



Newsletter September 2011

Hinkley Blockade, 3 Oct: Peaceful Action Against New Nuclear

A weekend of action against the plans for a new nuclear power station will culminate in a blockade at the gates of Hinkley Point on Monday 3 October.

On Saturday 1st October there will be a rally in Kings Square, Bridgwater, close to the town centre, from 1 – 4pm, with speakers and banners.

On Monday 3rd the blockade will start at the Hinkley gates at 7am, with non-violent obstruction of the entrance to the site for the rest of the day.

You don't have to arrive right at the start, however. Protesters will be continuing to join the blockade up to 10am.

Those not wishing to risk arrest will be able to show their support by joining a simultaneous demonstration. Everyone who is anti-nuclear or opposed to Hinkley C is welcome to join us on the day to express their opposition in their own way.



A nearby camp will take place over the weekend to prepare for the blockade. People are expected to travel from all over the country to join the event.

A briefing pack, details of travel arrangements and local accommodation can be found at www.stopnewnuclear.org.uk.

For more information call 07980 731896 or 0845 2872381.

The protest has been organised by an alliance of CND, Stop Nuclear Power Network UK, South West Against Nuclear, Kick Nuclear, Shut Down Sizewell, Sizewell Blockaders, Trident Ploughshares and Stop Hinkley.

Stop Hinkley Legal Challenge Appeal

Stop Hinkley is planning a legal challenge to the recent decision by West Somerset Council to grant planning permission for major pre-construction works at Hinkley Point (see article below). Our legal advisors, including a barrister from a leading London chambers, consider that we have a good case. But we need to raise an estimated £15,000 towards legal costs. With this newsletter is attached an appeal letter. We hope you will be able to respond.

West Somerset Councillors Could Live to Regret Planning Approval

West Somerset Council's decision to approve major groundworks at Hinkley Point (at its meeting on 28 July) has allowed energy company EdF to "jump the gun" on its plans for a nuclear power station, the campaign said in a press statement afterwards.

Many opponents of the application for "preliminary works" spoke eloquently at the meeting and there was a large demonstration outside.

"This is like giving a developer permission to excavate a greenfield site even before they have permission to build the actual houses," said Stop Hinkley spokesman Crispin Aubrey. "What will those Councillors say to the people of West Somerset in two years' time, with massive holes in the ground lined with concrete and a devastated wasteland - no trees, no hedges, no wildlife - and EDF says 'Sorry, we don't think it's worth going ahead'."

Stop Hinkley's statement said that, "in the wake of the Fukushima disaster, the tide is turning strongly against nuclear power. An increasing number of countries are rejecting nuclear expansion plans, including Germany, the world's fourth largest economy. At the same time the costs of nuclear projects are rising, with EdF's Flamanville reactor in France now four years behind schedule and double its original cost."

Consultation on Hinkley C Radioactive Discharges

The Environment Agency is seeking comments on an application it has received from EDF for the radioactive discharges that it wants to make from the proposed Hinkley C power station. Stop Hinkley is planning to make a submission but you can comment yourself at www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/132474.aspx

-o0o-

EDF Breaks Planning Conditions at Hinkley

EDF has broken a time limit condition attached to its planning permission to remove a spoil heap from the Hinkley Point site.

The work - removing spoil contaminated with asbestos left over from the construction of the original Hinkley A power station - should have been completed by 31 August. This was a condition of the planning consent granted to EDF by Somerset County Council last January. However, work is still continuing and EDF is now applying for an extension to continue with the clean-up operation up to February 2012.

Somerset County Council is concerned that if the work continues into the winter months it could disturb migratory birds which fly along the coast past Hinkley Point.

"If EDF cannot stick to the rules on something like this, then it doesn't bode well for when it comes to more serious issues to do with operations at Hinkley Point", said Stop Hinkley spokesman Crispin Aubrey. "The company should be told to stop work until a new timetable has been agreed."

The original planning application was challenged by Stop Hinkley on the basis that the real purpose of the "clean-up" work was to level the ground in preparation for building the new Hinkley C power station. EDF denied this at the time of the application but signs directing traffic to the site are now clearly labelled "Hinkley Point C".

(From Stop Hinkley press release, 14 Sept. See story in West Somerset Free Press - <http://www.west-somerset-today.co.uk/News>)

-o0o-

*Thank
you*

To all our supporters, old and new, who have enabled us to keep up the fight against nuclear power in Somerset. Your support at this crucial time is very important.

Many thanks.

Doubt Cast on Integrity of Reactor Design

Further doubt has been cast on the integrity of the new nuclear reactor design proposed for Hinkley C following a series of criticisms by French safety regulators.

Documents revealed in the French press highlight a series of "gaps and weaknesses" in work being carried out on a new European Pressurised Reactor (EPR) by Electricite de France at Flamanville in Normandy.

In a 20-page report the French Nuclear Safety Authority, ASN, highlights a number of deviations from construction requirements affecting essential parts of the reactor, including the steam generators, water injection filters and batteries used for the cooling system.

