

# Hinkley Point C

## Preliminary Works Development

Site Preparation

ENVIRONMENTAL  
SCOPING REPORT  
APRIL 2010



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# CONTENTS

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Background
- 1.2 Legislative Context
- 1.3 Environmental Scoping
- 1.4 Structure of the Scoping Report

## 2 PROJECT DETAILS

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Design
- 2.3 Construction Method
- 2.4 Removal and Restoration to a Suitable State (if required)
- 2.5 Consideration of Alternatives
- 2.6 Enabling Works

## 3 SCOPING ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Geology, Topography and Geomorphology
- 3.3 Groundwater
- 3.4 Hydrology and Flooding
- 3.5 Land Contamination and Waste
- 3.6 Soil and Land Use
- 3.7 Nature Conservation Designations
- 3.8 Terrestrial Flora and Fauna
- 3.9 Marine Ecology
- 3.10 Hydrodynamics and Coastal Geomorphology
- 3.11 Marine Sediment and Water Quality
- 3.12 Freshwater Quality
- 3.13 Traffic and Transport
- 3.14 Noise and Vibration
- 3.15 Air Quality
- 3.16 Radiology
- 3.17 Landscape and Visual Amenity
- 3.18 Archaeological and Cultural Heritage
- 3.19 Amenity and Recreation
- 3.20 Socio-economics
- 3.21 Summary

## 4 WAY FORWARD

- 4.1 Environmental Impact Assessment
- 4.2 Cumulative Impact Assessment
- 4.3 Appropriate Assessment
- 4.4 Consultation

## TABLES

Table 3.1	Key habitats adjacent to Hinkley Point
Table 3.2	Number of walkers counted using the coastal path at Hinkley
Table 3.3	Number of horse riders using the bridal paths within the site
Table 3.4	Summary of Proposed Surveys / Studies
Table 4.1	Summary of Potential Project Effects on Natura 2000 Sites at Hinkley Point

## FIGURES

Figure 1.1	Site Preparation Works. Hinkley Point Development Site
Figure 1.2	Sub-Areas within the Site Preparation Works Development Site
Figure 1.3	Scoping Process
Figure 2.1	Outer Fencing and Fencing Arrangement
Figure 2.2	Potential Arrangement for Restoration
Figure 3.1	Geological SSSI Location
Figure 3.2	Watershed Drainage
Figure 3.3	Environment Agency Fluvial and Tidal Flood Risk Map
Figure 3.4	Statutory Protected Sites around Hinkley Point
Figure 3.5	Areas of Corallina around the Site and Hinkley Point
Figure 3.6	Site location and Cultural Heritage Study Area
Figure 3.7	Archaeological Site Location Map
Figure 3.8	The PRow network around Hinkley Point

## COMMON ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Appropriate Assessment
CPA	Coast Protection Act 1949
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
DCO	Development Consent Order
DECC	Department of Energy and Climate Change
EDF	Electricité de France
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ES	Environmental Statement
FEPA	Food & Environment Protection Act 1985
HA	Harbours Act 1964
HEO	Harbour Empowerment Order
IPC	Infrastructure Planning Commission
MFA	Marine & Fisheries Agency
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
SCC	Somerset County Council
SDC	Sedgemoor District Council
TCPA	Town & Country Planning Act 1990
WSC	West Somerset Council



# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

### a) The Development

- 1.1.1 EDF Energy (EDF) intends to seek planning consent for site preparation activities at Hinkley Point, Somerset which would include vegetation clearance, ground terracing and main civil works contractors' mobilisation hereafter referred to as the 'site preparation works'. The site preparation works are required to help facilitate the proposed development of a new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point (hereafter referred to as the Hinkley Point C Development).
- 1.1.2 The main element of the site preparation works comprises earthworks to level and terrace the site into a series of platforms for the subsequent construction of the Hinkley Point C Development. The existing surface water drains, including Holford Stream and a number of rhynes, would be re-routed, culverted and/or upgraded to accommodate drainage of upper soil surfaces and de-watering of deeper sub-strata. New access arrangements would connect the site with the existing road. Further details of the works are described in **Section 2.2**.
- 1.1.3 Planning consent for site preparation works will be sought from West Somerset Council (WSC) under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA). In addition, a licence under the FEPA and consent under the CPA from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) for the structures allowing discharge of surface water to the foreshore may be required.
- 1.1.4 EDF Energy will also, independently of the site preparation works, be seeking a Harbour Empowerment Order (HEO) and a Food and Environmental Protection Act 1995 (FEPA) consent from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) for a temporary jetty (the jetty) in advance of the main power station construction for the Hinkley Point C Development.
- 1.1.5 The site preparation works and the jetty are collectively termed Preliminary Works and these applications will be made in advance of a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Hinkley Point C Development. This DCO application will be made to the Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC) under the framework established following the introduction of the Planning Act in 2008. The relationship between the Preliminary Works and the Hinkley Point C Development is described in **Section 1.2**.

