

# Meeting Report

**EDF Hinkley Point C: Main Site Forum.**

**Date: Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 – 6pm**

**Victory Hall, Stogursey, Bridgwater**

**Participating:**

Paul Kelly, *Chair*

Erik Neale, *Local resident*

Jenny Ody, *Stogursey Parish Council*

Sue Spicer, *Burton resident*

Sue Goss, *Stogursey Parish Council*

Jon Ayers, *Environment Agency*

Ella Hughes, *Environment Agency*

Briony Waterman, *Somerset West & Taunton Council*

Allan Searle, *Stogursey Parish Council*

Chris Ford, *Stogursey Parish Council*

Mike Laver, *Burton resident*

Richard Cuttall, *Shurton resident / W.H.A.G*

Valdo Andrade, *Avon & Somerset Police*

Chris Morgan, *Somerset West & Taunton Council*

**EDF Team:**

Andrew Cockcroft, *EDF*

Stacy Walker, *EDF*

Drew Aspinwall, *SEC Newgate*

Robyn Evans, *SEC Newgate*

**Apologies:**

Andrew Goodchild, *EDF*

Nicola Hale, *Sedgemoor District Council*

Bruce Eyley, *Kilve Parish Council*

**In addition to the forum meeting notes and agendas, all presentations and reports are available at [www.edfenergy.com/hpccommunity](http://www.edfenergy.com/hpccommunity)**

## **1 Introductions**

- 1.1** Paul Kelly ('The Chair') welcomed everyone to the in-person meeting. He asked everyone to introduce themselves and ran through the forum protocols and venue arrangements.

## **2 Meeting Note and Matters Arising from the last Forum held: 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022 (Chair)**

- 2.1** There were no comments and the draft meeting note was agreed.

## **3 Project Progress Update – (Andrew Cockcroft, EDF)**

### **3.1 Safety and Learning**

Andrew Cockcroft (AC) said it had been a difficult few months for the project, with a fatality on site and a road incident involving a HPC bus.

He said learning is being taken from both of these serious events and HPC have gone back to basics when it comes to safety messaging. He discussed the most recent campaigns running on site on taking a personal approach to safety, highlighting the 'life saving rules' which are adopted across EDF Group operations all over the world.

Investigations are continuing on both events and AC said he should be able to provide an update at the next Community Forum.

### **3.2 Progress and Milestones**

AC went on to run through progress on site and major milestones.

#### **Unit 1 – Ring Liner**

- The final 11 metre prefabricated steel ring liner has been lifted into place.
- Unit 1 now stands at over 40m and is ready for the installation of its iconic domed roof in 2023.

### **3.3 Reactor Pressure Vessel Complete**

- The first nuclear reactor built for a British power station in more than 30 years is complete and ready for delivery to Hinkley Point C.
- The "reactor pressure vessel" is the high strength cylinder that contains the nuclear fuel and the chain reaction needed to make heat.
- At just 13m long and weighing in at 500 tonnes, each of the two reactors at Hinkley Point C will help power around 3 million British homes.
- The reactor has been built in France by Framatome; the same nuclear engineering company which built Britain's last nuclear reactor, at Sizewell B in 1991.
- Teams have spent 80,000 engineering hours on its construction.
- It marks a significant milestone for the project.

### **3.4 Unit 1 - Storage Pools**

- One of the project's heaviest lifts has been completed successfully as the Lance Storage and Transfer Compartment Pools were placed into Unit 1.
- Weighing in at around 780 tonnes the lift marked the end of more than 12 months of intense assembly work in its prefabrication building.
- The first of four Accumulator Tanks for the Unit 1 Reactor Building was installed on 4<sup>th</sup> February. Lifted into position by Big Carl, the tank weighed 51 tonnes and measured 9.1m tall.
- The Accumulators are an essential safety component as they'll passively inject boronated cooling water into the primary circuit without the need for outside intervention in the event of a loss-of-coolant incident.

