

Joint update from the Parish Councils of Arlingham, Aust, Kingston Seymour and Westbury-on-Severn plus Local Action Groups on Hinkley Point C nuclear power station and their saltmarsh proposal.

As you are all aware there were various public meetings held with the Hinkley Point team (HPC/EDF) in our communities in the Autumn. These meetings drove the creation and the issue of a parish council joint statement calling for EDF to consider alternatives as to how they meet their environmental commitments at Hinkley Point without the need to create saltmarsh. Since then, we have maintained our engagement and following a joint meeting this week, we are able to confirm that EDF are now looking seriously at alternative options. This is a major change from their position in our public meetings that **‘there was no plan B.’**

Specifically, as part of their review, EDF are now considering:

- 1) Alternative technical solutions
- 2) Looking at wider options as to how environmental mitigation could be delivered across the breadth of the Severn Estuary
- 3) Engaging with other conservation bodies to consider whether EDF could invest and develop schemes which are proportionate, needed and wanted.

This **does not mean** unfortunately, that the consideration of saltmarsh creation is off the table, but it does mean that other options are now being carefully considered ahead of the option to create saltmarsh. To enable due and proper consideration it means EDF are going to delay their public consultation period, which was due to commence in January 2025, to provide more time to develop potential options. Ultimately, this will identify if there needs to be any works in our communities or if other options as have been recommended can provide EDF what they need. EDF have confirmed they will write to all landowners in the first full week of January to build on the information provided above and update us all formally on their plans for public consultation.

The challenge to our communities has not totally gone away but it does mean that EDF have been and continue to listen to us. The time and effort invested by many in our communities to flag the issues with saltmarsh creation has not been wasted and the political support that has been shown to us by both our local authorities and MPs has mattered. On a more practical here and now level we also understand that the recent road survey equipment installed will be removed across our communities by Tues 17th Dec 24.

We will continue to engage with EDF. Information is being compiled to further call out to EDF why the risks and impacts for saltmarsh creation are so high and we have been assured that these will be fully considered by EDF in getting to their preferred option, which they will still consult on publicly.

The situation will continue to be monitored by us all closely and we will provide further updates.

Chairs of Arlingham, Aust, Kingston Seymour and Westbury-on-Severn & Local Action Groups