### b) The Developer

- 1.1.6 EDF Group (EDF) is one of the world's largest energy companies and safely operates the world's largest fleet of nuclear power plants. Over the last 30 years, EDF has built up an unparalleled nuclear generation capacity in France with 58 operational plants, with a further new plant currently under construction in Normandy. In January 2009, EDF acquired British Energy plc (British Energy) which operates a further 15 nuclear reactor units on seven sites in the UK.
- 1.1.7 EDF has a strong safety record of operating nuclear power stations and safety is at the heart of the design and operating procedures. Through its acquisition of British Energy, EDF has also been able to combine its design and operational expertise with an organisation which has excellent knowledge and experience of operating nuclear power plants safely and efficiently in the UK. This has created a strong basis for future nuclear development.

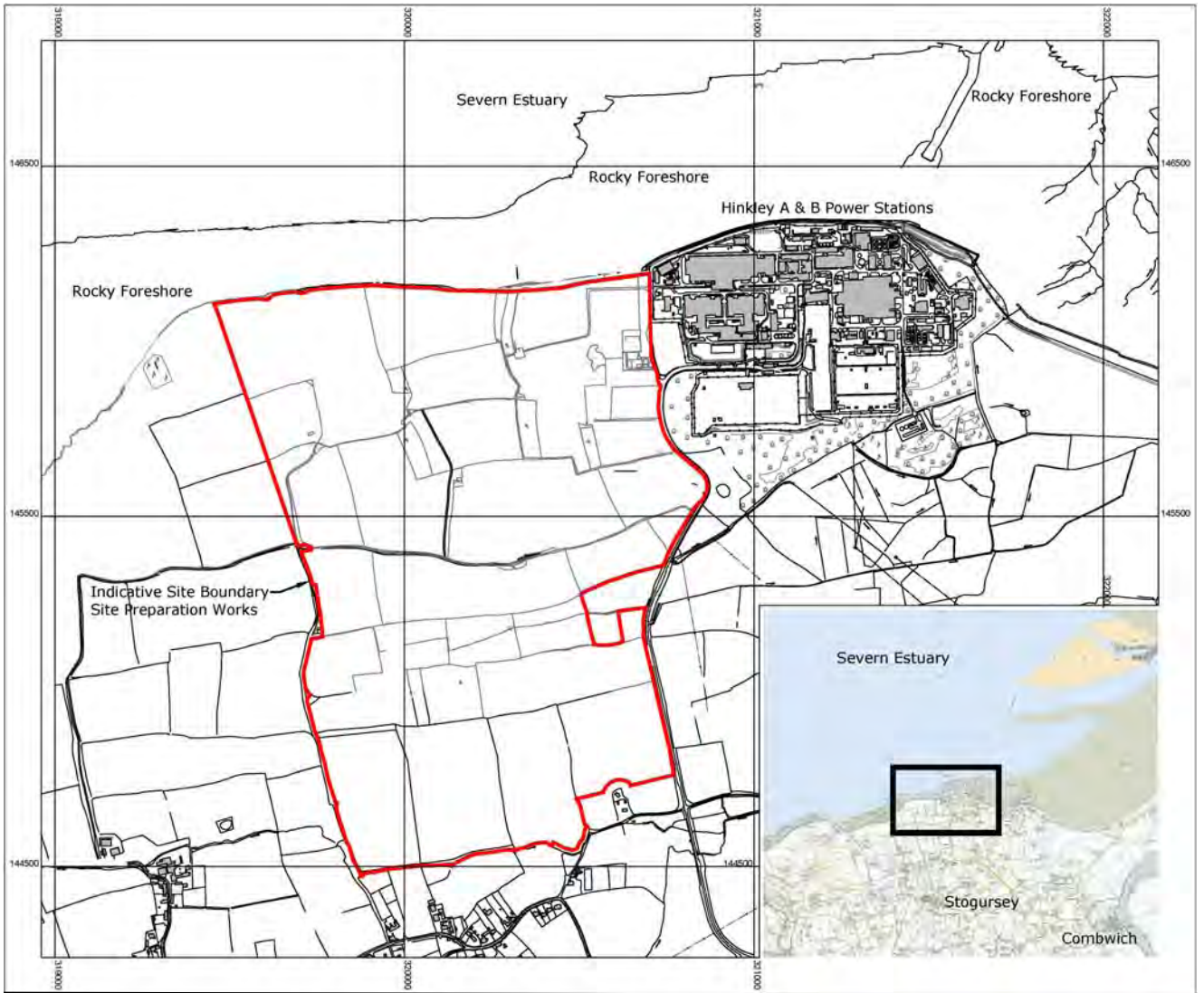
- 1.1.8 EDF's subsidiary in the UK, EDF Energy has stated publicly that it intends to invest in a new generation of nuclear plants in the UK, with the aim of constructing up to four new nuclear plants in the UK; the first to be operational by the end of 2017.
- 1.1.9 EDF Energy believes that the challenge of climate change and security of energy supply must be met by greater energy efficiency as well as a diverse mix of generating technologies including low carbon nuclear power, together with renewables, gas and clean coal.
- 1.1.10 NNB Generation Company Limited (Company number 06937084), part of EDF Energy, is the Company that will lead the new nuclear programme in the UK. For the purpose of this Scoping Report, NNB Generation Company Limited is referred to as EDF Energy.