### 3.5 Progress in 2023

- The project will reach the peak of construction with both main civil works and mechanical and electrical installations in progress.
- This will be the year the Dome is placed onto Unit 1 and the Reactor Pressure Vessel is received on site.
- In the Bristol Channel, more great work will occur as HPC drill the shafts to connect the heads to the cooling water tunnels.
- The main control room that has been pre-fabricated will also be transferred into Unit 1 for its fit out.
- In addition, the suppliers of the Nuclear Steam Supply System (Framatome) and Turbine (GE) will increase their presence on site and start installing equipment.
- The MEH teams will also be accelerating the installation of 1,000km's of pipework and cabling as rooms are transferred from the main civils work.

### 3.6 Combwich Wharf and Logistics

- All remediation work now completed at Combwich Wharf with the installation of an upgraded berthing bed.
- There will be a busy schedule of deliveries as major components begin to arrive to support the Mechanical and Electrical installation.
- Training of in-house teams to carry out escorted moves along the C182 completed and awaiting vetting confirmation.
- There will be a focus on looking to weekend movement windows but HPC will need to ensure that deliveries spend as little time as possible at the Wharf itself.

**3.7** AC said it will become busier over this year, with more loads moving up the road, but that HPC will continue to operate its notification system for every single load. HPC are committed to trying to reduce the number of loads that come in over the weekends and will be making efforts to do this on weekdays as much as they can possibly can. He explained that the key to this is less reliance on the police going forward.

**3.8** Sue Goss (SG) said she thought weekend movements were the favoured option as there is less traffic on the road.

AC recognised that the weekend is quieter but said it is difficult to avoid weekday movements when it gets busier. He added that HPC try to move the loads outside of rush hour on weekdays.

SG said there is also the need to consider the decommissioning at B station.

AC reassured members that efforts are made to undertake this work at the most suitable times.

**3.9** Mike Laver (ML) asked for confirmation that side traffic will still be using the C182 rather than being diverted down country lanes.

AC gave assurance that HGVs will not be going down small country lanes, saying this is the benefit of being able to hold loads at the park and ride facilities.

### 3.10 Environment and Ecology

AC noted that Luke Stevens has now left the project to work at HS2 but that HPC have a replacement and a team of 50 environmental specialists on site.

He said a lot of work was undertaken at Combwich Wharf to mitigate the impact on the environment and ecology, with HPC putting in place a number of underpasses to help facilitate mammals moving under and around roads.

AC said there is positive news that the area is being used and the underpasses are having a beneficial effect and showed Forum members a video of three otters using an underpass.

### 3.11 Supported Traineeship

- Hinkley Point C's Supported Traineeship programme has returned for 2023.
- The new cohort began their training before Christmas with initial work-readiness training before the formal placements began in January.
- The scheme was developed to help individuals aged 18-24 with special educational needs and disabilities or an Education, Health and Care Plan by providing them with employability training and on-the-job learning via Project placements.

### **3.12 Team News**

Rob Jordan is being welcomed back to the project to take on the role of site construction director.

Stacy Walker who has joined HPC as Stakeholder Relations Manager introduced herself to Forum members.

Valdo Andrade, who has recently replaced Jake Dade as Police Community Support Officer at Avon and Somerset Police, also introduced himself.

### **3.13 Southern Area**

AC said there has been some concern from the HPC environmental team about dogs chasing hares in the Southern Area. He said the HPC team had looked back at last year's meeting minutes on this as concerns had previously been raised on having measured use and Mike Laver (ML) had made the point that it is not a nature reserve.

ML said he did not want the Southern Area to become designated as environmental land.

AC said HPC do not want to be too heavy handed and see the area covered in signs and would rather people be respectful of the wildlife and ecology in the area. He said the possibility of a traffic light system was raised in the past and may be something to reconsider.

- 3.14** SG said the traffic light system sounds like a positive way to remind people to be respectful of the wildlife.

AC reiterated that HPC do not want a position where they are enforcing dogs on leads.

- 3.15** Chris Morgan (CM) spoke on global warming and asked what commitments EDF are making on the future of the environment.

AC said that EDF building a new fleet of nuclear power stations that can produce a lot of low carbon electricity is in an effort to tackle climate change. He said the change we are seeing in the climate reinforces the need to get HPC finished as soon as possible, along with offshore wind turbines and battery storage to counteract against this.

- 3.16** With regard to CM's point on birds nesting, AC said HPC have a large team of ecologists monitoring the area, looking at things such as nesting birds across the estate.

