



For Immediate Release  
25<sup>th</sup> August 2015

### Are these the dying days of Hinkley Point C?

More delays are being predicted for the Hinkley Point C nuclear project - originally expected to be generating electricity by Christmas 2017. As revelations emerge that the site has been effectively mothballed since 1<sup>st</sup> July this year, the Stop Hinkley Campaign is calling for the project to be cancelled now, rather than waiting for its slow death.

As recently as three weeks ago the media was predicting that David Cameron and China's president, Xi Jinping, would sign a deal at a meeting in the UK in October which would signify that a Final Investment Decision on Hinkley Point C had been made. The Chinese are expected to fund two thirds of the scheme. (1)

In those three weeks there has been a growing chorus calling for the project to be cancelled. (2) Now the Construction Products Association (CPA) is predicting that the start of the main works on the nuclear site will be delayed until 2018. (3)

We have also learned this week that the Hinkley Point C site has effectively been mothballed since 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015. According to the Click Green website:

*"Despite recently publishing a list of preferred suppliers for the £24 billion project, the French firm were in behind-the-scenes talks with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR), during which they informed them of their decision to mothball the site."* (4)

We already knew that site preparation work at Hinkley Point C was stopped in April 2015, and up to 400 construction workers were laid off. (5) What wasn't clear at the time was that NNB Genco – the consortium planning to build the reactors which consists of EDF Energy, China General Nuclear Corp and other investors - put a cap on future spending on the project.

Because the nuclear regulator charges NNB Genco for the work it carries out this means that the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) has suspended the production of future inspection reports and stopped attending meetings of the local liaison committee – the Community Forum.

ONR says it is *"monitoring the impact of the budget constraint upon NNB Genco's competency and capability"*. In other words NNB Genco had better watch out or it will lose its status as an organisation competent and capable of holding a nuclear license. (6)

Stop Hinkley Spokesperson Roy Pumfrey said:

*“With the Chinese stock market in turmoil it is hardly surprising that the construction industry is predicting yet more delays to this £24.5 billion project. But we think the CPA is being overly optimistic. By 2018 the renewable industry will have had another 2 or 3 years of falling costs and innovation, whereas nuclear costs just keep rising and technical problems mount up. Somerset should kick EDF out now so that we can get on with building the sustainable industries we need to tackle climate change, capture the jobs required and transform our energy and transport system into one over which communities have more control.”*

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**NOTES**

- (1) Guardian 4<sup>th</sup> August 2015 <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/aug/04/deal-to-build-uk-nuclear-plant-should-be-finalised-within-weeks>
- (2) See Stop Hinkley Press Release 13<sup>th</sup> August 2015  
<http://www.stophinkley.org/PressReleases/pr150813.pdf>
- (3) Construction Products Association Press Release 24<sup>th</sup> August 2015  
<http://www.constructionproducts.org.uk/news/press-releases/display/view/cpa-forecasts-strong-growth-for-construction-despite-public/>
- (4) Click Green 20<sup>th</sup> Aug 2015 <http://www.clickgreen.org.uk/news/national-news/126381-exclusive-edf-mothballs-planned-hinkley-c-nuclear-power-site.html>
- (5) Gloucestershire Echo 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015 <http://www.gloucestershireecho.co.uk/400-jobs-lost-Barnwood-based-EDF-stops-site-work/story-26271600-detail/story.html>
- (6) Professional Engineering 20<sup>th</sup> Aug 2015 <http://www.power-eng.com/articles/2015/08/construction-halted-at-hinkley-point-c-nuclear-project-site.html>