



Meeting Report

Regarding:

EDF Energy Hinkley Point: Community Forum

Date:

30 September 2009

Attending:

Colin Allen *Cannington Parish Council*
Chris Aubury *Forum 21*
Doug Bamsey *Sedgemoor District Council*
Stewart Brook *Somerset Primary Care Trust*
Jo Brown *Parents Concerned about Hinkley*
David Hatherley *Clerk to Cannington Parish Council*
Councillor Paul Tipney *West Somerset District Council*
Iain Sturdy *Parrett Drainage Board Consortium*
Nick Stevens *Parrett Drainage Board Consortium*
Mike Short *Fiddington Parish Council & Chairman HPSSG*
Allan Searle *Stogursey Parish Council*
Granville Roberts *Environment Agency*
Barry Pearce *Planning Aid South West*
Councillor Chris Morgan *West Somerset District Council*
Louisa McKay *Environment Agency*
Fiona MacMillan *Bridgwater College*
Cara Lynch-Blosse *Stogursey CE Primary School*
Alyn Jones *Somerset County Council*

Allen Jeffrey *Stop Hinkley*
Malcolm Hogg *Nether Stowey Parish Council*
Stuart Hill *Bridgwater Bay Wild Fowl Association*
Phil Ham *Parrett Drainage Board Consortium*
Charles Graham *The Green Party*
Susan Goss *West Hinkley Action Group*
Andrew Goodchild *West Somerset District Council*
Leslie Flash *Stogursey & District Parish Plan Steering Committee*
Becky Feltham *3G Communications [for National Grid]*
Julie Edwards *National Farmers Union*
Christopher Durham *RAC Foundation*
Rachel Davies *Somerset College of Art & Technology*
Sheila Conrad *Somerset Trust Badge Group*
Peter Whitehead *Planning Aid South West*
Emma Baker *Environment Agency*
Lynda Laird *Cannington Parish Council*
Richard Mayson *EDF Energy*
Simon Dunford *EDF Energy*
Gordon Bell *EDF Energy*
Alexia Pradel *EDF Energy*
Charles St George *PPS*
Jo Hatton Jones *PPS*
Ruth Stacey *PPS*

Item**1. Introductions**

CStG asked everyone to explain briefly who they were and what organisation they were representing.

PPS will produce the minutes of Forum meetings and circulate these as a draft to attendees to check for factual accuracy, before being sent to the full Community Forum membership and posted on the website - www.edfconsultation.info.

Attendees gave their consent for photographs to be taken of the Community Forum in session as long as these were appropriately captioned when used.

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2. Terms of reference and membership of the Forum

CStG explained the Community Forum had been established to give EDF Energy a point of contact with representatives of the local community and stakeholder bodies during the planning process and subsequently, if plans were approved, during the construction of Hinkley Point C.

The Forum has a narrower remit than the Hinkley Point Site Stakeholder Group (SSG), which covers all issues relating to the existing power stations. This Forum reflected the need for a specific body to discuss nuclear new build issues.

Three key aims had been identified for the Community Forum:

- Keep the local community informed on nuclear new build
- Enable the local community to raise issues with EDF Energy
- Allow EDF Energy to gain a better understanding of the concerns and issues of the local community.

CStG ran through the terms of reference and explained that membership is likely to evolve over time. He suggested that the venue for meetings should be rotated. It had seemed appropriate to start the cycle of meetings in the parish where the site is located.

In response to a question about how frequently meetings will be held, CStG explained they would be scheduled quarterly, with additional meetings at key times in the project.

The membership of the Forum was discussed. CStG explained that representatives had been invited from local groups within the vicinity of Hinkley Point along with key stakeholder and statutory consultees that had an interest in the project.

He outlined the Statement of Community Consultation (SOCC), which is being prepared by EDF Energy and the requirements of the Planning Act for IPC applications. He explained the approach to consultation and identified the three consultation areas as inner (within about 5 miles of the site), middle (within about 10 miles) and outer (within about 15 miles). Community groups represented were mainly from the inner



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area.

JB asked that affected areas down wind of Hinkley Point, specifically Burnham, should be included. Others agreed with the 5-mile zone approach and expressed a desire to keep to the Community Forum as a focus for communities in the area impacted directly by EDFE's proposals. Concern was also expressed about the Forum getting too big.

After some discussion, it was agreed that an invitation to join the Forum would be extended to Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge Town Council and Bridgwater Town Council.

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In addition, when the minutes of the meeting go on the website people representing local groups and organisations will be able to register an interest in joining the Community Forum.

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The question of whether the Forum should discuss health and safety issues relating to nuclear power was discussed. CStG explained that the main purpose of the Forum was to consider issues affecting the local community, principally those that would be dealt with through the IPC and planning processes. Health & safety is not a matter for the IPC and the planning authorities but for other regulatory authorities, notably the Health & Safety Executive its Nuclear Installations Inspectorate. Members of the Forum were free to raise any issues of concern but the aim was to focus on planning considerations.

