

Meeting Report

Regarding:

EDF Energy Hinkley Point: Community Forum

Date:

12 May 2011

Attending:

Alan Ladd *Chairman*
 Peter Barrington *The Environmental Network of North Somerset (TENONS)*
 Doug Bamsey *Sedgemoor District Council*
 Alan Beasley *Save Cannington Action Group*
 Paul Cottington *National Farmers Union*
 Christopher Durham *RAC Foundation for Motoring*
 Mike Fackrell *Cannington Primary School*
 Lesley Flash *West Hinkley Action Group*
 Andrew Goodchild *West Somerset Council*
 Sue Goss *West Somerset Councillor*
 Malcolm Hogg *Nether Stowey Parish Council*
 Trevor Howes *Civil Nuclear Constabulary*
 Alan Hurford *Bridgwater Town Council*
 Allan Jeffery *Stop Hinkley*
 Alyn Jones *Somerset County Council*
 Lynda Laird *Cannington Parish Council*
 Jenny Lawrence *Somerset Racial Equality Council*

Peter Malim OBE *Stogursey Parish Council*
 Fiona McMillan *Bridgwater College*
 Brian Payne *Environment Agency*
 Sarah Porter *Stringston Parish Meeting*
 John Roberts *Nether Stowey Parish Council*
 Kenneth Sampson *Kilve Parish Council*
 Mike Short *Fiddington Parish Council and HPSCG*
 John Stuckey *Bridgwater District Civic Society*
 Keith Talintyre *Otterhampton C. P School*
 Anthony Trollope-Bellew *Somerset County Councillor*
 Gordon Bell *EDF Energy*
 David Eccles *EDF Energy*
 Alan Hyde *EDF Energy*
 Nigel Knee *EDF Energy*
 Charles St George *PPS*

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1. Introductions

Alan Ladd (AL) welcomed those attending and asked attendees to introduce themselves and the organisations they represent. He also reminded participants of the terms of reference of the forum.

2. Minutes & Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 March had been approved and circulated to members. The following matters arising were dealt with:
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Page five, item three: David Eccles said that work on modelling the emergency route from Stogursey Lane to Nether Stowey was underway. It was not yet complete but would be for the application to the IPC. ▪ Page six, item five, bullet one: Charles St George confirmed that Wembdon Parish Council was on the list of groups invited to send representatives to the Community Forum. |
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- Page six, item five, bullet two: Charles St George said that copies of the minutes of both the Transport Forum and the Main Site Neighbourhood Forum were available after the meeting and both the agendas and agreed minutes of these meetings were put onto the project website, www.edfenergyconsultation.info
- Page six, item six, bullet two: Brian Payne from the Environment Agency would respond to the question about zero discharge outside of the Forum to Mr Beasley directly. Mr Beasley confirmed to the Chair that this was acceptable. **ACTION – ENVIRONMENT AGENCY, BRIAN PAYNE**

3. Japan and the Report of the UK’s Chief Nuclear Inspector

Nigel Knee from EDF Energy gave a presentation on recent events at the Fukushima nuclear plant in Japan following the huge earthquake and tsunami that devastated the north east coast of Japan in March.

He outlined the sequence of events at the plant, put this in the context of the earthquake and tsunami, and explained the technology and the current status of the nuclear reactors on the site.

In terms of the implications for EDF Energy’s operations in the UK he made the following points:

- All EDF Energy’s nuclear plants in the UK were protected against a credible storm surge or tsunami. The plants would be safe even if they were hit by the worst tsunami or flood that could be expected in the UK in 10,000 years.
- An earthquake the size of the one in Japan was simply not credible in the UK. Earthquakes of this magnitude only occur in zones at the edges of tectonic plates where these collide. The UK is situated in the middle of tectonic plate.
- Safety measures to protect against seismic events are detailed in approved safety cases agreed and tested with the independent safety regulator (the Office of Nuclear Regulation, formally the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate)

However, he emphasised that EDF Energy was determined to learn the lessons from the events in Japan and explained that a review of safety had already been undertaken on the company’s existing nuclear sites. The Government had made it clear that UK policy on nuclear had not changed and had asked the UK’s Chief Inspector of Nuclear Installations, Dr Mike Weightman, to prepare a report on the implications for the UK. The interim report was due in the middle of May [post meeting note – this report was published on 18 May] with a final report in September.

