



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Mr Alan Porter
Chairman
Melton Parish Council
By email: clerk@melton-suffolk-pc.gov.uk

APPENDIX B3

Department for Business, Energy &
Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

T +44 (0) 20 7215 5000
E enquiries@beis.gov.uk
W www.gov.uk

Our ref: TOB2020/05068

27 March 2020

Dear Mr Porter

Thank you for your further email of 5 March, enclosing the appendices to your letter of 22 January 2020, about EDF Energy. I have been asked to reply.

We have taken the time to familiarise ourselves with the correspondence between yourself and the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR). We hope we can provide some answers and wider context of new nuclear builds in the UK.

We believe that the origin of the france24 article you cite is a report commissioned by the French Government, written by Jean-Martin Folz. Our understanding is that the French Government, as the main shareholder of EDF SA, has instructed the company to prepare an action plan to improve. This action plan is a matter between the shareholders and the company. The ONR is an independent body dedicated to nuclear safety, which therefore operates separately from government and from the commercial interests of companies. As such, it would be inappropriate for the ONR to comment on, or have any involvement in the implementation of, the action plan since it is a matter between the company and shareholders.

Any reactor deployed in the UK must meet the UK's robust and independent regulatory requirements. This includes meeting design safety requirements via the Generic Design Assessment (GDA) process. The GDA is a process administered by the Environment Agency (EA) and the ONR which allows them to assess the safety, security and environmental implications of new reactor designs, separately from applications to build them at specific sites. The UK-EPR reactor design completed this process in 2011, full details of which can be found on the ONR website (www.onr.org.uk/new-reactors/uk-epr/index.htm). Regulators are satisfied it meets these strict safety, security and environmental regulations.

Aside from the GDA, active scrutiny by the ONR begins with the assessment of a nuclear site licence application. Once the licence has been granted, the ONR continues to regulate the management of the site, construction and related manufacturing. The site licence for Hinkley Point C (HPC) was awarded on 26 November 2012 and monitoring continues.

With regard to some of your specific concerns, the developer of HPC has assured the UK's ONR that it will apply any relevant lessons learned in building the new reactors at Flamanville (France) and Olkiluoto (Finland) and ensure the delivery of high standards of nuclear safety for its new nuclear power plants in the UK. In addition, by working closely with fellow regulators in France and Finland, the ONR is kept informed of technical and design issues as they emerge in these countries.

In terms of the proposed nuclear power station at Sizewell C, any nuclear site would follow the same strict safety, security and environmental regulations as at Hinkley. This would include continual safety, security and environmental oversight from the ONR and EA, which would not allow a reactor to be built, or to operate, if any significant environmental, safety or security concerns had not been addressed.

I hope that we have clarified how nuclear regulation operates in the UK and reassured you of the strict safety, security and environmental standards we have. Similarly, please be assured that whilst the ONR does not and should not have a role associated with the Folz report, it holds all developers to the most rigorous standards which includes considering any lessons learnt and working with other regulators.

Thank you again for writing and I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Riley', with a long, sweeping underline.

Adam Riley
BEIS CORRESPONDENCE UNIT