### **c) The Development Site**

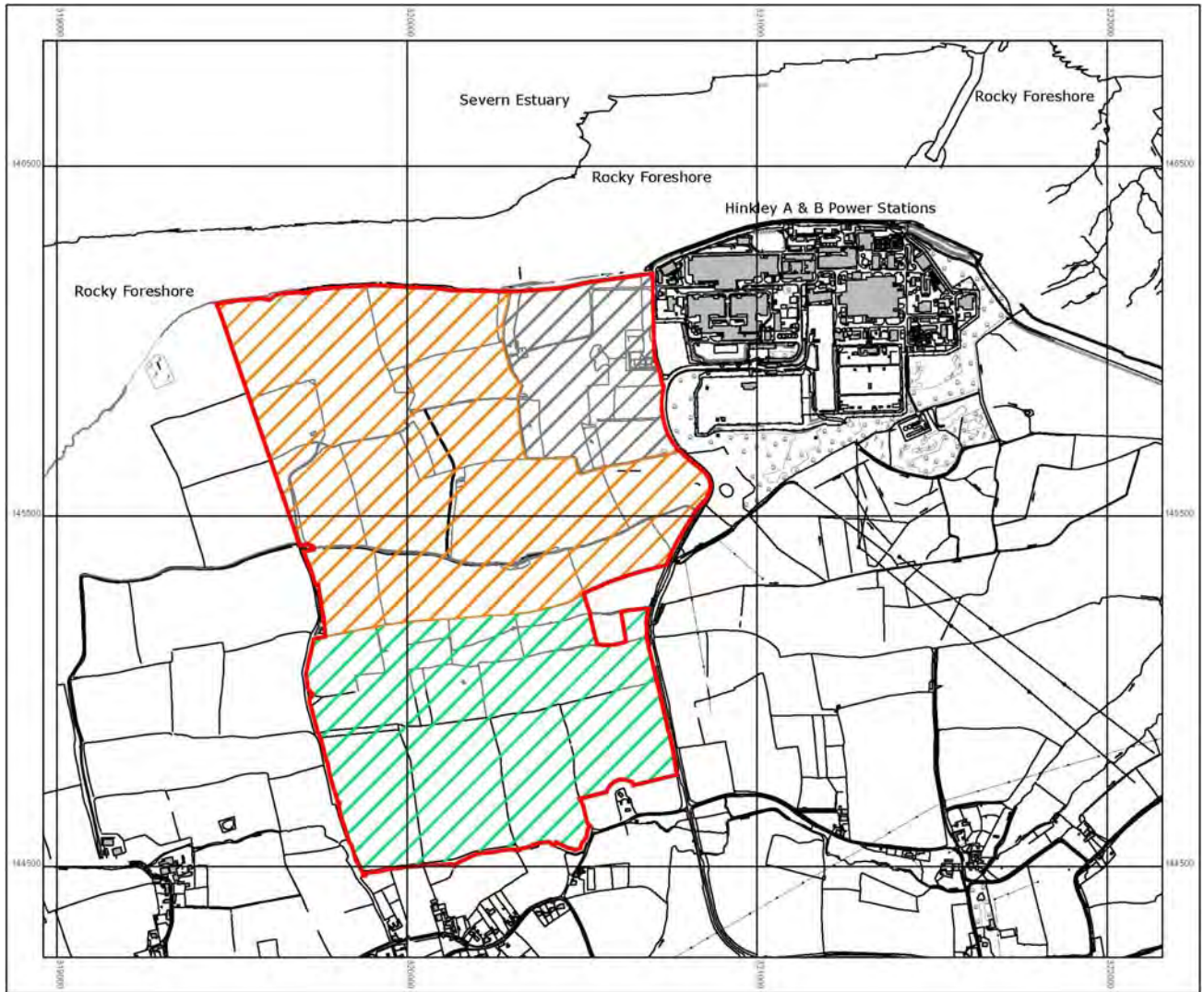
- 1.1.11 The proposed site is located at Hinkley Point (see **Figure 1.1**) on the west Somerset coast; 25km to the east of Minehead and 12km to the north-west of Bridgwater. The site preparation works would take place on approximately 167ha of predominately farmland to the west of the Hinkley Point A and B nuclear power stations.
- 1.1.12 With reference to the environmental surveys undertaken the site is divided into a number of sub-areas (see **Figure 1.2**), which are referred to as follows:
- Built Development Area East;
  - Built Development Area West; and
  - Southern Construction Phase Area.
- 1.1.13 **Figure 1.3** shows the indicative land uses for the site preparation works.



