



Date: 29 November 2018
Enquiries to: Philip Ridley / John Pitchford
Tel: 01394 444432 / 01473 264804
Email: philip.ridley@eastsuffolk.gov.uk /
john.pitchford@suffolk.gov.uk

Rt Hon Greg Clark MP

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

Dear Secretary of State,

Local authority concerns regarding the cumulative impacts of Nationally Significant Energy Development on the Suffolk Coast – offshore wind energy and interconnector proposals making landfall and grid connection at Sizewell in Suffolk and the development of Sizewell C new nuclear power station

A letter was sent to you and the Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP on the 11 May 2018 highlighting local authority concerns with the number and scale of major energy infrastructure projects proposed for the Sizewell area on the East Suffolk coast.

Since that letter, we have had a number of letter exchanges and a meeting with Claire Perry MP, Energy Minister, in your department which have been welcomed and thank you for aiding in the facilitation of this meeting.

Subsequent to May there have been two rounds of public consultation by Scottish Power Renewables (SPR) on their two offshore windfarm proposals (East Anglia 1 North and East Anglia 2) and clarity from EDF Energy that it will be conducting a Stage 3 public consultation in January 2019. The EDF Energy public consultation will be alongside SPR's round 4 public consultation. Indications are that we will be at DCO examination for the three projects simultaneously in late 2019 / early 2021. This has significant resource implications for all local authorities affected that is never fully compensated for by planning performance agreements.

We are also aware that there are two further proposals for interconnectors proposed by National Grid Ventures with connections offered in the Sizewell area and that Greater Gabbard and Galloper offshore windfarms are exploring opportunities for expansion. We do not know whether these extensions to existing offshore windfarms (which both have substations in the Sizewell area) will result in further onshore infrastructure requirements in our locality. There is also proposed a Round 4 lease auction from the Crown Estate, which could further impact on our locality.

It appears to the Local Authorities that the way that the energy market as currently constructed (by Government policy) does not allow anything but incremental change that precludes looking at, for instance, an offshore grid to connect together windfarms and capable of being brought ashore closer to key markets. We see many parties having some influence in this field (BEIS, Crown Estates, Ofgem, National Grid Strategy, National Grid Transmission, windfarm operating companies interconnector companies and OFTOs), but we do not see any formal co-ordination.

The difficulty is that we are, in effect, being asked to anticipate and judge the incremental impacts of a piecemeal and uncoordinated approach to the development of the offshore to onshore infrastructure with unknown and potentially far more significant cumulative impacts that will bring long-term detriment to the environment and communities of East Suffolk. The likelihood that any or all of these will be drawn to the same location as the SPR sub-stations may have a significant effect on the rural locality and possibly protected landscape.

In this context, we are seeking further discussions with you having regard to the following:

1. The communities in this part of Suffolk need to be compensated for the disruption and long term impact that they will have to suffer both in terms of the construction phase and then of the “industrialisation” of large areas of attractive, unspoilt open countryside or AONB. It should be noted that this is in the context of no significant economic benefit in the immediate area once the construction phase is over. Government led and funded community benefit has been proposed in relation to new nuclear proposals but there has been no policy basis for community benefit in relation to other nationally significant energy projects. Having regard to up to 25% of the UK’s electricity requirements being routed through the Sizewell area with very limited economic benefit for the residents, there needs to be discussions around a Government led and funded community benefit proposal for all major energy proposals.
2. There appears to be no overall consideration of longer terms strategies that will allow a more innovative approach to transferring energy from offshore to markets without the damaging consequences that we appear to have to suffer in Suffolk., it appears that no one is in a position to guide a future strategy for transmission. It should be the role of Government to lead on this matter.

A number of points have been highlighted and we are happy to discuss these further with you and your ministers.

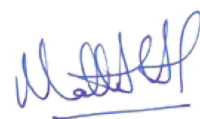
Yours sincerely



Cllr Ray Herring
Leader
Suffolk Coastal District Council



Cllr Mark Bee
Leader
Waveney District Council



Cllr Matthew Hicks
Leader
Suffolk County Council