

The Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP
Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
London

SW1H 0ET

DRAFT 6/4/20

Dear Secretary of State

EDF Energy – Lacking a Culture of Quality

Thank you for the comprehensive letter of reply, dated 27 March 2020, from your BEIS correspondence unit.

The Parish Council is grateful for the professional courtesy shown to it by your Department and also by the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR). This contrasts sharply with the EDF Energy CEO's failure to acknowledge or reply to my letters dated 14 November 2019 (and reminder dated 15 January 2020) asking for the French audit report and action plan to be made available to the statutory and non-statutory consultees for Sizewell C (SZC) and calling for an impact assessment of EDF's various failings on the SZC project, to-date and looking forward.

We are re-assured by a couple of new items of information in your reply. Firstly, that the ONR is working closely on technical and design issues with fellow regulators in France and Finland. Secondly, that the developer of Hinckley Point C has given positive assurance to the ONR that it will apply the lessons learned.

The Parish Council remains concerned that any "lessons learned" would be based on EDF's judgement alone, devoid of independent scrutiny – a process that does not represent good governance.

Your reply says that EDF's action plan is solely a matter between the company and its shareholders (the main shareholder being the French Government) and, by implication, not a matter that warrants intervention by the UK Government or its agencies. And yet, there are precedents for the UK Government to intervene with foreign-owned companies that have proven quality weaknesses, especially when they build and run infrastructure that is critical to UK national security. We can only assume that you are, instead, placing reliance on the French Government's scrutiny of EDF's action plan. Wouldn't it, therefore, be prudent to pause further EDF work in the UK until the French Government removes its block on EDF building new EPRs in France?

Thank you again for your reply.

Yours sincerely

Alan Porter
Chairman