- 3.17** CM asked whether there will be ongoing monitoring of pylons.

AC said this is a question for National Grid but said that he knows that they conduct regular monitoring on impact on the bird population.

- 3.18** CM said the fatality in November was a great shame and acknowledged HPC's track record and how much focus the project has put on trying to mitigate against this kind of disaster.

AC said it is a pertinent point and that it is rare that someone does not lose their life on large and long-running construction projects. He said the fatality really shook the project at a personal level and efforts are being redoubled on safety.

## **4 Update: Planning (Andrew Cockcroft, EDF)**

- 4.1** AC gave an update on planning matters.

#### 4.2 Material Change to Development Consent Order

- HPC's proposal not to install an AFD requires three approvals: Change to DCO; Environmental Permit; and Marine Licence.
- In 2019 HPC undertook a pre-application consultation on the change to the DCO.
- HPC made an application to vary the Environmental Permit in 2020 and subsequently appealed in 2021. In September 2022 that appeal was dismissed by the Secretary of State.
- At the end of 2022 HPC were considering challenging the decision and was preparing a further DCO consultation covering AFD and four other matters including revisions to the Interim Spent Fuel Store.

##### Update

- Following positive conversations with the Environment Agency (EA), HPC decided not to challenge the SoS's decision on the Environmental Permit appeal.
- Instead, HPC will work with the EA and other relevant bodies to develop a compensation scheme of physical measures in the Bristol Channel and on relevant rivers to address impacts on migratory fish and the assemblage of fish in the Bristol Channel.

#### 4.3 AC set out the anticipated timeline for the DCO going forward:

- The current proposal is to work with the Environment Agency at mitigation measures and to go for the pre-application consultation in summer 2023.
- The application would then be made in winter 2023.
- The examination and decision would take place into spring/summer 2024.
- In tandem to this, the environmental permit would go through in spring 2023 and the marine licence application in 2024.

#### 4.4 AC explained that the most important date for the community will be the main DCO material change consultation which is planned to take place this summer. He said this will still include the other elements of the changes to the spent fuel storage, lesser height meteorological mast, and sluice gate storage racks, but would be looking at the AFD in a slightly different way to include consultation on the compensatory mitigation measures.

#### 4.5 SG asked what sort of mitigation measures are being proposed to the Environment Agency. AC said in very broad terms, EDF are looking at creating new wetland habitats which create better spawning grounds for certain species of fish.

#### 4.6 SG asked whether there is an alternative plan in the event that the Environment Agency do not go along with this. AC said the AFD could be forced upon EDF but that this is not the scenario they would like. He also recognised that there are a number of different factors to come together, including the marine licence decision.

#### 4.7 ML said there must be some kind of engineering solution to the AFD. AC said the real problem is effectiveness, stating that all the modelling undertaken by EDF has shown its effectiveness is very low. He added that this is balanced against the long term risks to human life. He explained that maintaining a fish deterrent system of this scale would require a significant amount of human management underwater in one of the most hostile marine environments, whilst also doing this in a limited time window.

#### 4.8 ML questioned how the effectiveness of the compensation scheme would be measured. AC said these kinds of discussions will take place with the Environment Agency. Jon Ayers (JA) said the EA is holding its own stakeholder engagement sessions to answer any questions around the current application to vary the permit.

**AFTERNOTE:** The Environment Agency launched a consultation on the application to vary the cooling water discharge permit to remove reference to the acoustic fish deterrent and add the discharge of

**AFTERNOTE**

impinged biomass and seawater from the fish recovery return system. The consultation ran from 24 January 2023 to 2 March 2023.

Information about the consultation is available online [here](#). The EA also run a 'meet the regulator Hinkley forum' which aims to:

- Offer a better understanding of nuclear regulation and the role of the EA;
- Provide updates on the EA's work at the Hinkley nuclear sites, on permit applications and variations and other issues of interest to stakeholders;
- Enable people to share views and ask questions to the EA;
- Give people a better understanding of how to provide comments and views on the EA's consultations.

To join the group email [HinkleyNuclear@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:HinkleyNuclear@environment-agency.gov.uk) with your name, organisation and email.

AC gave assurance that the compensation measures and AFD can be discussed in real detail, with all the relevant information, during the consultation in the summer.

