

HINKLEY POINT SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Minutes of the meeting held at Hill House, Otterhampton on Friday 27 February 2015

PRESENT

Cllr M Caswell (Chairman) - Stockland Bristol
Mr R Schroder - Site Director, Hinkley Point A
Mr M Harrison - Station Director, Hinkley Point B

Elected Members

Cllr T Ayre - Holford Parish Council
Cllr Ms A Bown - Somerset County Council
Cllr M Brown (Vice Chairman) - Otterhampton Parish Council
Mr A Debenham - Stop Hinkley
Cllr J Edney - Somerset County Council
Cllr Ms S Goss - West Somerset Council
Cllr M Hogg - Nether Stowey Parish Council
Mr A Jeffrey - Sedgemoor and West Somerset Green Party
Mr M Laver - West Hinkley Action Group
Cllr C Morgan - West Somerset Council
Cllr Ms B Oates - Stogursey Parish Council
Cllr M Phillips - Cannington Parish Council
Cllr Mrs A Reed - Wembdon Parish Council
Cllr J Roberts - Nether Stowey Parish Council
Cllr S Stretton - Spaxton Parish Council
Cllr J Taylor - Fiddington Parish Council
Cllr T Williams - Kilve Parish Council

Co-opted Members

Mr M Short

Appointed Members

Mr J Jenkin - Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Mr T Fediw - Environment Agency
Mr D Withey - Environment Agency
Mr I Wilson - Office for Nuclear Regulation
Mr D Prescott - Office for Nuclear Regulation
Mr P Dickenson - Office for Nuclear Regulation
Mrs N Dawson - Somerset County Council
Mr T Howes - Civil Nuclear Constabulary
Dr S Harrison - Public Health England

EDF Energy

Mr P Higginson - Technical Safety and Support Manager
Mr G Bell - Media Manager
Mr D Stokes - Communications

Magnox

Mr A Moore - Chief Operating Officer
Mr B Bridgewater - Magnox Waste Team

Mr S Wilmott - Magnox Waste Team
Ms Z Young - Communications
Ms P Hatt - Communications
Mr S Booth - Head of Environment

IN ATTENDANCE

Cllr H Davies - Somerset County Council
Cllr Dr Keen - Kilve Parish Council
Ms C Collingridge
Mr R Pumfrey
Mr O Hill
Mr M J Davis - Secretary

OPEN PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

- 1 Cllr Caswell welcomed all those present to this meeting of the Site Stakeholder Group for Hinkley Point A Site and Hinkley Point B Power Station. He invited questions from members of the public on any issue which might not be covered in later discussion.
- 2 Ms Collingridge said that she was pleased to hear of the reported change to encapsulation of fuel debris rather than dissolution in acid but hoped that more information would be made available by the company in future on the integrity of the proposed storage containers and the construction of a disposal facility.
- 3 Ms Collingridge suggested that advice provided by the company on arrangements for taking potassium iodate tablets in the event of an emergency event was not consistent with WHO advice in relation to persons with thyroid disease. Mr Higginson undertook to pursue this matter at a meeting of the Emergency Planning Consultative Committee with representatives of the Health Authority who had responsibilities for such advice.
- 4 Ms Collingridge asked whether consideration had been given to the use of potassium iodide rather than potassium iodate as prophylactic treatment in the event of a release of radioactivity. Dr Harrison, representing Public Health England, confirmed that this matter was under review at national level.
- 5 Ms Collingridge asked what arrangements were made in the event of an emergency for smokers who might be required to shelter in public buildings to be able to smoke. Cllr Caswell felt that this was not an appropriate subject for discussion at this meeting.
- 6 Ms Collingridge suggested that monitoring arrangements might follow the good practice of the Hong Kong Observatory which included radiation monitoring measurements in a database containing weather information which was accessible

by the public. Cllr Caswell said that this would be a matter for consideration by the Environment Agency.

- 7 Mr Pumfrey raised issues in relation to the storage and processing of radioactive waste which would be addressed in later discussions.

CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 8 It was confirmed that there was a quorum of elected members present at the meeting.
- 9 Apologies for absence were received from Dr R MacGregor, Cllr A Moore, Cllr H Davies and Miss B Child.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31 OCTOBER 2014

(a) Accuracy

- 10 The minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2014 were approved as a correct record.

(b) Matters Arising (other than matters to be covered in later discussions)

Cllr John Edwards

- 11 Cllr Caswell drew attention to the death of Cllr John Edwards, a former member of this Group, and paid tribute to the contribution he had made to the work of this Group and Spaxton Parish Council.

Demolition of A Station Turbine Hall (para 18(viii) refers)

- 12 Mr Schroeder said that it was now proposed to commence demolition of the Hinkley Point A Turbine Hall in mid-2017 rather than in 2019 as previously planned. He said that this would avoid lorry movements associated with this work coinciding with a peak of lorry movements required for Hinkley Point C construction.

Hinkley Point B Reactor Core Graphite

- 13 Mr Harrison displayed a replica of a graphite block which formed part of a fuel channel within the Hinkley Point B reactor core together with a model of a fuel element. He explained how the blocks which formed the reactor core fitted together and described the inspection and monitoring of these graphite components. He said that the safety case provided justification for an average

weight loss of 15% in these graphite components; most recent measurements indicated an average weight loss of 12.8%.

- 14 In response to questions on reactor core graphite inspections, Mr Harrison said that the programme, which included both of the Hinkley B reactors and the similar reactors at Hunterston B, included inspections and analysis of samples removed from the reactors. The programme ensured appropriate coverage of all areas of the reactors. During the current outage of Reactor 4 a total of 31 fuel channels were planned for inspection. To date 29 of these inspections had been completed with no anomalous results.
- 15 In reply to a further question on the Reactor 4 outage, Mr Harrison said that the extensive programme of maintenance and inspection included the replacement of LP turbine rotors and two gas circulators. In reply to a question from Mr Debenham, Mr Harrison said that electrical output from the turbo alternators could be slightly higher in winter due to the effect of the lower temperature of the sea water entering the turbine condensers. In reply to questions from Cllr Williams, Mr Harrison said that reactor gas was filtered to remove any particulate material; he also explained that maintenance of the fuelling machine was generally carried out outside of the main reactor outage.

STATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT – HINKLEY POINT B

- 16 Mr Harrison reported on activities and performance at Hinkley Point B since the previous meeting of this group, drawing particular attention to the following:
- (i) The station had maintained high standards of safety and reliability. It was now more than 8 years since the station had had a reportable nuclear event and more than five years since the last environmental event.
 - (ii) Reactor 3 had operated at nominal full output throughout the period with reduction in output only for a period of refuelling. Reactor 4 had operated at nominal full output until 23 January when it was shut down for the start of its current outage for planned maintenance work. Reactor 3 was scheduled to remain in operation throughout the period of Reactor 4 maintenance.
 - (iii) 1000 additional workers had joined the workforce for the outage work. Many of these were specialist maintenance contractors but additional staff were recruited locally when appropriate.
 - (iv) An international team of nuclear experts representing the World Association of Nuclear Operators had spent three weeks at the station during December carrying out a peer review. This process, which assessed performance against specified objectives and criteria was carried out at each nuclear power plant every four years.

