

Devon and Severn IFCA News

Hinkley Point C Environmental Permit - Public Inquiry

D&S IFCA Engage in Planning Inspectorate Inquiry on Hinkley Point C

The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) is holding a Public Inquiry regarding the Acoustic Fish Deterrent at Hinkley Point C (HPC), a new nuclear power station that is under construction in Somerset. The energy company EDF plans to use water from the Severn Estuary (132 cubic metres of water per second) to cool the nuclear reactors at HPC. This requires a Water Discharge Activity (WDA) permit from the Environment Agency. The WDA permit was previously granted on the condition that an Acoustic Fish Deterrent was installed at the cooling water intake points, as part of a suite of mitigation measures designed to reduce fish kill by this system. EDF have sought to remove the requirement to install the Acoustic Fish Deterrent; this process has escalated to an Appeal to PINS, as outlined [here](#).

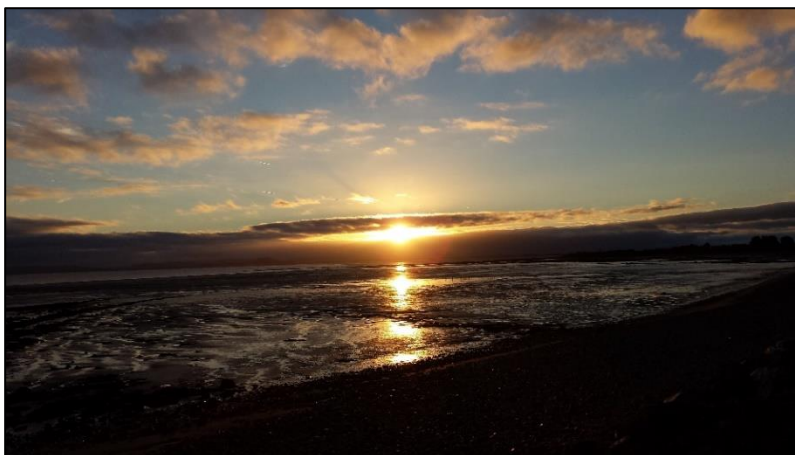


Photo: The Severn Estuary at low tide, as seen from Hinkley Point

The majority of the Public Inquiry took place between 8th–18th June. On Tuesday 8th June, the Inquiry began with the opening statements of the three main parties: EDF, the Environment Agency (EA) and the 'Severn Estuary Interests group' (SEI). Representations were then made by interested parties – David Bunt, Dr Paul Naylor, Dr Andy Turnpenny, Fish Guidance Systems, Katy Attwater, and Dr James Stewart of Devon and Severn IFCA (D&S IFCA).

D&S IFCA's representation to the Inquiry took the form of a brief oral representation, supported by a full written representation. The oral representation is available on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/wel6oCV53Cg?t=11328>, and the full written representation is available on D&S IFCA's website, [here](#). This written representation was in addition to the [representation previously submitted in October 2020](#).

The inquiry then proceeded with examination, cross-examination and re-examination of EA witnesses (8th–11th June), Steve Colclough (on behalf of SEI; 15th June) and the EDF witnesses (15th–17th June). D&S IFCA was able to cross-examine [Dr Simon Jennings](#) and [Mr Tim Goodwin](#), who were witnesses for EDF.

The [cross-examination of Dr Jennings](#) was able to draw on D&S IFCA's partnership working through the [Marine Pioneer programme](#), in which D&S IFCA worked with scientists from Swansea University to investigate herring populations in the Bristol Channel. This research demonstrates the local nature of herring populations, highlighting their potential vulnerability to local depletion by the cooling water system at HPC. This is an important element of the Inquiry discussions, in which the EA, SEI and D&S IFCA have argued that fish losses due to HPC should be compared with relevant local population sizes. On the other hand, EDF have argued that local fish losses due to HPC should be compared against fish numbers at much larger geographic scales.



Photo: Catching herring for genetic samples in Swansea University research

On 18th June, D&S IFCA also contributed to discussions around the conditions that would be applied to the WDA permit if the Appeal were to be upheld. During these discussions it also became apparent that the Appellant (EDF) had not had due regard to the South West Marine Plan, which is a material consideration for issues like this. D&S IFCA was therefore invited to submit a further representation to the Inspector on this issue, which is available [here](#).

The Inquiry resumes for one day on Thursday 24th June, during which the three main parties will present their closing statements. Any interested parties can watch this live on YouTube, via the [Planning Inspectorate's Channel](#). Alternatively, search YouTube for "APP/EPR/573 - Hinkley Point C, Bridgwater"

You can find all inquiry documents including opening statements using this link:

<https://ea.sharefile.com/share/view/sa7a70bbe9bf2420ba7866087a3092b26/foa35f32-8794-4909-af94-026950180576>

If you have not had a chance to follow the inquiry, the full proceedings are available on YouTube via the following links:

8 June <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wel6oCV53Cg>

9 June <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZpWmTOIQi8>

10 June <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0W8medcB37E>

11 June <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjp7XxWziDQ>

15 June <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WjZILU01E4E>

16 June <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3jinizGb0M>

17 June <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9oHI8-wwk>

18 June <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kF2j9ujyIUo>

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