

Community meetings regarding new nuclear power station development at Dungeness

These meetings were held over the period 13 – 29 January 2009 at the following locations:

New Romney	7.00 pm	13 January
Rye	6.30 pm	14 January
Dungeness	2.00 pm	20 January
Dymchurch	6.30 pm	21 January
Hythe	6.30 pm	28 January
Lydd	2.30 pm	29 January

Notes to accompany the slides

Slide 1

Good evening [afternoon].

My name is Alan Oulton and I am the Station Director of Dungeness B power station. I will be your chairman for this evening.

Thank you for coming to what I hope will be an open discussion on plans for future nuclear development at Dungeness.

As always at British Energy meetings, I'd like to start with a safety briefing – and inform you of the emergency arrangements for this building. Please take a moment to identify the emergency exits, which are clearly marked. If there is a fire alarm, we will muster outside.

There is an induction loop provided for those that need it.

I'd like to start by explaining the purpose of this evening.

Slide 2

This evening is an opportunity for us to update you on the status of our proposals for future development at Dungeness, including the consequences of the takeover of British Energy by EDF.

We hope to give you an idea about the next steps in the development process, and the opportunities you will have for further input.

It is also an opportunity for you to meet some of the British Energy team, both from the power station and from our new nuclear development team.

This evening is very much about listening to you. We are keen to understand what your views are at this early stage. We may not be able to answer all your questions this evening, but we will do our best to be as open as we can.

I need to make it clear that we will be recording the question and answer session. This is so that we have an accurate record of the meeting. We will publish a summary of the proceedings but will not reveal the names of any members of the public who ask questions.

I'll now turn to the agenda for this evening.

Slide 3

In a moment I will hand over to Hugh Hutton¹ from our new nuclear development team. He will say a little about British Energy and EDF and provide an update on Government policy on nuclear power. He will then outline our proposals for development at Dungeness.

Next we have Ian Bryant¹, who will describe the site selection and planning process for new nuclear power stations, including the environmental impact assessment requirements.

We will then take a break for refreshments. This will also be your opportunity to speak informally to representatives of British Energy who are here this evening. We also have representatives from Royal Haskoning here. They are supporting us on environmental impact assessment work.

We will restart after the break for a question and answer session, and will close formal proceedings after that. If you have further points to make or questions to ask, you will have the opportunity to follow up after the meeting.

Just to set the scene, I'd like to say a little about the contribution made by Dungeness B.

Slide 4

We have been producing electricity on Romney Marsh from the "B" station for over 25 years, and I've been station director here since 2005.

With a capacity of 1090 megawatts we generate a significant amount of electricity – enough to meet around 30% of the electricity needed in the South-East.

We are also a very low carbon form of electricity generation. Over the lifetime of Dungeness B, we estimate that we have saved the emission of 65 million tonnes of carbon dioxide that would have otherwise have been emitted by coal and gas fired power stations.

¹ The line up of speakers was not the same at every meeting, although essentially the same script was followed. A list of all the speakers and panel members is given at the end of this document

We are one of the largest employers in the area, with over 570 full time British Energy staff plus around 250 full time staff from our contract partners. Most of our permanent staff live within about 25 miles of the station. We are committed to training and development. We have dedicated training facilities on site, and currently have 20 apprentices on four-year apprenticeships.

We estimate that the station contributes over £30 million into the local economy - mainly through wages.

Slide 5

I also want to tell you a little about Sizewell B in Suffolk. Sizewell B is our newest power station and is the most similar to the designs that are being considered for new build.

The capacity of the plant is just under 1200 MW. We run continuously at full output whenever we can. Every 18 months or so we need to shut down for refuelling and maintenance. Our last refuelling took place in March and April 2008 and took just under 26 days. The station has been operating since 1995, and supplies enough power for around 2 million homes.

We are very proud of Sizewell's performance. In the last financial year Sizewell generated almost 10 billion units – and avoided the emission of almost 7 million tonnes of carbon dioxide from coal and gas power stations.