- (v) An exercise of the station's emergency arrangements during June would test the operation of the on site (level 1) plan, the off site (level 2) plan and the central government (level 3) plans.
 - (vi) The planned life of the AGR reactor plant at Dungeness B power station had been extended by 10 years to 2028.
 - (vii) During a graduation ceremony for the company's apprentices a "community engagement" award had been given to Bart Marquis, an apprentice from Hinkley Point B.
 - (viii) More than 20,000 members of the public had used the Visitors Centre in Bridgwater during the two years since it opened.
- 17 Mr Harrison expressed an apology to local residents in Cannington for inconvenience caused by the transport of LP rotors to site during the current Reactor 4 outage. He said that there were no further abnormal loads to be delivered to site during the current outage programme.
- 18 Cllr Ms Goss and Cllr Ms Oates drew attention to a deterioration in standards of driving along local lanes since the current outage had started. They said that the problem was particularly acute with convoys of cars driving at high speed at times of shift changeover. Mr Harrison apologised and described arrangements to brief everyone coming to work at the site on the importance of safe and responsible driving on local roads. He said that action had been taken against individuals who had been found to have driven inconsiderately and asked that local residents should report to the station the registration numbers and descriptions of any vehicle which was seen to be driven badly. Mr Schroeder confirmed that a similar approach was adopted on the Hinkley Point A.
- 19 In reply to a question from Mr Debenham, Mr Harrison said that during the emergency exercise in June the only things which would be apparent to local residents would be the sounding of sirens and the attendance of emergency vehicles.

SITE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – HINKLEY POINT A

- 20 Mr Schroder reported on activities at Hinkley Point A site since the previous meeting, drawing particular attention to the following:
- (i) There had been no accidents involving time lost from work on Hinkley Point A since the previous meeting.
 - (ii) Progress was being maintained with the removal of radioactive wastes from settling tanks.

- (iii) Fuel element debris was being examined in order to characterise the waste, develop techniques for retrieval and determine future processing strategy.
 - (iv) The milling technique which had been developed on site for decontamination of pond skip components removed approximately 1 mm of material from the surface. The removed material, which was classified as intermediate level waste (ILW), represented a small proportion of the total volume and the remainder could be freely recycled.
 - (v) De-watering of an area of Hinkley Point C site to allow construction of foundations for the new plant could cause movement of an underground plume of diesel oil on Hinkley Point A site which had escaped from a leak in underground pipe work some 30 - 40 years ago. A technique had been developed to inject a water barrier which would prevent movement of the plume. There was insufficient time to remove the oil before de-watering work commenced in June.
- 21 In reply to a question from Cllr Ms Reed, Mr Schroeder said he anticipated that the proposed water barrier system would remain in place for some eight years.
- 22 In reply to questions from Mr Debenham and Mr Jeffrey, Mr Schroder explained that the option to send pond skips to the USA for smelting, as had been done with the Hinkley Point A skips, was no longer available. Surface decontamination using the techniques developed at Hinkley Point A made an enormous reduction in the volume of the material to be treated as ILW and allowed the remainder to be recycled. Two of the skips received from Sellafield had been size reduced by laser cutting and the remaining skip would be processed in the coming months.
- 23 In response to a query from Cllr Edney, Mr Schroder confirmed that the Environment Agency was closely involved in discussions on arrangements for dealing with the underground plume of diesel oil.

MAGNOX WASTE STRATEGY UPDATE

- 24 Cllr Caswell referred to a meeting of a small subgroup with representatives of NDA and Cavendish Fluor which had given an indication of current thinking in relation to ILW, fuel element debris and decontamination of pond skips. He referred also to an article which had subsequently appeared in the Bridgwater Mercury which contained false and inaccurate statements. Cllr Ms Goss expressed support for the points made by Cllr Caswell; she was concerned by the Bridgwater Mercury article which she regarded as bad reporting and believed that it should be retracted. A copy of the statement to the meeting by Cllr Caswell is attached as an appendix to these minutes.

