



Press Release

29th November 2011

Photo Opportunity: Advance Notice

**Stop Hinkley Campaign Presents Petition
to Government Against EDF's Nuclear Plans**

The Stop Hinkley campaign is to present a petition with more than 12,750 signatories to the government department responsible for the UK's policy on nuclear power. The petition shows the strength of opposition to plans by energy company Electricite de France to build the UK's largest ever nuclear power station at Hinkley Point on the Somerset coast.

Most of those who have signed come from the county of Somerset, where the new plant would be sited. EdF has submitted an application for construction to the Infrastructure Planning Commission.

The petition will be handed in at Downing Street on **6th December at 1.30pm** and at the Department of Energy and Climate Change in London on **6th December at 2.00 pm**. Members of Stop Hinkley will be accompanied by Wells MP Tessa Munt and Green Party leader and MP Caroline Lucas. The Department of Energy is at 3 Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2AW.

Addressed to Chris Huhne, Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, the petition wording says: "We, the undersigned, strongly oppose the plan by EdF to construct a new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point in Somerset. Instead, a government-backed programme of energy saving and clean renewable energy would combat climate change and avoid the risks of a catastrophic accident, dangers to health and the storage of highly radioactive waste at Hinkley for 160 years."

Huhne is responsible for the coalition government's policy in favour of nuclear power, but in May 2010, before the general election, he described it as a "tried, tested and failed technology". Stop Hinkley is urging him to stick to his original view.

For more details of the petition presentation please contact Katy Attwater of Stop Hinkley (0798 073 1896).

Ends/

Notes to Editors

- Hinkley Point C would be the first new nuclear power station to be built in the UK for more than 20 years, turning the clock back to a discredited energy option. Highly radioactive waste would be stored at the site for at least 100 years, with no final resting place yet decided.
- The European Pressurised Reactor (EPR) design proposed for Hinkley C has been plagued with safety and construction problems. French safety watchdog ASN has identified a series of “gaps and weaknesses” in the EPR being built at Flamanville in France; this is now expected to cost 6 billion Euros, almost twice the original estimate, and take four years longer to complete.
- The Fukushima accident resulted in the meltdown of three reactors, the release of radioactive material into the air and sea, and required the evacuation of more than 80,000 people. If the equivalent disaster happened at Hinkley Point, the town of Bridgwater (population 40,000) would have to be abandoned.
- The German government confirmed earlier this year that it would phase out all its nuclear power plants by 2022 and aim for 80% of its electricity supply to come from renewable sources by 2050. Britain has less nuclear power than Germany and a much greater potential for exploiting renewable generation from the wind, waves and tides.
- Liberal Democrat MP (and now Energy Secretary) Chris Huhne said in May 2010, before the general election: “Nuclear power is a tried, tested and failed technology. It’s been around for 50 years. We know that there’s no solution to the problem of waste or decommissioning... Nuclear has been there, we’ve done that. It’s too expensive, it’s too costly and we shouldn’t go down that route.”

For more information: Katy Attwater, Stop Hinkley campaign (0798 073 1896)