I'd now like to introduce Hugh Hutton who will say a little about British Energy and outline the proposal for development.

Slide 6

Thank you Alan. I'll start with a few words about British Energy, and the offer from EDF to acquire the company.

Slide 7

As some of you know, on 24 September 2008, EDF announced an offer to buy British Energy. The offer was accepted by shareholders and approved by the competition authorities. The offer became unconditional on 5 January and, as a result, British Energy is now part of the EDF Group. EDF will establish a new business unit to take forward its nuclear new build activities in the UK.

The combined business brings together two experienced nuclear companies, committed to new nuclear development. That will be good for energy security in the UK. It's also good for the taxpayer as the government will realise several billion pounds for its share in British Energy. It will also be good for the existing nuclear power stations, including Dungeness B.

The deal does not change the arrangements to provide funds for the decommissioning of the B station when it eventually reaches the end of its life.

A condition of the acquisition is that EDF will divest the development land at either Dungeness or Heysham (in Lancashire). This may take some time to complete, and we will continue with the preparatory work for development for the time being.

I'd like to go back to say a little about British Energy and then outline the reasons why the government – and EDF - are considering new nuclear build.

Slide 8

British Energy operates 8 nuclear power stations on 7 sites around the coast of the UK, and one coal fired power station in Yorkshire. We produce around one sixth of the UK's electricity needs.

We are not a well known name because we don't sell our output directly to domestic customers. Our production is sold to other electricity suppliers that may supply you and send you bills, and to large business users. We employ over 6,000 staff, and most of these work on our nuclear power stations or in directly supporting engineering activities. Through our predecessor companies, we have over 30 years experience of safe nuclear operations in the UK. Operating nuclear power stations safely is the core of what we do.

We think that all of our existing nuclear power station sites have potential for further development – subject to a siting assessment that the government will do. You will hear more of that later. We also own land adjacent to the now closed Magnox station at Bradwell in Essex. We think this is also a potential site for a new nuclear power station.

Slide 9

What are the benefits of nuclear?

- Carbon emissions – near zero, and a cost effective way of reducing carbon emissions
- Stability of prices – helps contribute to long term price stability, and thus benefits UK customers and industrial competitiveness
- Security of supply – help reduce reliance on imported gas as North Sea resources decline.

The case has now been made – the Government's White Paper published on 10 January 2008 makes this clear – and we can now move to the next stage.

In fact the Government has recently made its commitment to the role of nuclear even clearer....

Slide 10

This is what John Hutton said last year at a conference of potential investors in new nuclear.

“Nuclear must be right at the heart of the energy mix in the UK in the future.”

Government is committed to some important work to enable developments to proceed in a timely way, through legislation and by improving the regulatory framework so that international designs can be considered for use in the UK. Government is changing the planning system and a new Planning Act became law last November.

In addition a new Energy Act includes provisions to ensure that operators set aside funds to pay for the costs of decommissioning and waste disposal. Government is also pushing forward national policy on management and safe disposal of radioactive waste. The regulators (that is the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate and the Environment Agency) will be resourced and organised to undertake a full independent assessment of the prospective designs

Slide 11

These are the broad parameters of our proposed development

Single unit development of up to 1650 MW – this will depend on the choice of design. Site to the west of the existing “B” station – effectively the land that was identified as a potential site for Dungeness C some years ago. Ian Bryant will say more about this later.

5 year construction period - based on international experience and up to 2000 peak workforce, depending on approach to construction. Some of the designs make more use of pre-fabrication and this then impacts on the size of workforce needed on site.

Slide 12

60 year operational life – compared with a current assumption of 40 years for Sizewell B.

Employment numbers of 350-450 for operating station. Again this will depend on the design chosen and more detailed work on staffing arrangements. Interim storage of intermediate level waste and spent fuel during the operational life of the power station, pending the opening of a national repository.

