



For Immediate Release
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Anti-Nuclear Groups Angry about Regulators lack of response to silo damage at Hinkley Point C – worried it indicates a wider lack of control over nuclear company.

The Stop Hinkley Campaign and other anti-nuclear groups have written an angry letter to the nuclear regulator over its lack of a response to a recent ‘dramatic’ incident at the Hinkley Point C construction site and expressing concern that this represents a wider lack of control of the nuclear industry by the Office for Nuclear Regulation.

At around 7.30am on 10th June a large dust cloud was released from a silo in the concrete batching plant – known as the GGBS Silo - which is used to store aggregates for concrete production. There was widespread concern about how the 35-metre tall tower weighing 5,000 tonnes suffered "structural damage" (1)

EDF says an investigation is underway.

The Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) addressed concerns by saying simply that it was satisfied there were "no nuclear safety consequences" as a result of the damage. It has also said it will decide on its course of action after EDF returns its findings. (2)

According to the Somerset Live website, the silo contains ground granulated blast furnace slag, is described as “important” by EDF Energy and plays a “pivotal role” in the station’s construction by reusing the material within its concrete. Photos on media outlets show a section of the silo has collapsed inwards. (3)

Stop Hinkley chairperson, Sue Aubrey, who could see the silo from her house says: *“Stop Hinkley understands that the ONR had not visited the silo since the accident by 26th June. By 2nd July the silo had been removed by EDF. It is most unfortunate that ONR does not seem to have seen the damage for themselves, and are, therefore reliant on EDF’s explanation which does not ring true to us.”*

She continued:

“Viewing the attached photographs taken from outside the perimeter fence it looks like there must have been some sort of explosion to split the walls of the silo from the base spreading a third up the sides. It was premature for EDF to remove the silo before ONR could visit the site. One might be drawn to the conclusion that EDF has something to hide.”

“The concrete batching plant may not have been part of the nuclear build but the damage does not give us confidence in EDF’s ability to build a nuclear power station.”

In an angry letter from NGOs to ONR the groups say:

“It seems Stop Hinkley’s despair at the latest Silo incident has united with other NGO concerns over the basic principles that there is no proper independent scrutiny over the work of EDF. To rely on a company to police its own actions is not delivering a democratic/credible process which we need to see and you surely want to uphold.”

The groups are calling on the ONR to implement “*a tighter regime of inspections*” and assurance that “*the ONR is in control over this company EDF and all the work it carries out.*”

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Notes

- (1) Somerset Live 19th June 2020 <https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/hinkley-point-c-silo-latest-4245040> and Bridgwater Mercury 10th June 2020 <https://www.bridgwatermercury.co.uk/news/18507731.investigation-underway-concrete-silo-suffers-structural-damage-hinkley-c/>
- (2) Somerset Live 12th June 2020 <https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/hinkley-point-dust-nuclear-regulation-4220434>
- (3) Somerset Live 10th June 2020 <https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/hinkley-point-c-dust-cloud-4210733>