**4.9** Richard Cuttall (RC) said reports show that EDF have made massive losses as a group, the French Government are in the process of nationalising, the Chinese are very unlikely to put any more money in and there are escalating costs primarily due to inflation. He questioned whether it would be fair for EDF to be lodging a sum of money to ensure fish stocks are not decimated over the life of the power station. AC said these are two very different subjects. With regard to money, AC said it will not be cheap and will cost many millions to develop new wetlands and fish passes, adding that he does not think the issues with EDF Group have anything to do with this.

**4.10** RC said his main concern is for the future of the fish in the Bristol Channel. AC said this is exactly why the EA are signing off on the measures and will hold them account. He said that the EA will say they do not want any harm, and even a small amount of harm will need some compensation.

**4.11** SG disagreed with AC's comment that if there is any harm then the EA will deal with it, noting that the EA have not yet prosecuted one farmer for polluting rivers. She said that far more fish are likely to be killed by river pollution than the AFD and no action is taken by the EA.

**AFTERNOTE:** The EA disagreed with this statement. The information on the number of prosecutions the EA has taken in relation to river pollutions can be obtained by contacting the EA's enquiries team at [enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk).

**AFTERNOTE**

**4.12** The Chair said the consultation will address these types of issues. JA explained that the EA would not be responsible for agreeing compensation measures as part of the DCO material change. The EA will be consulted on the material change and will provide comments on any compensation packages proposed.

**4.13** ML asked for an update on the planning applications submitted prior to Christmas. AC confirmed that the planning submission for the Junction 21 Logistics Hub is with Sedgemoor District Council.

**4.14** On the community bus, SG raised concerns about the closure of the B3191 road between Watchet and Blue Anchor and what impact it will have on the timetable for other communities on the Bridgwater side. She raised concerns that even though the road is closed, Somerset Passenger Services are still driving up from Blue Anchor to the nearby caravan parks and retracing their steps to go to other communities, which she argued might have an impact on the timetable. She asked why EDF are picking up holidaymakers from a campsite as opposed to focusing on use for local people.

**ACTION:** AC said it is not the intention for the service to be run in this way and that he will talk to Andy Wagstaff on this.

**ACTION**

**AFTERNOTE:** HPC operates a community bus service between Minehead and Bridgwater. We have had a report of tourists using the service near Blue Anchor. Somerset Passenger Solutions (SPS) are not aware of a large number of tourists using this service. An update will be issued to all drivers reminding them that the bus service is for members of the local community (although the challenge of identifying those using the service as a tourist or a local resident has been noted) and drivers will be asked to report any issues of tourist related overcrowding.

**AFTERNOTE**

**4.15** CM said it will be important to consider the legacies of the project over the coming years. AC agreed and said this is something that will be discussed and considered in due course.

**4.16** RC put on record that Erik Neale wanted a definitive answer on whether buses can reverse or not. AC said HPC are looking at this as a result of the Community Forum and will give a position on this.

## **5 Any other business / Topics for Future Main Site Fora - (Chair)**

**5.1** SG asked about the use of Hikvision, noting that it is not used on B or C site and questioned whether this applies to the rest of the fleet. AC said it was not used across the fleet in the business. He said there was a nationalised warning that went out and that the overall position is getting tighter, not just on CCTV but on all technology. He said GCHQ continue to advise HPC as a critical infrastructure on these risks.

**5.2** RC asked for an update on the cycle route. AC said that this has been put on pause for the time being as it could be caught up in additional compensatory habitat discussions, particularly as Steart is where expansion work may take place. He said HPC will update forum members when things start moving again on this.

**5.3** SG said the majority of the cyclepath lies within Stogursey Parish and therefore negotiations should include Stogursey Parish Council. AC said this point has been made clear.

## **6 Date of next meeting: Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023 at 6pm**

**6.1** 2023 dates for the Community, Main Site and Transport Forums

All 6pm start and on Thursdays:

**Main Site Forum:** 23rd February 2023 / 22nd June 2023 / 19th October 2023

**Community Forum:** 19th January 2023 / 18th May 2023 / 21st September 2023

**Transport Forum:** 16th March 2023 / 13th July 2023 / 16th November 2023

**6.2** The meeting ended.