



Newsletter July 2010

New reactors 'held up' by policy recall

Bristol Evening Post, 17th July 2010

Anti-nuclear campaigners claimed yesterday the chances of new nuclear reactors operating in the West by 2018 have been hit by a planning delay.

Hinkley Point in Somerset in Somerset has been earmarked for the first wave of new reactors, while Oldbury, South Gloucestershire is being considered for a later project. Energy Minister Charles Hendry has revealed the National Policy Statements (NPS) will pave the way for a new generation of nuclear power will not be presented to Parliament until next spring.

The Western Daily Press reported on Wednesday how Mr Hendry told MPs they would have been agreed by Parliament before the winter. Now he says they "have decided to take a further look at the appraisal of sustainability (AoS) of our draft energy policy statements to make sure that they are fit for purpose. Taking this decision now is essential to safeguard our long-term goal of a sustainable and secure energy supply."

An AoS is a study of the environmental, social and economic impacts of implementing a policy, and includes comparison with reasonable alternatives. The Minister claimed: "Plans for the first new nuclear power station to begin generating electricity by 2018 remain on course."

But the Stop Hinkley campaign group said the NPS had originally been expected to be ready by the end of July, and the announcement "throws the planning process into some confusion". It suggested the Government "fears being challenged over

aspects of the policy statements which may not be legally watertight".

Earlier this year Friends of the Earth promised to mount a legal challenge over the first NPS consultation framework, while the RSPB, World Wildlife Fund and Greenpeace could also do so.

Stop Hinkley co-ordinator Jim Duffy said the AoS would have to investigate renewable energy as an alternative. He said: "This was a surprise announcement which raises lots of questions. Will the alternatives to nuclear be thoroughly examined in the new consultation? Will the Hinkley C application be allowed to go ahead as planned in December? If so, how will it be managed in the absence of a planning blueprint?"

"A nine-month delay from the Government on top of EDF's six-month planning application delay looks likely to affect their hopes for a 2018 opening of the two massive reactors at Hinkley C."

EDF Energy said it would "work with Government to understand the details and implications of the announcement".

Ed: The Infrastructure Planning Commission told Stop Hinkley that EdF could still make their application in December but said that an undesignated policy statement, especially if it had been heavily challenged, could weaken the case for the applicant. Will EdF take the risk of legal challenges or hold back till after Parliament debates the re-consulted nuclear policy statement in April next year?

Hinkley site to be razed before full planning permission

Much of the 435 acre Hinkley C green-field site of species-rich woodland, hedgerows and fields may be destroyed by EdF even before it receives full planning consent to build its two massive nuclear reactors.

A large hole will be excavated in preparation for foundations and the adjoining coastline, a protected area, may be cemented and terraced and a huge jetty built into the estuary, in preparation for the eventual building works.

All this will involve the movement of a million cubic metres of soil and rock.



[Photo © Paul Glendell Photography](#)

EdF have signalled they wish to apply to West Somerset Council to undertake the premature destruction well in advance of their expected planning submission to the IPC in December (now possibly delayed – see page1). The Commission will then take a year to decide for or against the nuclear building proposal, which will be signed off by a Minister.

West Somerset Council have said, due to its 'grand scale', they are committed to undertake a broader range of consultation than they are legally required to by holding events at towns which may be affected by the early disruption, such as Cannington which falls in the neighbouring local authority of Sedgemoor. The Council wishes to go beyond their statutory obligation by involving

a range of parish councils and interest groups. The Council has received no date for the application by EdF so cannot yet say when they will launch their consultation.

The proposals were outlined in a recent Community Forum Meeting held by EdF and attended by Stop Hinkley and other interested parties including councillors.



[Photo © Paul Glendell Photography](#)

The local village of Shurton has meanwhile achieved a small victory in forcing EdF to rethink its southern boundary, formerly alongside the homes and gardens of villagers. After a hail of objections the boundary is to be moved further north. The victory follows a planning decision in May where West Somerset District Council agreed with villagers that proposed trench digging was inappropriate so near peoples' homes.

Stop Hinkley has joined other campaign groups in calling for a public inquiry over the 'Justification' of new nuclear power stations, which the Liberal Democrats, now part of the coalition Government have supported. Chris Huhne, who as Energy Secretary has ultimate responsibility for power stations, has said he does not believe the economics of nuclear power add up and will not allow public subsidies to nuclear power companies.

The reactor licence design is currently being investigated for safety by the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate who expect to make a statement on EdF's preferred design in

June next year. However the NII's Generic Design Assessment (GDA) team has said any licence it issues may have 'exception' clauses within it, which must be resolved before any particular reactor is switched on. This could include the controversial 'Control and Instrumentation' system which was considered flawed by the NII last year. Another design fault in the system which responds to changes in electricity demand was discovered in the French European Pressurised Reactor some months ago.

There have been criticisms of the GDA process, whose documents seem both too complicated for the lay reader and too superficial for independent engineering consultants. The process may not be fully legitimate as it cannot stand alone and needs to be ratified by the NII, who have slightly differing criteria.