20 year decommissioning period. Approval of the design will require the preparation of a detailed decommissioning plan.

I should emphasise that these are British Energy's working assumptions for the site. If the development site is sold to another developer, then decisions on design choice and timing of development would be a matter for them.

Slide 13

This is a map of the area around Dungeness.

The A station is currently being decommissioned by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority. The operational "B" station is to the West of the A station. The potential development land is to the West of the B station. The map also shows the main access road and the current alignment of the transmission connections, and the existing 400k V sub-station which is used to supply the site and export power to the National Grid. The connection agreement for Dungeness C is based on replacing this substation with a new substation at Lydd. Cooling water would be provided from the sea.

Slide 14

There is now an international market in nuclear reactor designs. Here are the three designs which the UK regulators started reviewing in detail in their Generic Design Assessment process. All of these designs are modern evolutionary designs, well worthy of consideration for Dungeness.

EDF were involved in the development of the EPR design so this is the design that British Energy would adopt for new build. Other developers may choose any of three designs shown. However, GE have recently said that they are suspending their work in the UK in support of the design assessment process for the time being to focus on design approval in the US.

Slide 15

As I explained earlier, it may be that the development site is sold to another company to take forward.

In the meantime, we are continuing with the ground work. We have already done some work on impacts of climate change – and measures needed to protect the sites. Our own civil group have been looking at geology and seismic hazards. Environmental survey work is already under way – this will include a wide range of topics, as Ian will explain later.

We announced in November 2007 that we have entered into agreements for grid connections at 4 sites in the south of England including Dungeness. The agreement with National Grid is for up to 1650 MW at Dungeness. We have been carrying out early work on the scope of any planning application, including meeting with local authority planning officers to understand the local issues.

We are also keen to engage with the local community and to be as open as possible about our plans, and to listen to local views. I'd like to pass over now to Ian Bryant to cover the planning process.

Slide 16

Before looking at the current planning process, I'd like to touch on the precedent for nuclear development at Dungeness. You will be aware there has been a nuclear power station at Dungeness since the 1960's. The use of land for this purpose and the associated benefits to the local economy are well established. The proposals for a new power station, located on land adjacent to the existing plant will serve to continue and enhance these benefits. It appears to us to make sense to locate new power stations next to existing ones.

The planning process for a new station at Dungeness will, in many respects, be similar to the process we have been through in the past. The developer – which may not be British Energy - will work up his proposals in close consultation with you and your planning officials. He will make a submission to Government or its delegated body, and you will have an opportunity to be part of the public inquiry.

We are however, expecting some changes to the planning process for new development at Dungeness. It's really about bringing more certainty to the process without losing the right of local communities to have a say on whether development should proceed.

Slide 17

This chart shows some of the key planning activities along an indicative timeline.

Firstly, Government will be putting together a policy on new nuclear which will include an assessment of where best to site new power stations. This policy work has already started and is expected to run through to 2010. The middle band covers the work the Health and Safety Executive and the Environment Agency are carrying out to assess safety and radiological aspects. Information on these key matters will need to feed into the planning process.

Alongside this, we are working up development proposals on our sites including Dungeness. We would expect a planning application for the Dungeness site to be possible in 2010 / 2011 – but of course it may not be British Energy actually making the application. We would expect a planning decision around 2012 and, should consent be granted, for target completion of the plant by around 2017/2018.

Slide 18

I want now to focus on the high level enabling work Government are doing in connection with new nuclear build. There are two basic elements to this:

As Hugh has pointed out, Government have established the need for nuclear in the January White Paper. Government has also started a process to identify where in England and Wales new nuclear power stations should be sited. This piece of work is called a Strategic Siting Assessment and involves a high level examination of whether potential sites, nominated by industry, are likely to be suitable from a safety, technical and planning perspective. Part of this assessment will include formal consultation with the public and especially the communities surrounding the nominated sites.