Nigel Knee stressed that EDF Energy would thoroughly review its existing plant, processes and plans in the light of Dr Weightman’s findings and would make changes where these were required. He emphasised that safety remained EDF Energy’s first priority.

Members of the forum responded to this presentation with the following points, questions and concerns (with responses, in italics):

- The Japanese owners of Fukushima, TEPCO, had followed the approved safety procedures but failed to protect the plant adequately from the tsunami. This was a failure of imagination – does EDF Energy have sufficient imagination to deal with an equivalent catastrophe in the UK? *EDF Energy has reviewed safety procedures at all its nuclear power stations in the light of the Japanese experience, and will also respond to any recommendations from Dr Weightman’s reports. All are protected against a storm surge/tsunami of the type that could occur in the UK once every 10,000 years. An*

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<p><i>earthquake of the magnitude of the one that hit Japan is simply not credible in the UK.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could this event affect the Generic Design Assessment process and the timetable for new nuclear build? <i>The Office of Nuclear Regulation and Environment Agency, who are jointly undertaking the GDA process, were due to complete the fourth stage of the process at the end of June. Completion of this stage has been delayed so account can be taken of the lessons to be learned from Japan. There may therefore be some overall delay to the GDA process. However, this has not so far had any effect on EDF Energy's commitment or timetable for new nuclear build in the UK.</i> • There was a tsunami/tidal surge in Somerset in the 17th century and another tidal surge approximately 25 years ago. The weather is worsening because of climate change so will this be taken into account? <i>BP from the Environment Agency confirmed that the flood risk assessment (FRA) for Hinkley Point C will have to model for the worst case projection taking into account climate change. The FRA will need to be regularly checked during the lifetime of the power station and EDF Energy will have to demonstrate that they can protect the facility throughout its lifetime taking into account increased flood risk caused by climate change.</i> • The big problem in Japan was the loss of the cooling systems. There have been two examples in the UK of facilities losing their cooling systems including an incident at Sellafield. Sizewell A also suffered from a leak of water from spent fuel. Storage of highly enriched spent fuel on site at Hinkley Point C for at least 100 years meant the problem would stay in Somerset. Loss of cooling accidents are generally caused by human error. <i>We will need to wait for the conclusions of the Weightman reports to see the reasons for the loss of cooling and whether these are relevant to the UK and will require changes in procedures.</i>

4. Stage 2 Consultation Update

CStG briefly reported on the facts and figures relating to the recent Stage 2 update consultation:

- Consultation took place for just over 4 weeks from 25 February to 28 March 2011
- Focus of the consultation was on material changes to the Stage 2 preferred proposals
- Consultation was advertised through the Statement of Community Consultation (SOCC), newsletters and the project website, www.edfenergyconsultation.info
- There were seven public exhibitions, two workplace exhibitions, six exhibition previews for Parish/Town Councils, six stakeholder meetings and one meeting of the Community Forum during the consultation process
- Approximately 1,147 people attended the exhibitions, around 118 went to the meetings and there were 15,932 unique visitors to the project website during the consultation period
- Responses to the consultation included 159 questionnaires returned by the public, 71 letters, emails and other forms of communication and 77 responses from statutory consultees
- A full Consultation Report will be submitted with the Development Consent Order application to the IPC. AH said that EDF Energy was currently processing approximately 20,000 comments from the Stage 1 and Stage 2 consultation processes
- Engagement will continue up to and beyond submission of the DCO.