It was pointed out that there was no mention of planning or the IPC in the terms of reference of the Forum. CStG explained that if the plans were successful it was proposed that the Community Forum should continue throughout the construction and operation phases.

SH said that the wording in the terms of reference stated that the Forum would "consider" issues relating to EDF Energy's plans. However, participants needed to feel that the Community Forum carried weight and was worthwhile attending. It was suggested that the wording in the terms of reference should be amended to "consider and advise". This was agreed by the meeting.

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In response to a question about when it would be decided if the plans



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would go ahead, RM explained that a decision on submission of the application will be made following consultation in the spring of 2010.

BP commented that no young people were present at the meeting and asked what is being done to consult them. CStG explained that part of EDF Energy's consultation programme includes engaging with young people and there is a workshop being held with students at Bridgwater College on 20th October. EDF Energy would welcome a representative to join the Community Forum. The Principal of the College said that it is would be better for young people to discuss issues in groups with their peers.

The question of the chairmanship of the Forum was raised. RM explained EDFE is looking for an independent Chair, notwithstanding the fact that whoever took on the role would expect to be paid by EDFE. The Company was open minded about chairmanship and would welcome suggestions.

BP made the point that communities need to understand how they can input into the process more widely than just through the Community Forum. However, he said the Forum could help to facilitate people's knowledge of how they could get involved. CStG explained the SOCC will be published next month and this will set out in detail how people can get involved in the consultation process. RM explained the SOCC will be put on the project website and published in full in a locally a circulated paper.

3 & 4 Presentation on Infrastructure Planning Commission and update on Hinkley Point C

RM gave an update on the plans for Hinkley Point C covering overall objectives, investigative and preparatory works. He briefly described the IPC planning process and outlined EDF Energy's timetable for pre-application public consultation.

EDF Energy were asked whether Natural England had been consulted about works on site and in the Bristol Channel as well as hours of working as these will impact on local waterfowl RM explained that the Marine and Fisheries Agency, local authorities, Natural England and

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other groups had been actively involved in discussing these issues.

In response to a question about whether an Environmental Assessment been undertaken for the works taking place in the Bristol Channel, RM explained that EDF Energy had done everything required by Natural England but agreed to discuss details and provide further information following the meeting.

There was then a general discussion about the Government's policy on nuclear energy and the planning process.

CStG explained that the Government is expected to publish its draft National Policy Statement on nuclear power in late October/early November. This will identify sites suitable for new nuclear development. EDF Energy is hoping Hinkley Point will be one of the sites identified.

He suggested that at the next Forum there should be a discussion about the NPS and the consultation process on it. The Government's consultation process on the draft NPS will be the main forum for local people to have their say on whether there should be new nuclear development at Hinkley Point.

RM said that other draft National Policy Statements would be published at the same time, including an over-arching energy statement and one on renewable energy.

BP explained the role of Planning Aid, a charity designed to help local communities to get involved in planning debate and issues. Planning Aid South West could help people to get involved in the Hinkley Point C planning process and the consultation on the draft nuclear National Policy Statement. He handed round leaflets on Planning Aid and explained about the helpline it operated for people with questions on planning procedures, which is answered by qualified planning professional.

The charity also tries to encourage ordinary people to get involved in planning applications. Planning Aid South West will be holding three workshops in the early part of November for local people to attend. These events are to inform local people about the Hinkley Point C

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planning process and the draft National Policy Statement, and to help them get their voices heard effectively. Planning Aid aims to act as a translator for communities to translate planning jargon into plain English and help local people to contribute.

CStG said that the Planning Aid South West events would be publicised in the next EDF Energy newsletter.

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In response to a question about what criteria might rule out Hinkley Point as a suitable site for new nuclear development, RM briefly explained the Strategic Siting Assessment (SSA) process, details of which were available on specific pages of the Department of Energy & Climate Change's website, www.nuclearpowersiting.decc.gov.uk. A number of exclusionary and discretionary factors were outlined on this website and EDF Energy had nominated land at Hinkley Point under the SSA process. It was agreed that this web link would be circulated with the minutes of the meeting.

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If members of the Forum wanted a hard copy of the Hinkley Point SSA nomination, this could be viewed in the EDF Energy Bridgwater office and copies will be brought to the next Community Forum meeting.

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There was then a general discussion about health and safety and how incidents are monitored.

GB explained that there were many mandatory procedures in place and that this could be confirmed by the Environment Agency. Reports are published annually by a number of agencies, which are publicly available.

JB expressed concerns about health effects and, after some discussion, it was agreed that a reading list of scientific studies citing health concerns about nuclear power produced by Parents Concerned About Hinkley would be circulated with the minutes. A link would also be provided from the EDF Energy consultation website, www.edfconsultation.info to the Stop Hinkley website.