**Figure 1.1 Site Preparation Works. Hinkley Point C Development Site**



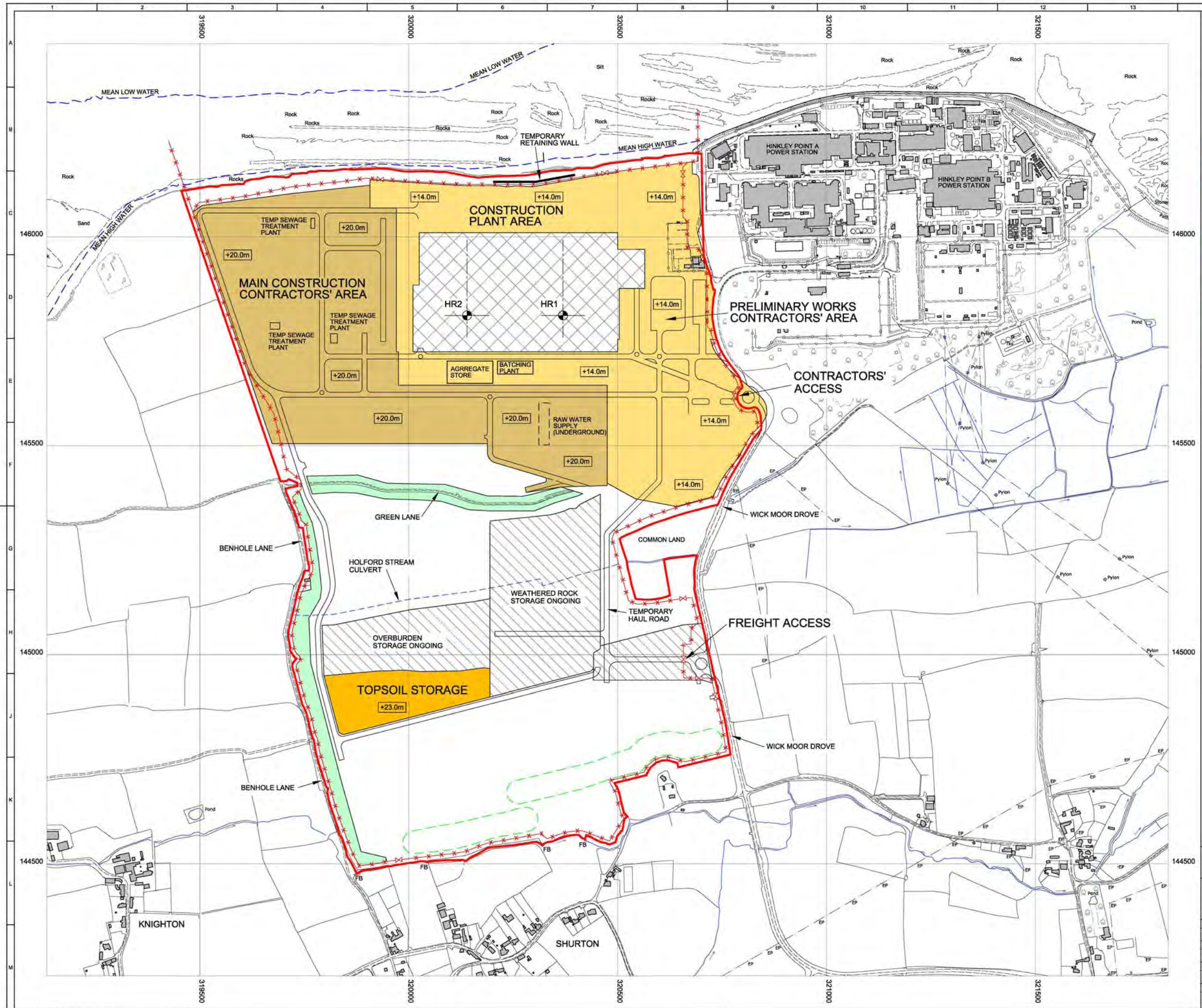
**Figure 1.2 Sub-Areas within the Site Preparation Works Development Site**