According to the *Financial Times*, the Flamanville EPR is now expected to cost 6 billion Euros, compared with the original estimate of 3.3 bn, and will not start operation before 2016, four years late.

(From Stop Hinkley press release, 26 Aug)

Flagging Up the Message

Stop Hinkley supporters wave flags during the Tour of Britain cycle race from Taunton to Wells.



-o0o-

Greenpeace goes to court over nuclear policy

(*Planning magazine*, 30 Aug 2011)

The government's national policy statement (NPS) on nuclear energy faces a legal challenge from environmental group Greenpeace on the grounds that ministers failed to take into account the implications of this spring's Fukushima incident in Japan.

The group's 1,611-page judicial review application says energy and climate change secretary Chris Huhne unlawfully pressed ahead with the NPS, adopted last month after a Commons vote, "without waiting to take into account relevant considerations arising from the Fukushima disaster".

Greenpeace said the government appears to have regarded chief nuclear inspector Dr Mike Weightman's interim report on lessons from Fukushima, published in May, as a "green light" for designating the NPS, even though the report identified a series of technical issues over power station safety requiring further investigation.

"We believe the government's failure to properly consult experts and the public after the Fukushima tragedy amounts to a dangerous attempt to cut corners and carve out voices of concern, in order to keep pushing forward with its favoured technology," said Greenpeace executive director John Sauven.

"Following Fukushima, a number of countries decided nuclear power wasn't worth the risk or increased costs and focused on safer, clean renewable technologies. Instead in Britain, despite election promises, the coalition government is planning hundreds of millions of pounds more in hidden subsidies for the nuclear industry and dragging its heels on creating the green jobs and growth we need," Sauven added.

The NPS identifies sites at Bradwell, Hartlepool, Heysham, Hinkley Point, Oldbury, Sellafield, Sizewell and Wylfa as potentially suitable for nuclear development.

Greenpeace pointed out that five of the eight sites are wholly or partly in areas classified by the Environment Agency as being subject to high flood risk – one of the areas of concern flagged up in Weightman's report.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Fukushima disaster: it's not over yet

(Jonathan Watts, Guardian 9 Sept 2011)

Six months after the multiple meltdowns at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant, the streets have been cleared but the psychological damage remains.

At the a conference centre-turned-refugee shelter in southern Fukushima, most people have moved into temporary shelters. The few that remain benefit from ample provisions, friendly volunteers and cardboard-and-curtain partitions designed by the world-famous architect, Shigeru Ban. But an electronic display inside the corridors shows a reading of 0.1 microsieverts (becquerels, the quantitative measure of radiation, are converted to sieverts to offer a qualitative indicator of the impact on the body). The question of whether it will return to normal prompts a sigh from volunteer Michio Terashima. "Normal no longer means what it did. The nuclear disaster didn't turn out to be the cataclysm we feared at first and many things are

getting better, but they will never be the same again."

But there's also an effort to decontaminate and lift spirits. Fukushima is distributing 20m sunflower seeds to suck up the cesium radionuclides that have permeated the soil. Although they brighten the landscape, their stalks and petals concentrate the radioactivity and will later have to be burned or left to decompose in a controlled environment

Adding to the problem is a trust deficit. Ministers have admitted holding back vital information in order to prevent a panic. Government spokesmen initially denied there was a meltdown and said the plant's problems posed "no immediate risk" to human health. Safety authorities ranked the accident as a mere four on the international scale of nuclear accidents. Not until a month later did it upgrade this to a maximum seven – like Chernobyl. The full details of what happened to the nuclear reactor are still emerging and far from complete.

Nuclear and emergency workers were also in the dark. One of the men involved in the clear-up operation, T-san, was evacuated from Fukushima Daiichi plant after the earthquake struck and returned almost two weeks later to join the containment operation.

"They didn't tell us anything," says T-san. "Nobody mentioned a meltdown. We didn't get any critical accident training or instructions. But we all knew the situation was very bad. I thought this might be my final mission."

Since March, he estimates he has been exposed to 50 millisieverts of radiation. Under the government's previous guidelines, this was the maximum allowed for an entire year

The overall radiation release from the plant is staggering – 770,000 terabecquerels in the wake of the accident and a billion becquerels still being added each day while engineers struggle to seal the broken containment structure. Most of the iodine – with its eight-day half-life – has since decayed and the cesium and other radionuclides have been diluted and dissipated. But much has seeped into the soil, contaminated the leaves in the forests and is being passed through the food chain to cattle, fish, vegetables – and humans. As more details become apparent, people in Fukushima are trying to work out what dose they have received. They look back at where they were on the peak day of 15 March and calculate how long they were outside, whether it was snowing and what they were wearing. Then they consider what they have eaten and drunk since and whether it was from a safe source.

Watching the obfuscation by Tokyo Electric and the slow response of the government, some people have become depressed. Others have been radicalised...

Protesters urge Japan to abandon nuclear power *(From Guardian 19 Sept 2011)*

Tens of thousands of people marched in Tokyo on Monday in the biggest show of public opposition to nuclear power since the start of the Fukushima Daiichi crisis in March.

