



Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee

information



Media release from NFLA and Stop Hinkley - for immediate release, 30th April 2012
NFLA/Stop Hinkley submission warns that Somerset will get long-term highly radioactive waste store through undemocratic process

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) organisation and the Stop Hinkley campaign have submitted a joint detailed response to the Planning Inspectorate over EDF's application to build two new nuclear reactors at the Hinkley Point site in Somerset (1). The response warns that, if the application succeeds, Somerset will host a highly radioactive waste store for over 100 years following a planning process that is fundamentally undemocratic.

Objectors have been given a scandalously short time to comment on the EDF application being considered by the Planning Inspectorate, which has taken over responsibility from the Infrastructure Planning Commission (2). This is despite the fact that serious doubts now hang over the project. These include the decision by power companies RWE and E-on to pull out of new nuclear build (3), question marks over new build raised by the CEO of Centrica (currently committed to a 20% investment in Hinkley Point C) (4) and the real possibility that the French election results may see the Government-controlled EDF phase out up to a third of French nuclear reactors and severely damage its UK new nuclear investment plans (5).

The NFLA/Stop Hinkley submission:

- Details concerns around on-site radioactive waste management of high burn-up spent fuel for up to 160 years.
- Highlights the alarming susceptibility of the Hinkley Point site to substantial flooding damage over the next century, which could severely damage the site and bring an extensive radiation release.
- Notes a number of significant nuclear emergency planning concerns, including the small size of the detailed emergency planning zone (DEPZ) at Hinkley Point – just 3.5 km compared to an IAEA standard for a 5 km 'Precautionary Action Zone' and a 30km 'Urgent Protective Action Zone'. The Sizewell Site Stakeholder Group has suggested a 20 km DEPZ may be more appropriate and safe.
- Raises deep concerns over the lack of time to scrutinise EDF's 30,000 page application and the extensive democratic deficit of the whole planning process.
- States its alarm that, at the preliminary meeting in March, the Principal Planning Inspector ruled that issues such as radioactive waste management, flooding and emergency plans were not within his remit. This is despite a legal ruling on a Greenpeace judicial review of government national policy which indicated that these subjects should be considered in the planning process.
- Reiterates local concerns over the impact of the development on the local environment, transportation networks, tourism, accommodation and local communities.
- Argues that the planning application should be rejected.

NFLA Chair Councillor Brian Goodall said: "It is clear to me that plans for new nuclear build in England and Wales have been dealt a fatal blow in recent months as it has become clear that there is no financial case for it, compounded I believe by the terrible, ongoing events in Fukushima. I am staggered that anyone could be considering a Hinkley Point C planning application when the owners of the facility have still not made up their mind about its affordability. The ridiculously short time for consideration of this application is a scandal. I urge the Planning Inspectorate to reject EDF's

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application on many grounds and commend them to read the NFLA submission in detail. I also call, once again, for the UK Government to follow the lead of the Scottish Government and rule out new nuclear build in favour of increased investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy production.”

Stop Hinkley (6) spokesman Crispin Aubrey added: “This submission raises serious concerns about the storage of radioactive waste for over 100 years, the risk of flooding from the Severn Estuary and the absurdly small current evacuation zone round Hinkley Point. After the Fukushima disaster these are issues which concern the many thousands of people in Somerset who might suffer the consequences. It would be scandalous if the examiners considering EDF’s planning application for Hinkley C choose to ignore them.”

Ends

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Notes to editors:

- (1) The NFLA/Stop Hinkley submission is attached.
- (2) Planning Inspectorate Portal – Hinkley Point C application by EDF, 2012:
<http://infrastructure.planningportal.gov.uk/projects/south-west/hinkley-point-c-new-nuclear-power-station>
- (3) See E-On media release for confirmation of the decision, 29th March 2012:
<http://pressreleases.eon-uk.com/blogs//eonukpressreleases/archive/2012/03/29/1802.aspx>
- (4) Financial Times, Centrica threatens to pull out of UK new nuclear build, 20th April 2012:
http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/bb/7f393c-8af0-11e1-912d-00144feab49a.html#axzz1tFx7Tz80*
- (5) Utility Week, Final decision on Hinkley ‘this year’ says De Rivaz, 25th April 2012:
http://www.utilityweek.co.uk/news/news_story.asp?id=196826&title=Final+decision+on+Hinkley+this+year+says+de+Rivaz
- (6) Further information on Stop Hinkley:
www.stophinkley.org

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