Key

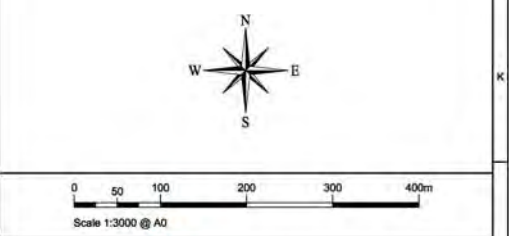
- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  Indicative Site Boundary Site Preparation Works |  Built Development Area East      |
|  Built Development Area West                     |  Southern Construction Phase Area |






- NOTES**
- EDF AERIAL TOPOGRAPHY SURVEY MAPPING DATA WITH A BASE SCALE OF 1:1000 ADOPTED AS DRAWING BACKGROUND TOPOGRAPHY DATA.
  - THE MEAN HIGH AND LOW WATER MARK LINES INDICATED ARE BASED ON GIS ORDNANCE SURVEY MASTERMAP TOPOGRAPHY LAYER DATA WITH A BASE SCALE OF 1:1250.
  - ALL CO-ORDINATES ARE IN METRES AND ARE BASED ON THE NATIONAL GRID. ALL LEVELS ARE IN METRES AND ARE RELATIVE TO ORDNANCE DATUM.

- KEY**
- INDICATIVE SITE BOUNDARY - SITE PREPARATION, GROUND TERRACING, AND CIVIL WORKS CONTRACTORS' MOBILISATION
  - INDICATIVE FINISHED PLATFORM LEVELS
  - EXISTING GROUND FEATURES AND VEGETATION TO BE RETAINED
  - NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL ISLAND +3.0m TO +6.0m
  - POTENTIAL BUNDING/PLANTING SUBJECT TO INFORMAL PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION
  - SINGLE CONSTRUCTION PHASE SECURITY FENCE
  - INDICATIVE LOCATION OF TEMPORARY RETAINING WALL



		EDF Energy 90 Whitfield Street London W1T 4EZ
Drawn S Gallimore Orig Scale 1:3000 Orig Size A0	<b>HINKLEY POINT C          PRELIMINARY WORKS DEVELOPMENT          SITE PREPARATION</b>	
Date APRIL 10	Drawing Number <b>Figure 1.3</b>	

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## 1.2 Legislative Context

### a) Primary Approvals and the requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment

- 1.2.1 The site preparation works will require planning permission from WSC. Although a formal screening opinion has not been sought from WSC, it has been assumed that the site preparation works qualify as EIA development (in accordance with the EIA Directive 85/337/EEC as amended by 97/11/EC) as transposed into UK legislation under the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 (as amended) and an application for planning permission will need to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement (ES).

