of the Government, the CEBG has agreed to a small modification in the design of Hinkley Point and of the next two stations in its programme so as to enable plutonium suitable for military purposes to be extracted should the need arise. The Government made this request in order to provide the country, at comparatively small cost, with a most valuable insurance against possible future defence requirements. The cost of providing such insurance by any other means would be extremely heavy." [Hansard 24 June 1958 columns 246-8].

With the current confusion over Hinkley's latest promised reactor, the murky military history of the site should not be forgotten.

<http://drdavidlowry.blogspot.co.uk/2016/08/how-first-hinkley-reactor-was-weaponised.html>



Our dedicated team at the Green Scythe Fair

Report on the Stop Hinkley Stall at the Green Scythe Fair 2016

We were as busy as ever at the Green Scythe Fair this year and our campaign to increase our membership got off to a very good start with 76 new members signing up to join Stop Hinkley.



To tie in with the main debate (see write up by Glen on back page) we produced a stall display and a new leaflet raising awareness of the flood risk of the nuclear power stations on the edge of the Severn Estuary. North Somerset suffers from coastal erosion and the existing sea wall beneath Hinkley is subject to overtopping regularly leaving beach stones and seaweed on the path above the sea wall.

The Environment Agency stated in 2011 "we should plan for a rise in sea level of approximately 1 metre over the next 100 years and for river flows to increase by up to 20 per cent" This has not it seems been updated recently and since then we have had two severe flooding situations in Somerset. Our concerns with Hinkley C radioactive waste being stored on site for 160+ years and probably forever, needed to be publicized and a Stop Hinkley leafleting team succeeded in getting the message across!

Jo Smoldon

To download our new leaflet go to <http://stophinkley.org/FloodCoastHink6.pdf> or the Leaflets page on our website.

THE GREEN SCYTHE FAIR DEBATE 2016

“FLOODING – WHAT IS THE FUTURE?”

An apt title for the debate held at the Green Scythe Fair on Sunday 12th June, Rain hammered down relentlessly on the marquee, as we debated the causes and consequences of flooding, and how to prevent a repeat of the 2014 disaster!

Thorney Lakes, the location of the Fair, was under water for six weeks in the 2014 floods. The future for the Somerset Levels, with continuing pressure on land use, unabated climate change, and diminishing resources to combat flooding, looks precarious indeed.

Members of Stop Hinkley leafleted the audience before the meeting with our new leaflet “The Flood Risk of Hinkley Point C site”, and we planned to ask the speakers’ views on this issue at some point in the debate.

Julian Temperley, local farmer, and founder of the Somerset Royal Cider Brandy Company, explained the vital importance of dredging. After the 2014 floods about 8,000 metres of river was dredged at a cost of £6m. On average, the river channels have been expanded by a third wider, so there is a greater cross sectional area for the water to pass through. That increases the capacity of the rivers and prevents additional water from spilling into the areas that flooded previously. This will obviously need to be done on a regular basis, and is costly, but necessary, he said. Oddly, for a Somerset “champion” he described the dredging of the 3 arches of the bridge at Bridgwater! There is no such bridge in Bridgwater- it later transpired he was talking about Burrowbridge! Still, both towns begin with “B”, I suppose! Ahem!

George Monbiot, journalist, environmentalist, and now, famously, pro-nuclear power, looked at the political and environmental causes of flooding, and said that dredging was only part of the answer, and stressed the need for a more holistic approach, maintaining tree planting and land drainage, for example. He decried the madness of EU subsidies given to farmers to destroy wildlife habitats and increase flooding risk, by planting crops such as maize, which blocks drainage and adds to the problem of swelling lakes and rivers

Molly Scott Cato, Green MEP for SW England and Gibraltar, addressed the global causes of flooding and asked how we can begin to seriously tackle climate change, instead of allowing governments to pay lip service to solving this threat to human existence. We need, she said, to recognise the vital role land management in addressing environmental crises. We need

sustainable, human-scale farming, with emphasis on local and sustainable food systems, rather than pressure to compete in global export markets.

At last, a member of Stop Hinkley managed to ask the million-dollar question: “What about the threat of flooding at the Hinkley C site?” Monbiot shocked and delighted us all by declaring that both the proposed site and the economics of Hinkley C are “completely crazy”. Elsewhere, he has said of Hinkley C: “No one should commission a mess without a plan for clearing it up.” So, while many of us may not be able to forgive him for deserting our cause, he is at least with us on opposition to Hinkley C.

Glen Burrows

Local artist Suzanne Creighton-Kelly had her artwork: ‘Exclusion Zones’ exhibited as part of Taunton Live, the performing and creative arts festival 18th – 24th July.

Her work was motivated through resistance to new nuclear and focused on Hinkley Point in the event of a nuclear disaster and also featured a display from the Fukushima disaster. Stop Hinkley members dropped in to see the exhibition at The Planet café in Paul Street, Taunton, and took part in the interactive display positioning themselves on the exclusion zone map, a thought provoking exercise for customers throughout the week.

Events

Stop Hinkley meetings
Mondays Aug 15 & Sep 19 at 7pm
West Bow House, Milton Place
Off West Street, Bridgwater TA6 7RT

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