

# EDF Energy Sizewell C Community Forum 16 December 2019

## **Attendees:**

*Brian Stewart OBE, Community Forum Chair*

*Jim Crawford, EDF Energy*

*Tom McGarry, EDF Energy*

*Richard Bull, EDF Energy*

*Stephen Roast, EDF Energy*

*Rebecca Calder, EDF Energy*

*Peter Palmer, Aldeburgh Town Council*

*David Secret, Benhall and Sternfield Parish Council*

*David Hepper, Bredfield Parish Council*

*Richard Fernley, Campsea Ashe Parish Council*

*Michael Simons, Darsham Parish Council*

*Rod Smith, Dunwich Parish Meeting*

*Jocelyn Bond, East Suffolk District Council*

*Tony Cooper, East Suffolk District Council*

*Philip Ridley, East Suffolk District Council*

*Simon Barlow, Environment Agency*

*Ian Norman, Farnham with Stratford St Andrew Parish Council*

*Sue Jackson, Friston Parish Council*

*Argus Gathorne-Hardy, Gt Glemham Parish Council*

*Adrian Revill, Hacheston Parish Council*

*Edwina Galloway, Kelsale-cum-Carlton Parish Council*

*John Staff, Knodishall Parish Council*

*Mary Ann Woolf, Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council*

*Nick Mayo, Leiston, Saxmundham and District Citizens Advice Bureau*

*Richard Cooper, Marlesford Parish Council*

*Bill Banks, Melton Parish Council*

*Roy Dowding, Middleton-cum-Fordley Parish Council*

*Jeff Hallett, Pettistree Parish Council*

*Mike Stevenson, Rendlesham Parish Council*

*Adam Rowlands, RSPB Minsmere Nature Reserve*

*David Sims, Sibton Parish Council*

*Pat Hogan, Sizewell Residents Association*

*Ian Bradbury, Southwold Town Council*

*Simon Amstutz, Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB*

*Rachel Fulcher, Suffolk Coastal Friends of the Earth*

*Leigh Jenkins, Suffolk Constabulary*

*Bryn Griffiths, Suffolk County Council*

*Russ Rainger, Suffolk County Council*

*Alan Miller, Suffolk Wildlife Trust*

*Stephen Brett, Theberton & Eastbridge Parish Council*

*Mike Taylor, Together Against Sizewell C (TASC)*

*Arthur Stansfield, Wickham Market Parish Council*

*Eamonn O’Nolan, Woodbridge Town Council*

*John Walford, Yoxford Parish Council*

## **I. Chair’s Introduction**

The Chair introduced himself and welcomed the attendees. The minutes of the meeting would be circulated.

## II. Apologies

Mike Taylor noted that he was attending in place of Joan Girling, who passed on her apologies.

## III. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Chair proposed that the minutes of the last Forum be approved as a correct record of the meeting. The Chair's proposal was accepted by the Forum. The minutes were therefore approved as a correct record of the previous meeting.

## IV. Project Update

Jim Crawford reported that 2019 marked the conclusion of the formal stages of public consultation on Sizewell C. There had been nearly 10 months of formal consultations, with EDF engaging with over 10,000 local residents and stakeholders.

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) would be published with the application for development consent. EDF was continuing enabling works activity. Some activities would be subject to scrutiny outside the consenting process delivered by the Planning Inspectorate, including applications for environmental permits which the the Environment Agency would have to determine(EA).

There had also been the publication of the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) report on Net Zero emissions in the UK. A consultation launched by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) had considered a different financial model for Sizewell C and HPC. The regulated asset base model had been a success for the Thames Tideway Tunnel. The Sizewell C Development Consent Order (DCO) application would endeavour to demonstrate how EDF would mitigate the impact of construction on designated landscapes.

### *Employment and training*

As well as building a sustainable, local supply chain, there was a keen focus on the people who would build Sizewell C and creating well-paid, highly-skilled jobs in the local community.

### *Next Steps*

EDF would circulate a newsletter in January 2020. The DCO application would be submitted in 2020. It was anticipated that the Secretary of State for BEIS would announce a decision, with regards to the Planning Inspectorate, by late 2021. In 2020 EDF would submit applications for environmental permits to the EA. It was expected that there would be an update on the potential financing model for Sizewell C. There would be ongoing technical assessment and design works, as well as engagement with community groups and parishes.