### b) Relationship between the Preliminary Works and Hinkley Point C Development

- 1.2.2 The principal justification for seeking consent for Preliminary Works in advance of the Hinkley Point C Development is that it will help expedite construction leading to the power station becoming operational earlier. This is in line with the need for early deployment of new nuclear power stations as set out in the Government's draft National Policy Statement (NPS) for Nuclear Power Generation (the Nuclear NPS), published on 9 November 2009. New nuclear power stations can help reduce our carbon emissions, and early deployment would reduce the risk that the country is locked in to higher emissions by building new coal or gas-fired generation to provide security of electricity supplies in the period post-2015 when a significant amount of existing generating capacity is due to close and the country faces potential shortages of base load generation. Hinkley Point C, when fully operational, would supply approximately five million homes.
- 1.2.3 The framework for bringing forward Preliminary Works has been guided by a letter dated 16 July 2009, sent by the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) and the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) to local authorities. The letter states that in areas where sites have been nominated into the Government's Strategic Siting Assessment (SSA) for new nuclear development, it would be possible for developers to seek planning permission for preliminary or preparatory works ahead of an application to the IPC. The letter states that local authorities should have confidence in considering such applications on their merits, in this case for the Hinkley Point C Development. They may decide that consent should be granted on the basis that any Preliminary Works carried out would be removed if the subsequent application to the IPC is turned down or if, within a specified time, no application is made.
- 1.2.4 EDF Energy believes that the Hinkley Point site is a strong candidate for new nuclear development. The site was granted consent for a new nuclear power station in 1990 following a lengthy public inquiry. Although the consent lapsed, studies carried out to assess the current proposal have given EDF Energy a high level of confidence that the site remains suitable from a safety, technical and environmental perspective. Since the letter dated 16 July 2009, Government has published the draft Nuclear NPS and the Hinkley Point site has been included within the list of sites judged suitable, at a strategic level, for nuclear development, following the SSA process.



### c) Materiality

- 1.2.5 The Department for Communities and Local Government's (CLG) Guidance for Local Authorities on the Planning Act 2008 (March 2010), Paragraph 73 states the following:
- “Since the issuing of that letter [referred to above], the Government has published a suite of draft energy NPSs (November 2009) and a draft ports NPS. These draft NPSs contain important information about the Government's policy on the need for different types of nationally significant infrastructure. Accordingly, draft NPSs may be a material consideration for local authorities – for example in their consideration of applications for preliminary works – though it will be for the local authorities themselves to determine what weight they wish to attach to them.”*
- 1.2.6 In order to address the risk that a DCO is refused (or not granted within an appropriate time scale) when its application is determined by the IPC, EDF Energy proposes that consent authorising the site preparation works is granted subject to a condition which requires EDF Energy to restore the area affected back to a suitable condition.
- 1.2.7 EDF Energy considers that the protection offered by the proposed condition, together with the clear statements of Government policy in favour of new nuclear to be found in the White Paper on Nuclear Power (January 2008) and the draft Nuclear NPS (November 2009), provide an appropriate framework for the determination of the proposal.
- 1.2.8 Clearly, the indirect and cumulative effects which arise from the site preparation works, in combination with the Hinkley Point C Development, would require detailed consideration and assessment. This would be undertaken through this ES. In addition, the DCO for the Hinkley Point C Development would incorporate all the relevant Preliminary Works within the DCO application. The DCO application would therefore consider the whole project, inclusive of the Preliminary Works. Further information on the approach proposed is provided in **Section 4.2**.

### d) Appropriate Assessment

- 1.2.9 The site preparation works are situated adjacent to the Severn Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar site. In these circumstances it may be necessary that any significant effects of the works are subject to measures set out in the Habitats Directive (1992/43/EC) as transposed into UK law through the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994, and that they may be subject to Appropriate Assessment (AA) by the competent authority, WSC (see **Section 4.3**). If Appropriate Assessment is required, it is intended that information for its consideration will be included as part of the EIA.

