

# Legal challenge to Hinkley Point Portishead mud dumping dismissed

A legal challenge against plans to dump mud dredged from the Bristol Channel off Hinkley Point C into the Severn Estuary has been dismissed.

Last year the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) [granted energy giant EDF a licence](#) to deposit hundreds of thousands of tonnes of sediment at a site off Portishead, as part of works to install [water cooling tunnels](#) below the sea bed for the nuclear power plant in Bridgwater, Somerset.

It followed analysis from government marine scientific agency CEFAS, which found the operation posed no risk to humans or the environment, and low levels of radioactivity in the mud were “predominantly naturally occurring”.

Environmental groups, represented by Tarian Hafren, applied for a judicial review and said the MMO awarded the licence unlawfully, and argued it did not have the statutory power to change the licence for dredging to include dumping.

Tarian Hafren did not bring any challenge to the MMO’s assessment that the material to be dredged and disposed of is non-radioactive.

In a judgement handed down on Thursday (March 24) High Court judge Mr Justice Holgate dismissed the claim, with each of the grounds of the challenge rejected.

In a statement released following the judgement a spokesperson for Hinkley Point C said: “Today’s decision is good news for people who care about the environment and climate change.

“It will enable thousands of workers to get ahead building a

project that will protect the environment from climate change and provide Britain with reliable low carbon electricity for decades to come.”

*BusinessLive* has contacted the law firm representing the environmental groups for comment.

Following the MMO’s approval of its use of the Portishead site last August, Hinkley Point C said it would begin the first of two phases of dredging and disposal, with the second to be completed in 2022.

Previously, EDF had also been considering another disposal location at Cardiff Grounds, two miles off the coast of the Welsh Capital, which is closer to its operations than the privately owned site off Portishead.

Its application for the use of the Cardiff Grounds site was paused after approval for the Portishead site was granted.

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