



Press Release

16 March 2012

EDF plans to destroy Hinkley Point hedgerows and woodland during bird nesting season

EDF contractors are lined up to remove hedgerows and other vegetation as part of preparation work for a new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point, even though the French company does not yet have permission to construct the twin reactors.

Details of planning conditions agreed with West Somerset Council for "preparatory works" in relation to Hinkley "C" power station show that nests and eggs of breeding birds can be destroyed up to a distance of 250 metres from the coast. This is despite the fact that the peak breeding seasons falls between March and August. Birds potentially affected include a large population of skylarks.

Katy Attwater, spokesperson for Stop Hinkley, said: "EDF have manipulated UK planning law to allow them to begin major work without full planning permission. Skylarks are the sacrificial victims."

Among the contractors is KJ Thulborn, a tree clearance specialist company based in Paignton, Devon. When informed that this work was viewed as premature and unnecessary by many local people, KJ Thulborn's managing director refused to comment.

Further inland, the location of nests across the 400 acre site is supposed to be monitored by ecologists working for EDF, with no work taking place if breeding birds are found. The countryside watchdog Natural England says it is up to West Somerset Council (WSC) to check that this happens. WSC says, "We have some money for on-site monitoring but we cannot and will not be policing all activity on site."

Local resident Sue Aubrey commented: "How can we trust EDF to police this fairly when two senior executives from the company are serving prison sentences for commercial espionage¹. This does not inspire us with confidence."

EDF also has permission, based on the assumption of getting a Development Consent Order, to excavate millions of cubic metres of soil for the foundations of Hinkley C, using the earth to fill in a previously undisturbed valley. The quantity would be enough to fill Wembley Stadium twice over.

For more information:

Katy Attwater, Press Officer, Stop Hinkley Campaign, Tel: 07980 731896

- **Note 1:** Two EDF executive were jailed in November 2011 for spying on the environmental pressure group Greenpeace. See www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-15683090