



For Immediate Release
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Stop Hinkley Campaign submits response to the Helm ‘cost of energy’ review – abandoning Hinkley Point C now could save consumers almost £1.5bn per year for 35 years from 2027.

The Stop Hinkley Campaign has today submitted a joint response, with the Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA), to the UK Government’s call for evidence on Professor Dieter Helm’s review of the UK energy market and the financial costs of energy to consumers and businesses. (1)

The joint submission argues the best way for the Government to keep electricity costs to consumers as low as possible over the coming decades, while reducing carbon emissions, and providing secure electricity supplies, is to cancel Hinkley Point C, scrap the new nuclear programme, launch a much more comprehensive energy efficiency programme and expand renewable energy ambitions.

The response also notes:

- Cancelling Hinkley Point C now might incur a cancellation cost of around £2bn, but consumers could save around £50bn over its lifetime. (2)
- Offshore wind is already approaching half the cost of nuclear power and Bloomberg New Energy Finance (BNEF) predicts costs will drop a further 71% by 2040.
- Removing the current block on onshore wind could save consumers around £1bn.
- Solar power is expected to be the cheapest source of energy (not just electricity) anywhere in the world by 2030 or 2040.
- Cost-effective investments in domestic energy efficiency between now and 2035 could save around 140 terawatt hours (TWh) of energy and save an average of £270 per household per year at current energy prices. The investments would deliver net benefits worth £7.5bn to the UK.
- Renewables could soon be producing enough electricity to power the grid from April to October. If the Government continues with the nuclear programme then Ministers will have to explain to consumers why they are having to pay for expensive nuclear electricity when cheap renewables are being turned off.
- The UK has the technology to match green power supply and demand at affordable cost without fossil fuels - by deploying the 'smart grid', using 'green gas' made from surplus power, and raising energy efficiency.
- Baseload is not helpful in balancing a variable energy supply – it simply leads to further overproduction of energy at times when renewables can meet demand on their own.

Just before the Christmas holidays the two organisations also submitted a joint response to the UK Government’s Clean Growth Strategy. (3)

Instead of funding R&D on new nuclear technology and Small Modular Reactors to the tune of around £460m, this called for more funding for low carbon heat and energy efficiency. In particular the Government should be investigating power-to-gas (P2G) technology which can produce renewable hydrogen, using surplus renewable electricity, which could then be fed into the gas grid for storage or used for producing renewable heat.

Stop Hinkley Spokesperson Roy Pumfrey said:

“The cost of renewables is declining rapidly, and it is becoming increasingly clear that there are lots of ways of dealing with intermittency issues. It now looks as though Hinkley Point C won’t be online before 2027. Several financial institutions have predicted that large centralised power stations are likely to be obsolete within 10 to 20 years, because they are too big and inflexible, and are “not relevant” for future electricity. (4) So Hinkley Point C and the rest of the UK’s ill-conceived new nuclear programme will be too late, too expensive and too problematic. Wind and solar are cheaper more flexible and much quicker to build. It is time to cancel Hinkley Point C now before consumers are saddled with a needless bill for £50bn not to mention the nuclear waste which we still don’t know what to do with.”

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Notes for editors:

- (1) The Stop Hinkley and NFLA joint submission on the Government’s call for evidence on the Helm Review is available on the NFLA website: http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/A283_NB170_Helm_cost_of_energy_review.pdf
- (2) See Time to Cancel Hinkley Point C by Emeritus Professor Steve Thomas available here: <http://www.no2nuclearpower.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Time-to-Cancel-HinkleyFinal.pdf>
- (3) The Stop Hinkley and NFLA joint submission on the Government’s Clean Growth Strategy is available here: http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/A282_NB169_UK_Clean_Growth_Plan.pdf
- (4) See Stop Hinkley Press Release 28th August 2014
<http://www.stophinkley.org/PressReleases/pr140828.pdf>