The protesters, who included residents of Fukushima prefecture, called for the immediate closure of all of Japan's nuclear reactors and a new energy policy centred on renewables.

Before the Fukushima accident, Japan depended on nuclear for just under a third of its power supply. The government has abandoned plans to increase its share to 50%.

-o0o-

Explosion at French nuclear site

The safety of French nuclear power plants has been seriously undermined by the explosion at a waste processing plant on Monday 12 September which killed one worker and injured four others.

The explosion happened at the Marcoule facility near Nimes in southern France when an oven used to burn nuclear waste exploded. The site, partly operated by an EDF subsidiary, stores large quantities of radioactive waste and produces mixed oxide (MOX) reactor fuel containing plutonium.

An EDF spokesman was quoted in the Guardian as saying: "According to our initial information it was an explosion in an oven used to melt metallic radioactive waste of a low level radioactivity."

Stop Hinkley responded with the following statement: "The accident in France is a sobering reminder of what can go wrong when a country commits itself so heavily to nuclear power, including all the problems associated with handling radioactive waste. Yet we are now proposing to import French technology to Hinkley Point and store waste there for 100 years or more."

-o0o-

Hinkley C Jetty Inquiry

A public inquiry into EDF's plans for a jetty out into the sea at Hinkley Point - in order to bring in aggregate for its proposed building works - is due to open on 15 November. Stop Hinkley has objected to the plans, along with a number of local residents. The inquiry has been requested by the Maritime Management Organisation, which approves construction out into the sea.

Stop Hinkley Street Stalls

Jo Smoldon and her team have been running street stalls in Bridgwater, Taunton and Glastonbury.

If you would like to help out, please contact Jo on 01278 459099.

Stop Hinkley Membership fees

Stop Hinkley needs to increase our membership as the larger our number, the louder our voice. After much discussion about subscription fees we decided that the suggested annual rates would be £12 for an individual (£5 unwaged) or £20 for a family. However, we will ask supporters to donate as much as they feel able, but whatever you give, however small, is gratefully received.

Many of you already have a Standing Order, which is an excellent way of donating as it enables us to predict future income and saves us sending annual reminders. If you would like to have a Standing Order form, please contact Val.

Events

Stop Hinkley 'business' meetings are held on the second **Monday of each month – October 10th & November 14th** at 7.30pm at West Bow House, Milton Place (behind Squib pub) West Street, Bridgwater

Stop Hinkley Social evenings
Mondays 7.30pm at the Hope Inn,
Taunton Road, Bridgwater
Sept 26, Oct 17 & 24.

(Every Monday unless there is a business meeting or bank holiday) Ring Peter for details and to confirm location 01278 453843

Contacts

Crispin Aubrey, Press Officer/Newsletter:
crispin@stophinkley.org 01278 732921

Katy Attwater, Press and general enquiries:
attyhoops@hotmail.com 0798 073 1896

Allan Jeffery, Assistant Coordinator:
ajjeffery@talktalk.net 01278 425451

Val Davey, Membership, Treasurer, Website Manager: 8 The Bartons, Yeabridge, South Petherton TA13 5LW. val@stophinkley.org

www.stophinkley.org



Legal Challenge Appeal from the Stop Hinkley Campaign – Sept 2011

We are urgently calling for your support in our campaign against the plans for a new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point – the largest ever in Britain and the first proposed since the 1986 Chernobyl disaster.

We intend to make a legal challenge to the recent decision by West Somerset Council to grant planning permission for major pre-construction works – even before the developers, Electricite de France, have received approval for the power station itself. Our legal advisors (including a barrister from a leading London chambers) consider that we have a good case.

Even if we are granted legal aid, however, we will still need up to £15,000 for legal fees and other expenses. We are asking all our supporters to contribute what they can, although big donations will be needed as well. You can donate now using one of the methods below. Please also pass this on to anybody else you think might support our challenge.

Over-turning this permission would not only delay EDF's plans it would be an important psychological blow to their confidence. The more delay to the project, the more potential there is for other factors, such as economics and the Fukushima accident, to come into play and knock it on the head completely.

Please support this practical step towards making "Hinkley C" less likely and the South West a safer place in which to live and visit.

- 1. Cheque:** please send your donation, made payable to "Stop Hinkley", to
Stop Hinkley Legal Challenge Fund,
8 The Bartons, Yeabridge,
South Petherton TA13 5LW.
- 2. Bank transfer** to the Stop Hinkley bank account (please quote reference "Legal Challenge"):
 - Account name: Stop Hinkley
 - Account no: 19041903
 - Sort code: 09 01 52
- 3. Paypal:** Details on the Legal Challenge page at www.stophinkley.org or log into your PayPal account and send a donation to donation@stophinkley.org

- If the legal challenge does not go ahead, your donation will be used for ongoing major campaign activities against the Hinkley plans. If you would prefer your donation to be refunded, please let us know.

www.stophinkley.org

PATRONS

The Lord Ashdown of Norton-sub-Hamdon, Raymond Briggs, Julie Christie,
Terry Jones, Caroline Lucas MP, Michael Meacher MP and John Williams.