Government will then decide which sites are likely to be suitable and include these in a draft National Policy Statement - which Parliament will need to scrutinise. We are starting to consult with your officials and others regarding our intention to nominate the Bradwell site. This evening's event also forms part of the informal consultation exercise for this process.

I would like to emphasise, however, that while the work the Government are doing will provide some welcome strategic guidance, it will not in itself confer planning consent. Development will still require detailed planning permission.

Slide 19

So, I want to finish this part of the presentation by looking at some of the detailed work we are doing at Dungeness. In common with all major proposals, there are legal requirements to assess implications for development on the local environment. This process is called Environmental Impact Assessment.

Essentially it's a structured way of understanding the characteristics of the local environment – not just the physical but also the social and economic, and then assessing development impacts, both positive and negative. The aim of this work is to eliminate or keep to a minimum adverse impacts – such as noise and disturbance during construction, and maximise benefits such as local job creation.

We are carrying out this work in partnership with Royal Haskoning – a firm with a very strong track record of assessing, in particular, coastal developments. They are represented here this evening and will be available during the break.

I also wish to make the point that, along with discussing our proposals with your planning officials and others, we also wish to engage with you, our neighbours. Experience tells us that the measure of support for development can only really be gauged by getting out and talking to local people. This event is about starting to do this and your comments will be fed back into our assessment. We also give you our commitment that we will keep you informed and consult further as the process moves along.

Slide 20

So what kind of work are we doing? We are gathering a broad range of information and have been doing so since spring 2007. This includes ecology and bird data both on land and off the coast. It also includes traffic surveys on key roads and junctions. As we move forward we will begin to look at appearance issues of the chosen design along with landscaping around the site.

We are also doing a lot of work to understand the local economy – and have engaged the same firm who helped us during the construction of Sizewell B power station in Suffolk. Finally, part of this work involves a study of in combination effects – we need to look at the impact of other activities including decommissioning of the A station.

Slide 21

Through 2008 we have been carrying out the baseline environmental survey work. Royal Haskoning have been assisting us in managing this work. We have asked government for a formal opinion on the scope of environmental impact assessment, and this document is available via the British Energy website.

Initial public consultations are taking place now, and we should be able to carry out the impact assessment later this year, so that we can start to prepare a draft planning submission. There will be public consultation on any draft submission before it is submitted to the new Infrastructure Planning Commission which will be established by the Planning Act, which became law at the end of November 2008. This could take place in 2010/11. On that basis, the Infrastructure Planning Commission should be able to reach a decision in 2011/12.

I must stress that this is an indicative timetable at this stage – and depends on whether Dungeness is sold to another developer to take forward.

I'd like to pass back to Alan Oulton at this point.

Slide 22

Thank you Ian.

Just to summarise the next steps which we have outlined:

- We intend to continue with the preparatory and survey work at Dungeness, for the benefit of whoever the ultimate developer is.
- We intend to nominate Dungeness as a potential site into the strategic siting assessment process that the government will carry out later this year.
- We will continue our dialogue with you, and your planning officials, and keep you informed of significant developments.
- There is the possibility of a sale of the development land at Dungeness, as a condition of the takeover of British Energy by EDF.

Slide 23

We will now take a break for refreshments.

- Staff from British Energy, Royal Haskoning will be available to answer questions.
- In case you don't want to ask questions yourself or want to remain anonymous you can also write your questions on a postcard and the chairman will ask the question on your behalf during the Q&A session.
- At the end of the break – the postcards will be collected and handed to the event chairman so he can ask those questions of the panel himself.
- If you have any questions after you leave here – the contact details on the slide are printed on the back of the leaflet on your chairs.

Slide 24

[Panel of EDF/British Energy and Royal Haskoning staff]

[end of meeting]

List of Speakers and Panel Members

British Energy

Ian Bryant
Nigel Buttery
Hugh Hutton
Nigel Knee
David Norfolk
Alan Oulton

Royal Haskoning

Sian John
Lyll Seale

15 December 2008