Members of the forum responded to this presentation with the following points, questions and concerns (with responses, in italics):

- What about letters sent by the general public? *These are included in the figure for non-*

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questionnaire responses from the public

- Will the 20,000 comments be grouped into subject headings to make it easier to understand how EDF Energy has responded to the consultation? *Yes*
- The scale of the response is large but that doesn't mean that EDF Energy's analysis and response will be any good. *This is not just a number crunching exercise – all comments will be assessed and a response provided. The quality of response is as important as the scale of the task.*
- What does the reference in the presentation to ongoing engagement mean? Is there a specific programme? *There are issues of detail that EDF Energy continues to discuss with the community, for example through this Community Forum and the Main Site Neighbourhood and Transport Forums*
- There is no mention of ongoing engagement when the DCO is submitted. *EDF Energy committed in its last SOCC to undertake an information exercise to explain its proposals to local communities once the DCO has been submitted. This remains a commitment*
- There were a number of people who responded without using EDF Energy's questionnaire. Does this reflect the fact that the questions were leading and that people were not able to say what they wanted? *The questions were not leading and were open-ended. In fact, for the Stage 2 update there were no specific questions – people were simply asked to comment on the key changes proposed and were able to say anything that they wished.*

5. Preliminary and Investigative Works

David Eccles provided a brief update covering: site remediation works, investigative works on the main and associated development sites and the site preparation works application currently before West Somerset Council.

The following points were raised in discussion (with responses, where appropriate, shown in italics):

- AG said that consultation on the further information submitted by EDF Energy in relation to the site preparation works application was due to close on 20 May. Key comments had still to come in from the County Council and the Environment Agency. No date had yet been set for Planning Committee consideration.
- A large amount of additional information had been submitted with a limited period for responses interspersed with a number of public holidays. Is the consultation period the statutory minimum? *AG said that the Council had taken account of the public holidays. The minimum period for consultation was 21 days and 23 had been allowed. One request for an extension had been received and the Council will be reasonable if Parish Councils and others can't meet this deadline.*
- The original email address provided by the Council for responses was incorrect. *AG confirmed this was the case. The problem had been quickly pointed out to the Council and rectified within 3 or 4 days of the start of the consultation. If anyone was concerned, they should re-send their submission.*
- Will the responses from statutory consultees such as the County Council be published when they are received as this could help non-statutory respondents with their replies? *AG confirmed that no major statutory consultees had yet responded but it was not normal to publish responses before the close of the consultation period. Further comments would be accepted up to 24 hours before the Committee report was drafted. AJ said that*

<p>Item</p> <p><i>the County Council's response would be available on its website once approved.</i></p>
<p>6. Transport Forum</p> <p>DE reported that two meetings of the Transport Forum had now been held and outlined the subjects discussed. The minutes of these meetings were made available to Forum members and had been uploaded onto the project website for public viewing.</p>
<p>7. Main Site Neighbourhood Forum</p> <p>DE reported that the inaugural meeting of the Main Site Neighbourhood Forum had been held and he outlined the subjects discussed. The minutes of this meeting were made available to Forum members and would be uploaded onto the project website for public viewing once they had been approved by the MSNF.</p>
<p>8. Any Other Business</p> <p>The Chair reported that Charles Graham, who could not attend the meeting, had written to the secretariat to object to holding future meetings at Hinkley Point because of the distance members had to travel and increased CO2 emissions.</p> <p>It was pointed out that several members live close to Hinkley Point and that moving the meetings elsewhere would increase their need to travel. After further discussion, the Forum decided that meetings should continue to alternate between Cannington and Hinkley Point.</p> <p>One member referred to the new security barrier at the entrance to Hinkley Point. Did this mean that members would require security passes to attend meetings in the Training Centre? <i>GB explained that this change had been made in order to clarify where the boundary between the public highway and the private road was. Passes would not be required at this point.</i></p> <p>Could the Forum have an update and discussion on Emergency Evacuation Procedures at Hinkley Point. <i>AJ responded that this was the County Council's responsibility and it seemed a reasonable request to have such a discussion. He promised to consult with his colleagues and come back to the next meeting of the Forum with suggestions as to how and when this might be done.</i> Action: Somerset County Council, AJ</p> <p>GB reported that there were regular Emergency Planning meetings for the A & B stations and that a representative of the C site now attended these as an observer. The intent was to link up the existing nuclear site with the construction site to ensure comprehensive emergency procedures.</p> <p>CStG reminded members that they should return their membership registration forms circulated following the previous meeting and promised that a report would be prepared for the next meeting on the responses received by the secretariat. Action: PPS, CStG</p>
<p>9. Future meeting dates</p>

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The following dates were agreed for future meetings subject to the availability of venues:

- 15 September 2011 at Cannington College
- 17 November 2011 at Hinkley Point B Training Centre