Jim Crawford thanked the Forum for participating in the consultation process.

## V. Stage 4 Feedback

Tom McGarry recounted that the Stage 4 public consultation had focused on:

- Integrated transport strategy;
- Bypass of Theberton/B1122: temporary or permanent;
- Additional land for wildlife mitigation;
- Further details on jobs and training.

The issues highlighted would be included in the Report on Consultation which would be submitted with the DCO application report. There had been:

- Eight exhibitions;
- 640 responses;

- 16 additional Stage 3 responses.

Issues raised:

- EIA;
- Response to Stage 3 feedback;
- Nuclear related issues;
- Tourism;
- Community impact/benefits;
- Many respondents did not express views of outright support or opposition;
- Environment: AONB and RSPB Minsmere.

### *Transport*

Richard Bull stated that transport had been recognised as a main issue for local communities. Work would continue on proposals to reduce the road traffic impact on local communities.

Many respondents continued to prefer the rail-led option. The proposed integrated option would only be accepted if the rail-led strategy was deemed to be unviable. Concerns had also been raised regarding noise impacts at night through rail transport. There had been consistent support for the two-village bypass.

There had been some support for making the Sizewell link road temporary, though just as many individuals had felt it should remain as a permanent legacy. A new site layout and railhead had been proposed for the land to the east of Eastlands Industrial Estate in Leiston.

### *Environment*

The introduction of additional land for marsh harriers had been welcomed. There had been a request for further detail on coastal processes. Respondents had also expressed an interest in having access to further details regarding the impacts on the marine life, which had informed EDF's position for discounting the construction of a large jetty to import construction materials by sea. While the issue of pylons had been raised, there been no majority view on either of the proposed options.

### *Jobs and training*

Few comments had been received. EDF has joined with charity partners to provide the Youth Employment Service Hub in Leiston, and it continued to develop its education strategies.

Next steps involved EDF responding to the feedback within its DCO proposals, before submitting the application to the Planning Inspectorate.

*The Forum was presented with a video detailing the examination process for NSIPs. The video can be accessed via <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/participating-in-the-process/>.*

## **VI. Q&A**

Peter Palmer asked why EDF had provided a disingenuous response with regards to the pylons. Jim Crawford responded that the need for the pylons had been identified through the engineering and technical work carried out. There was a technical reason driving the need for the pylons.

Simon Amstutz asked if Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB could be assured that the DCO would include an assessment of the project against the defined natural beauty and special qualities elements of the AONB. Richard Bull confirmed this.

Stephen Brett asked Jim Crawford to clarify when EDF would submit its DCO application. Jim Crawford stated that EDF aimed to submit it in the first half of 2020.

Jeff Hallett noted there had been concerns pertaining to congestion on the A12 at all levels. He asked if the DCO would include recommendations for how this could be mitigated. The villages around Wickham Market were worried about the local congestion. Richard Bull responded that the DCO would show updated traffic modelling, with the A12 being a particular area of focus. The modelling had demonstrated that traffic flows had improved following the last run of modelling.

With regards to the discussions at Wickham Market, Richard Bull had been clear that EDF had presented a couple of options to deal with the traffic flow through Wickham Market. Both had received little support. EDF was happy to work with Pettistree Parish Council as well as Wickham Market Parish Council in order to devise a range of mitigation proposals.

Mike Stevenson assumed that 80% of respondents had made no comments on the pylons during Stage 4. During Stage 2 Rendlesham Parish Council had been told that the layout of the structures and galleries had been determined by the regulators and could not be changed. Mike Stevenson believed that there had been a commercial decision not to underground the cables.

Jim Crawford stated that while it was more expensive to underground cables; it would take up more land and require a more complex design. The technical justification would be included in the DCO application.

Roy Dowding highlighted that Sizewell C had yet to obtain permission for the project to proceed. He asked why there was the need to destroy Coronation Wood. Jim Crawford replied that Coronation Wood had been a Sizewell B submission. Roy Dowding noted that Stage 3 had stated that the destruction of Coronation Wood was necessary as part of Sizewell C. Jim Crawford noted that relocated facilities had featured in the Stage 3 consultation. Tom McGarry confirmed this.

Argus Gathorne-Hardy questioned whether Sizewell was a suitable site for a power station. He asked if anything had materialised during the consultation process to suggest otherwise. Jim Crawford stated that the National Planning Statement 6 (NPS) had recognised Sizewell as a suitable site.