- 25 Mr Bridgewater reminded members of the studies on waste optimisation and storage undertaken over the past two years. He said that following extensive consultation with stakeholders the implementation of the options which had been developed was put on hold until the new Parent Body Organisation had taken ownership of Magnox on 1 September 2014. A review of options which had been undertaken since that time had taken account of new ideas developed by the PBO during the competition process and had reflected preferences expressed by stakeholders during the earlier consultation. Safety and safeguarding of the environment remained the highest priorities. Issues considered during the review had included:
- (i) The choice of containers to be used for intermediate level waste, in particular the use of a 6 m³ concrete box as an alternative to the ductile cast iron containers proposed for use previously. These concrete boxes had been used in the UK previously for waste from decommissioning of the Windscale AGR reactor.
 - (ii) Fuel element debris at some sites could be segregated in order to allow a proportion to be treated as low-level waste.
 - (iii) Experience with the Magnox dissolution plant at Bradwell had shown it to be safe and environmentally acceptable but having regard for cost and programme issues it was considered generally to be more appropriate to encapsulate this waste for disposal.
 - (iv) It still seemed appropriate to use certain assets on a regional basis.
 - (v) Various options were being considered for the decontamination of fuel pond skips. The option to send skips to the USA for smelting was no longer available. Decontamination by milling the surface of the material, as undertaken on a trial basis at Hinkley Point A, appeared to be a satisfactory technique and consideration was being given as to where this work might be undertaken. The use of Hinkley Point A as a central facility for this activity was an option under consideration.
- 26 Mr Bridgewater said that for Hinkley Point A it appeared to be more appropriate to use 6 m³ concrete boxes rather than DCICs for the storage of ILW. These provided many of the self-shielding benefits of the DCICs but at a significantly lower cost. With the increased storage requirements resulting from encapsulation rather than dissolution of fuel element debris, it was envisaged that it might be necessary for the length of the ILW store on the site to be increased from the existing planned 60 m to possibly 80 m. In reply to questions Mr Bridgewater said that the design of a store for ILW contained in 6 m³ concrete boxes would be similar to that previously anticipated for storage of DCICs. Planning permission aspects would need to be resolved with the local authority.

- 27 In reply to a question on the volume of the material associated with contaminated fuel pond skips, Mr Bridgewater said that there was some 80 tonnes of metal in total. If the skips were transported to a central location for processing this would amount to a maximum of 25 lorry movements. There would be opportunities for reducing the number of these lorry movements significantly by carrying out some volume reduction before transport and possibly by segregation of components which might be classified as low-level waste.
- 28 Cllr Ms Goss questioned the reference to the optimisation of arrangements on a "regional" basis. She accepted that Oldbury could be regarded as being part of the same region but felt that Dungeness and Sizewell could not be. Mr Bridgewater said that there could be overriding justifications for dealing with issues on a wider basis but the preference if possible would be to manage activities within regional areas. Mr Jeffrey commented that the three sites which appeared to have pond skips which needed processing, Oldbury, Dungeness and Sizewell, were all in the South of England; he asked whether there were any in the North of England. Mr Bridgewater said that there were some at Chapelcross and many at Sellafield; there was no suggestion that skips might be moved from Sellafield for processing elsewhere.
- 29 In response to a question from Cllr Williams, Mr Bridgewater said that he anticipated that the cost of establishing a facility at another site for milling decontamination and processing fuel pond skips would be of the order of £4 million.
- 30 Mr Bridgewater said that the total potential savings across all Magnox sites from the changes in strategy currently under consideration for the storage of ILW and processing of fuel element debris amounted to more than £200 million, of which approximately £45 million was associated with potential changes identified for Hinkley Point A site. The proposals under consideration for Hinkley Point A would represent a reduction of some 450 lorry movements compared with the current baseline plan proposals.
- 31 In response to a question on the integrity of a concrete box when used for storage over a long period of time, Mr Bridgewater said that it was necessary to demonstrate to the satisfaction of Radioactive Waste Management Ltd that containers would retain their integrity for a period of 500 years. This justification had been made in relation to the 6 m³ concrete boxes for their use elsewhere in the UK.
- 32 Mr Short commented that the importation of pond skips from other sites for processing at Hinkley Point A would have potential benefits in maintaining employment opportunities on the site. He felt that the additional amount of radioactive waste from such skips would be small compared with the total already on the site. Mr Bridgewater said that the volume of the waste swarf arising from milling these skips would be less than 1% of the waste inventory on the site.