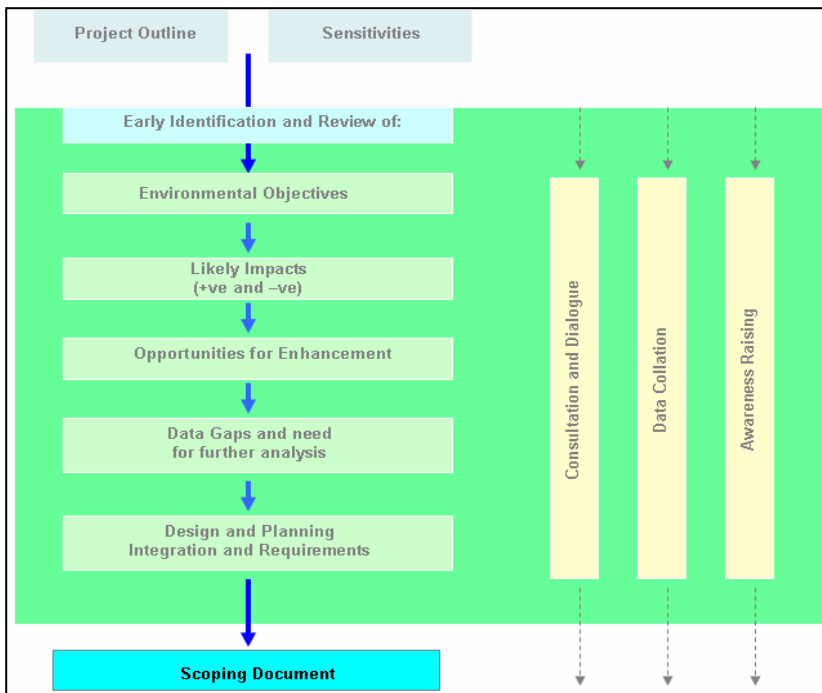
## 1.3 Environmental Scoping

### a) Objectives

- 1.3.1 This Scoping Report is being submitted in support of EDF Energy's formal request for:
- a scoping opinion from the West Somerset Council under Regulation 10 of the Town & Country Planning (EIA) Regulations (1999).
- 1.3.2 As identified in **Section 1.2**, the main objective of this Scoping Report is to facilitate the EIA process where it relates to the site preparation works. This scoping is intended to provide a focused 'road map' for the future interrogation of the environmental implications of the site preparation works. Following scoping, the detailed assessment stage of the EIA will consider the potential impacts of the site preparation works with respect to its construction and

restoration should consent for the main Hinkley Point C Development not be granted, leading to the production of an ES.

**Figure 1.4 Scoping Process**



**b) Study Area Definition**

1.3.3 Clear definition of the study area is a key part of the EIA process. The study area should encompass the area over which the impacts of the site preparation works are likely to occur and may be detected. Consequently, the study area for each of the environmental parameters included in the Scoping Report and subsequent ES may be different.

**i Immediate Study Area**

1.3.4 The ‘immediate’ study area includes the land and watercourses associated with and around the site preparation works, including the sub-areas referred to as Built Development Areas East and West and the Southern Construction Phase Area (see **Figure 1.2**). Construction, operation and possible removal impacts would generally occur within the immediate study area, particularly where environmental receptors (e.g. terrestrial habitats and species, public rights of way) are located within the footprint of the site preparation works area.

**ii Wider Study Area**

1.3.5 Details of the project are provided in **Section 2**. Clearly, construction, operation and possible removal impacts resulting from the site preparation works could extend across a ‘wider’ study area beyond the development site at Hinkley Point. Hence, consideration of each of the parameters being addressed by the EIA process will lead to the formal definition of a wider study area, such that an entire zone of potential impact influences is considered during the assessment process, allowing the context and significance of impacts to be determined.



Consequently, the wider study area for each of the environmental parameters included in the ES may differ.

## **1.4 Structure of the Scoping Report**

- 1.4.1 This Scoping Report is structured into four sections, which provide a stepped approach to the scoping of environmental impacts of the proposals. This introduction forms Section 1.
- 1.4.2 Section 2 provides details of the site preparation works including description of its construction, operation and possible removal, and the alternative options considered.
- 1.4.3 Section 3 provides information on the baseline environmental conditions of the immediate and wider study areas, identifies any uncertainties associated with the baseline conditions, identifies the key environmental impacts associated with the site preparation works, and provides information on the future assessment and studies required to inform the EIA and address any identified data gaps.
- 1.4.4 Finally, Section 4 provides information on the 'way forward' (i.e. what is planned to occur in the next stages of the EIA) to facilitate preparation of the ES.