Eamonn O'Nolan asked if the site was suitable to cope with sea level rises over the next 20 to 30 years. Stephen Roast replied that, even taking into account worst-case scenarios, the site would be suitable for safe operation during and beyond the operational phase.

Richard Cooper asked Richard Bull to provide further details on the realignment of the two-village bypass. Richard Bull noted that he had referenced the concerns about the alignment of the two-village bypass that EDF had proposed. The feedback would be considered in advance of the DCO.

Pat Hogan stated that the proposal for Coronation Wood had been passed by only one vote. She added that Jim Crawford was cognisant of the worries of Sizewell residents. Pat Hogan requested that EDF continue to provide good communication through all stages. Jim Crawford responded that EDF was keen to continue with this commitment.

John Walford asked how EDF would raise the money to build Sizewell C. Jim Crawford responded that the government would decide upon the proposed funding model.

Mike Taylor asked for confirmation of the area of Sizewell Belts SSSI that EDF intended to take. Richard Bull noted that this would be clarified within the DCO.

## **VII. Environment Agency**

### *EA role*

Simon Barlow explained that the EA provide pre-advice and guidance to EDF during their preparations for project proposals. The EA regulated nuclear power stations (operating and decommissioned) for radioactive waste, discharges to the water environment and discharges to the air.

### *Environmental permitting process*

EDF remained in the permitting pre-application phase. The EA would provide guidance in association with Natural England and the Marine Management Organisation, as part of the Defra Group. EDF would submit three environmental permit applications (radioactive waste, discharges to the water environment and discharges to the air) to the EA. The EA would consult on the applications in order to reach an informed decision. The EA was also a participant in the DCO examination process.

### *Permitting steps – consultation opportunities*

The EA would operate an enhanced determination process including consultative steps.

- *Phase 1 – pre application*
- *Phase 2 – receive application and consult*
- *Phase 3 – assess applications*
- *Phase 4 – draft decisions, consult and review*
- *Phase 5 – determine*

### *EA Q&A*

Eamonn O'Nolan asked if the EA had ever opposed a permit application. Simon Barlow highlighted that the EA had not, though it had received only one set of permit applications for a new nuclear power station in the past (HPC).

Arthur Stansfield asked if the EA had any role pertaining to increased pollution on the Suffolk roads due to Sizewell traffic. Simon Barlow replied that it did not, as the Local Authority and the Highways Authority have vires in this area (Environmental Health Dept).

Mike Taylor noted that the HPC application had included many non-material changes after the DCO had been issued. He asked how EDF would ensure that the DCO would fit the project. Rebecca Calder replied that a material/non-material change would have to undergo a new application process, and it would be controlled in the same way as the original DCO.

Mike Stevenson asked if the EA expected permit applications for the operational station to run in parallel with the DCO. Simon Barlow confirmed this to be correct. Mike Stevenson asked when the EA expected to have visibility of the permit applications for the construction phase and how this impacted the construction phase. Simon Barlow said there could be an impact if the permit applications were not submitted at the right time, as it could slow progress. The EA did not expect to carry out the same level of enhanced consultation for the construction-related permits as it would do for the operational permits, but that there would be opportunity for stakeholders to view and comment on them.

Argus Gathorne-Hardy asked if there were any proposals being discussed regarding the lowering of the water tables during the construction process. Simon Barlow understood that the project was proposing to lower water tables within the construction area during the construction phase and that associated impacts would be assessed.

Rachel Fulcher did not understand the extent to which the EA was advisory and regulatory. She highlighted that the EA did not agree with EDF's proposal to insert a causeway culvert crossing over the SSSI. Simon Barlow responded that EA awaited visibility of evidence that would justify the causeway crossing. Regarding the DCO process, the EA was a statutory consultee to the Planning Inspectorate's determination process. When it came to the environmental permits, the EA is an independent regulator.

### **VIII. Chair's Closing Remarks**

The Chair thanked everybody for their attendance and contributions. It was anticipated that the DCO for Sizewell C would be submitted in the first half of 2020. Once the application had been submitted it was expected that there would be a final Community Forum meeting.

**This Executive Summary was produced by Ubiqus UK ➔ +44 (0) 20 7269 0370**  
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