UPDATE FROM THE NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING AUTHORITY

- 33 Mr Jenkin presented a report on issues of current interest within the NDA, drawing particular attention to the following:
- (i) NDA had published an explanation of the Nuclear Provision, representing the cost of clean-up of legacy sites over a programme lasting in excess of 100 years.
 - (ii) Consultation on the NDA's Business Plan had now closed and a final version would be published at the end of March. Planned expenditure for 2015/16 was some £3.3 billion.
 - (iii) Work on the demolition of the turbine hall at Dungeness A had been accelerated and was expected to be completed by the end of March. The early completion of this work would result in savings in ongoing maintenance costs.
 - (iv) The Department of Energy and Climate Change was consulting on an updated strategy for the management of solid low level waste.
 - (v) The government had approved a recommendation from the NDA for a change in the management arrangements at Sellafield. This followed a detailed review which had concluded that the parent body organisation model used for other sites was less suited to Sellafield due to the complex technical uncertainties faced at that site.
 - (vi) NDA had published a report on the progress of priority projects.
- 34 Mr Short suggested that the significant changes in proposed strategy, notably the different packages for ILW and the change in approach for FED processing, reduced public confidence in the NDA's management arrangements for the Magnox sites. He asked why information on alternative approaches had not been available earlier if they represented significant improvements. Mr Jenkin said it was always necessary to keep plans under review and some of the options now under consideration had not been available to Magnox previously. Mr Bridgewater said that whilst the 6 m³ concrete boxes had been used some 15 years ago for the storage of waste from the Windscale AGR, they had not been considered as an option in the earlier review in view of the amount of work necessary to develop and secure approval of the design; much of that work had been completed in the past two years by RSRL and Dounreay.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

- 35 Mr Fediw presented a report on the Environment Agency's monitoring and regulatory activities relating to the Hinkley Point A and B sites since the previous meeting, drawing particular attention to the following:
- (i) Environment Agency staff were involved in discussions on actions to be taken on Hinkley Point A in relation to the de-watering of areas of Hinkley Point C in order to ensure there were no adverse effects on the environment.
 - (ii) In relation to the storage and treatment of ILW, Magnox would be required to demonstrate to the Environment Agency that best available techniques were used to minimise discharges.
 - (iii) A review had been carried out of solid and gaseous wastes from Hinkley Point B.
 - (iv) Discharges from both sites remained well within permitted limits. Hinkley Point B had reported during February that a Quarterly Notification Limit for discharge of carbon-14 had been exceeded. This had been associated with the blowdown of reactor gas at the start of the outage. The circumstances had been reviewed to ensure that there was no adverse trend and that all had been done to minimise emissions.
- 36 In reply to a question from Cllr Edney, Mr Fediw said that arrangements for dealing with the underground diesel oil would have been considered on a longer timescale; action was needed now as mitigation against the effects of the de-watering of the adjacent site.

OFFICE FOR NUCLEAR REGULATION REPORTS

- 37 Mr Prescott and Mr Wilson reported on the ONR's regulatory and inspection activities relating to Hinkley Point A and B sites. The following points were noted during discussion:
- (i) Inspections of arrangements for the management of radioactive waste on Hinkley Point A had been undertaken jointly with the Environment Agency.
 - (ii) The exercise of the Hinkley Point A emergency arrangements undertaken during November had been assessed as an adequate demonstration. One area which required some further improvement would be tested again in a further exercise.

- (iii) ONR had been notified of an incident on Hinkley Point A in November when leakage had been observed from an intermediate level waste container. The site's response to the event had been judged by ONR to be adequate and a report on the investigation of the event was awaited.
- (iv) Inspections against 10 Site Licence Conditions had been carried out on Hinkley Point B in addition to a system inspection of instrument air and turbine overspeed protection.
- (v) Technical discussions between ONR and Hinkley Point B personnel included discussions on events and actions taken in response to them.
- (vi) A Licence Instrument had been issued to give effect to an extension of the operating period of Reactor 4 to the date of shutdown for the statutory outage in January.