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Another member of the Forum asked that links also be included to accredited scientific responses to these reports to show both sides of

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the argument. This was also agreed.

5. Consideration of subjects for discussion at future Forum meetings

CStG said that there was a wide range of views on the Community Forum but there are some key points EDF Energy needs to cover. In particular, EDF Energy wished to consult the Community Forum on its Stage One pre-application public consultation before the end of the year.

AJ from Somerset County Council asked how long the Community Forum meetings could go on for? There are various consultation processes the local authorities were holding on planning issues, each with different time scale. There is not yet a full picture of EDF Energy's other, smaller planning applications that would be coming forward in addition to the IPC process. These considerations should guide future agendas and the frequency of meetings.

After discussion, it was agreed that the Forum needed to consider both the consultation process to be undertaken by EDF Energy outlined in its Statement of Community Consultation to be published in early November and the 'Initial Proposals and Options' to be put forward for consideration during the formal Stage One pre-application consultation period in late November and December.

It was therefore agreed that the next meeting would be held in November, with a further meeting in December.

Some attendees said it would be useful to look at other developments relating to Hinkley Point C and how these could be managed. There is a lot happening at once and it would be good to be able to understand what activity overlaps. Significant earth moving would be required on site to deliver EDFE's proposals and National Grid was planning upgrades. Hours of working would be important to know. All this will impact on local residents and it needs to be joined up.

DB from Sedgemoor District Council suggested the need to plot out what is happening in the local communities at the next meeting so everyone can see what is going on. This will also act as an action plan for the three local authorities.

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AJ commented it would be useful for local authorities and the Environment Agency to add details on what consultation they are undertaking in local areas to paint a full picture. The Environment Agency representative commented that a representative could attend the Forum to answer questions.

A Cannington community representative said it would be useful to have forewarning of construction activity for the preparatory works, as the traffic could affect the village. She asked that Cannington Parish Council be notified in advance.

Questions were raised about why EDF Energy required such a large area for the new nuclear power station. Specific questions were:

- Did EDF Energy already own all this land?
- Will there be a workers' campus and, if so, for how many people?
- Where will the workers' campus be located on the site?
- How will noise and light pollution be controlled?
- Will some of the site be used for storage of waste?

In response, RM explained that the land area identified is not all needed for the completed development – it also includes the land required to cater for everything to do with the construction of the nuclear power station.

The Forum and the local community will be consulted on how this part of the site will be landscaped and restored after construction.

EDF Energy was looking at a possible temporary campus onsite, which would help minimise traffic movements. This would also include amenities for construction workers to reduce their need to travel off-site.

RM explained it was not possible at the moment to be specific about where the campus would be located as it depends on what land is

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eventually owned by EDFE. The company is aware of the potential impact of the campus on Shurton and Burton and wants this to be minimised. Issues such as noise and light pollution will be part of the stage one public consultation starting in mid November.

He indicated that the campus on-site could provide accommodation for up to 700 workers during the peak of construction. A similar arrangement at Sizewell B had proved successful, so there was a proven track record for this type of facility.

The interim store for high-level waste would be in the northeast corner of the site. This will be a relatively small area and would only store waste from Hinkley Point C. There are no plans to take high-level waste from anywhere else.

CStG asked for the attendees to let PPS or the EDF Energy team know of any other items to be put on the agenda for future meetings of the Forum.

6. Any Other Business

JB asked if Hinkley Point was refused for nuclear development, does EDF Energy have any other interests in the Severn Estuary?

RM said that EDFE is currently committed to nuclear at Hinkley Point C and referred to the Government White Paper and its proposals for future energy production. There is a diverse mix of sources of low carbon energy and referred to the annex in the White Paper for more detailed analysis.

BF pointed out that National Grid's proposals for upgrading power lines would also affect the local communities.

CStG said that National Grid will be starting consultation in October on its plans and would be doing a direct mailing to those affected. They will also be holding public exhibitions. He said that EDF Energy and National Grid were looking to hold a joint public consultation event on 2 December 2009 in Stogursey Victory Hall.

One participant asked whether EDF Energy had secured funding to

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build the nuclear power station. RM advised that EDF Energy was in a secure financial position underpinned by its income stream from a large customer base, which would help the company to fund the development of new nuclear power from its balance sheet.

JB asked for a discussion of EDF Energy's financing of new nuclear power stations at the next meeting. RM said this would not be appropriate as it is a commercial issue and EDFE was not seeking a subsidy from the taxpayer for the development of nuclear power.

AJ asked whether the Forum and local people could be kept up to date with developments in the construction of new nuclear power stations in Finland and at Flamanville in France. RM stated that the Finland development was nothing to do with EDF Energy but that he would be happy to provide an update on Flamanville at a future meeting.

CStG said that up-to-date information on Flamanville could be provided via a link from the EDF Energy consultation website.

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7. Next Meeting

7pm on Thursday 12 November 2009 in Bridgwater College,
Cannington