Jim Duffy, spokesman for Stop Hinkley said: "EdF are running six months behind schedule with their application to the Infrastructure Planning Commission and this may be their way of making up time with their hopes to operate Hinkley C by December 2018. But it is utter vandalism to destroy all that wildlife long before any decisions can be made about the controversial nuclear reactors and puts unfair pressure on the planners and local community. EdF say they'll restore the site if they don't get permission but how do you restore a century old oak woodland or an ancient hedgerow?"

"EdF have lots of hoops to get through before they get permission to build. They should hold off till the final year, preferably, nay. Meanwhile West Somerset people should say no to this travesty."

EdF second-round consultation

EdF's second stage consultation was launched on 9th July with much paperwork and a planned series of displays at local venues such as supermarkets.

The EdF 'preferred options' for Hinkley C include moving much of the proposed worker accommodation from Cannington to Bridgwater. A well coordinated campaign by

Save Cannington Action Group has led EdF to water down its disruptive plans for the village but it has not gone as far as agreeing to the expensive Hinkley to Dunball by-pass which would route traffic congestion during construction away from both Bridgwater and Cannington.

After pressure from local authorities and Stop Hinkley, EdF has provided a 150 page health assessment of the Hinkley C project. The EdF/Amec report attempts to take solace from the frequently challenged International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP), suggesting that local health effects from Hinkley C would be 'insignificant'. It does not address the debate over the flakey IPRC model which is based on Hiroshima data relevant to single atomic blasts but not to chronic ingestion of low level radiation.

EdF tries to glean more support from a 2003 paper by the Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment (COMARE) which they mistakenly say criticised a Chris Busby study on cancers in Burnham-on-Sea as the studied sample of respondents was allegedly too small. COMARE actually withdrew this criticism following a complaint from Stop Hinkley, who had commissioned the study.

In a fantastic piece of community investigation, Parents Concerned About Hinkley had knocked on the doors of one third of the homes in Burnham North with questionnaires on their health. Almost 100% of residents filled in the questionnaires despite the sensitivity of the subject. COMARE had to concede to our view that the one third sample was more than representative.

Prof Chris Busby has agreed to undertake a response to the EdF report on Stop Hinkley's behalf which we will include as part of our submission.

The 10,000 page consultation documents can be found at: <http://www.edfconsultation.info> and a CD of this or a seventy page paper summary of the consultation can be ordered on 0800 169 6507. EdF said they cannot supply paper versions of all the documents but that they can be read at local libraries. The consultation ends on 4th October.

Action Weekend

We're planning a weekend of campaigning events on 11th and 12th September in Bridgwater. We aim to highlight EdF's premature plans to raze the green-field Hinkley C site and provide a meeting for active supporters and campaigners with an interest in Hinkley.

On the Saturday a workshop will look at Government plans, EdF's proposals, legislation, NGO responses, renewable alternatives to nuclear and low level radiation.

Speakers will include Ben Ayliffe from Greenpeace, Neil Crumpton from the Belona Institute and Chris Busby from Green Audit.

In the evening a band (TBA) will play a gig their new anti-nuclear power song.

On the Sunday there will be a protest at Hinkley Point which may include a guided tour of the green-field site, a flotilla of anti-nuclear boats and a media event.

Please tell your friends about us and watch our website for more details.

To book a place, please email Jim, details below.

N-waste subsidy

A Greenpeace study by nuclear economist Ian Jackson shows that proposals for a 'Fixed Unit Price' for managing new nuclear waste are likely to translate into massive subsidies for the industry.

The plans were drawn up by the previous pro-nuclear Labour Government.

Dealing with spent nuclear fuel may cost upto £1.9 billion per reactor but EdF would only pay £515 million into a Government fund. The value of the money is supposed to grow with accrued interest to the full amount over fifty years but the report casts doubt on relying on this increase in value.

The money would be deposited in 2080 when the waste is transferred to Government ownership and then 'grow' to 2130 when a deep geological repository is expected (?) to be ready. According to the report, current market conditions suggest this growth may well not occur, leaving future taxpayers to underwrite the difference.

Greenpeace is calling for the 'FUP' to be scrapped.

Glastonbury

A team of Stop Hinkley supporters led by Sue Aubrey told festival-goers about our campaign over the four days of Glastonbury. Almost 3,000 names were added to our petition (open the link: <http://www.stophinkley.org/PETITION.htm>) and hundreds of people passed through our marquee, reading information boards and taking away leaflets. Many pledged firm support for the campaign.

Barrister meeting

Stop Hinkley is seeking legal advice from an environmental lawyer over the Hinkley proposals. The Director of the Environmental Law Foundation, a former Greenpeace lawyer, has invited us to a meeting in early August to discuss ways in which they could help the campaign.

Events

**Action Weekend 11th-12th September
Bridgwater
See website, leaflet for details**

**Stop Hinkley meeting
Monday 2nd August, 7.30pm
West Bow House, Milton Place
Off West Street, Bridgwater**

Contacts

Jim Duffy, Coordinator, Newsletter Editor
68 Birchwood Ave, Wallington, SM6 7EN
0208 395 6191, stophinkley@aol.com

Val Davey, Membership, Treasurer,
Website Manager: val@stophinkley.org

www.stophinkley.org