REPORT FROM THE EMERGENCY PLANNING CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

- 38 Mr Higginson reported on the recent meeting of the Emergency Planning Consultative Committee. He referred to discussions on the planning of emergency exercises and exchanges of information between members on national arrangements for emergency planning.
- 39 Ms Dawson reminded members of the responsibilities of Somerset County Council for preparation of an Off Site Plan for emergencies at Hinkley Point. She had hoped that the plan would have been updated by the date of this meeting but work was continuing on the incorporation of lessons on the extendibility of plans learned from a recent exercise. She said that the revised plan would shortly be circulated to the various agencies involved and would be in place before the proposed exercise in June.

OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

- 40 Cllr Brown reported on a recent meeting of representatives of the various SSGs with NDA personnel. Discussions had included arrangements for socio-economic support, the NDA's engagement strategy, and guidance on the conduct of SSG meetings. He believed that arrangements for the meetings of this SSG were broadly in line with the NDA guidance. He felt that one possible aspect for consideration was the scheduling and timing of meetings.
- 41 Cllr Edney suggested that the chairman might consider arrangements for the public question and answer session at the start of these meetings, if necessary applying limits on the number or length of questions raised.

DATE TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

42 It was noted that the next meeting of this Group would be held on Friday 26 June 2015 at Hill House, Otterhampton.

MJD 5 March 2015

APPENDIX TO THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 FEBRUARY 2015

Statement by Cllr Caswell, Chair of the Hinkley Point SSG

This statement is in response to the false and inaccurate article in the Bridgwater Mercury dated the 24th of February 2015. A copy of this statement will be appended to the minutes of this meeting and also given to the Bridgwater Mercury with a challenge to print it and retract their article.

On the 19th of February a small sub-group of the SSG was called to the Stockland Sports Club to receive a 'Heads Up' presentation from the NDA and Cavendish Fluor prior to the forthcoming SSG. The group was formed from a cross section of members, including District and Parish Councillors and members of the Green Party and Stop Hinkley. The Stop Hinkley representative sent his apologies.

The Team from the NDA presented the updated waste strategy to the assembly in a clear and precise way and happily answered all questions throughout the presentation.

FED/ILW treatment. The updated waste strategy removes the prospect of FED coming to Hinkley from Oldbury.

Following the Trials at Bradwell and Dungeness, it is part of the strategy not to go down the route of 'acid dissolution at Hinkley Point. Instead they will be reverting to the 'Industry Standard' of encapsulation much favoured by some Green groups and NGO's. They will no longer be using the Yellow Boxes and there will be no discharges of nitrates into the Bristol Channel. There was a clear message that there was a move to return to the industry standard.

The ILW store at Hinkley A already has planning permission and it is for Hinkley A's, ILW only. Any changes to this will require planning permission from the County Council, the waste authority.

I do not and have never supported the importation of waste from other stations.

Pond Skips

Hinkley is at this moment in time conducting trials on pond skips. This SSG received a presentation on this some years ago. Permission was given by the County Council for these trials only. There are 3 skips left. The trial process involves cutting the skips into sections and milling off a few thousandths of an inch. The milling arisings are ILW, the major part of the skip is not irradiated and is available for 'free release' The trials are due to end in the Summer of 2015. The results of the trial will then need to be analysed and peer reviewed. At the end of this process the NDA, in conjunction with Magnox, will consider and publish their options. Skips are located at Oldbury, Sizewell and Dungeness. There are two scenarios; one involves moving the milling machine to each station where the skips are and carrying out the process there. Another is to bring the skips to Hinkley.

This will involve a maximum of twenty-five lorry movement over a two year period. These scenarios both depend on the trial being a success and above all safe. Any process involving Hinkley will require planning permission from the waste authority, the County Council who will no doubt demand a full consultation.

I am not nor never have been a supporter of bringing these skips to Hinkley.

To be clear

FED/ILW only Hinkley's FED and ILW will be encapsulated and stored at Hinkley Pond Skips - the trial needs to be completed and peer reviewed before any decision can be made.

Mike Caswell

Chair of the Hinkley Point SSG.