

101622673  
Revision 01

## ECOLOGY WORKING GROUP (RECREATIONAL DISTURBANCE – MITIGATION AND MONITORING PLAN SUBGROUP)

**NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**

Meeting:	3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2025: 10:00 – 12:30
Location:	MS Teams
Chair:	James Meyer
Attendees:	<p><b>Sizewell C Limited (SZC):</b> Steve Mannings (SMan), Natalie Clifton (NC), Nick Stayt (NS) – (Observer) Alison Milward (AM), Jen Mills (JMi), Caitlin Murphy (CM), Alan Lewis (AL)</p> <p><b>East Suffolk Council (ESC):</b> James Meyer (JMe), Bethany Rance (BR), Rae Pickbourne (RP) Sam Kench (SK)</p> <p><b>Suffolk County Council (SCC):</b> Andrew Muray -Wood (AMW),</p> <p><b>Natural England (NE):</b> Vanessa Gouldsmith (VG), David White (DW), Sean Mahoney (SM) – (Observer)</p> <p><b>Environment Agency (EA):</b> Chris Strachan (CS), Ayden Hassan (AH)</p> <p><b>RSPB:</b> Adam Rowlands (ARow)</p> <p><b>National Trust (NT):</b> Neda Asadfalsafizadeh (NA), Emma Hay (EH)</p> <p><b>Suffolk Wildlife Trust (SWT):</b> Ben McFarland (BMcF)</p>
Apologies:	<p><b>SZC:</b> Jack Raven, Nelson R, Luke Stevens (LS)</p> <p><b>Forestry England (FE):</b> Andy Palles-Clark</p> <p><b>SCC:</b> Anette Robinson (ARob)</p>

### Meeting Notes:

#### Welcome

- JMe welcomed all to the meeting and provided a brief overview of the agenda for the session.

#### Actions and Previous Meetings

- NC provided an update on the actions, noting that a number were closed (as included in the actions log at the end of the meeting notes).
- NC noted the retrospective applications can be discussed within the meeting today.
- Action - SZC to pick up with FE**

#### Project Update

- SMan provided an overview of the status of the works on site including at Off-Site-Infrastructure.
- SMan noted that FID took place
- SMan provided an overview of the status of works and main activities taking place across the Main Development Site, including the acoustic barrier.
- CS noted that piling timings might be shifted. SMan noted that the piling works are largely on track and noted that there are restrictions on timing of certain works which is secured through the DCO.
- BMcF queried if the extension of the sheet piling been considered in the hydraulic modelling. **Action – SZC to review and provide a written statement.** SMan noted that purpose of the barrier is mitigation.
- BMcF queried the status of the trees in the pots. SMan and AL noted that they were maintained throughout summer and there are replacement trees available should they be required.

101622673  
Revision 01

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- BMcF and AR not concerned around extension of certain workings into the breeding bird season. SMan and NC noted that there is learning from the last few years.
- SMan provided a summary of the site meeting held in August with the Natural England's executive team.
- SMan also noted that the East Suffolk Trust has launched.

#### Stakeholder Updates

- NC sought feedback from each party present on the call on any matters or observations following the last meeting.
  - RSPB: AR noted that a piling update would be provided later in the meeting (core group) but still a point of discussion with many visitors to the reserve. AR also noted discussions around the interface of the boundary between the site and RSPB.
  - SWT: BMcF noted that a sign with the SWT logo has been flagged as being present. **Action – SZC to provide update on signage at the next meeting.**
  - ESC: SK confirmed that the rangers are settling in well and have been well received.
  - SCC: AMW noted that at Yoxford Roundabout, road signs were present on the roadside nature reserve.
  - NT: Noted a strong relationship with the SZC team and confirmed discussions on data sharing are ongoing. NA noted that recreational surveys have been undertaken in the last month.
  - No other news was raised by other parties.

#### MMP Update – Recreational Surveys

- NC noted that preparation for winter surveys are underway.
- NC confirmed that reporting will be shared with the EWG after each phase.
- The following summary of key highlights of survey work undertaken to date in 2025 (*note, not a full year*) was provided:
  - 52% were local to East Anglia (34% previous year).
  - 58% were primarily at the site for walking, with only 24% for dog walking (44% and 40% in previous year).
  - decrease in respondents say they wouldn't stop using the area during the construction period (37% from 49%), whilst those that said they would and were unsure has remained the same.
  - Popular alternative locations include Southwold (35%), Aldeburgh (32%) and Dunwich (26%)
- BMcF queried the question on proximity to its home suggests the results are indicating the patterns of displacement are complex. Suggested that 'scenery' is underrepresented in the answer noting the popular alternative locations.
- NC welcomed questions on the interim report once shared.
- AR noted that an annual review would be helpful to interpret the data further to recognise the difference in the seasons.
- NA clarified that these results should be noted a snap shot in time.

#### MMP Update – Automatic People Counters (APCs)

101622673  
Revision 01

## ECOLOGY WORKING GROUP (RECREATIONAL DISTURBANCE – MITIGATION AND MONITORING PLAN SUBGROUP)

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- Still a number of locations requiring permission for installation

#### MMP Update – Sizewell Beach Car Park Subsidy

- Data collected trending significantly higher than previous year parking ticket sales.
- Spot checks are being undertaken to validate automatic traffic counter surveys. SZC confirmed that the Automated Traffic Counts presented were one way counts.
- AR noted that there might be a closure of the beach during a certain window over the winter, including potential presence of staff at Eastbridge sluice to warn of closure. **Action – SZC to confirm**

#### MMP Update – dog waste bags

- Now installed at six locations and consumption being monitored.
- Early indication is low usage.

#### MMP Update – Signage

- SK noted that they are similar to the Wildlife Wise signage but are different, without use of the QR code. SK noted that there are still discussion on the dates that are to be shown.
- SK noted that the focus has to been to use the colour coding to limit variation in signage.
- SMan supported the use of the three core colours.
- SK noted that there are proposals being developed on the placement of signage on the ground. SK noted that there are two types being considered
- BMcF queried the difference between 'amber' and 'red' as amber would imply that a dog would likely be required to be on a lead. BMcF also raised concerns that they could conflict suggesting that 'red' might indicate individuals would not be required to stick to the path. SK noted that there would be interpretation provided but it is down to the individuals. SK confirmed that 'red' also indicates that individuals should stay on the paths.
- SMan noted the 'red' image is missing the path, with is shown in the 'amber' image. SK confirmed that this can be added in both Wildlife Wise and SZC signs.
- A discussion was held on the dates to be included for the breeding bird season. It was agreed that the signs need to be location specific to reflect the species present

#### MMP Update – Proposals for consideration

- Joint logo branding
  - NC introduced the idea of having joint branding for wardens, noting that discussions had already been held with AR and BMcF. NC noted that the proposals were presented at committee by SK and it was indicated that it would be problematic. NC suggest that an alternative would be to have to logos of all parties involved. AMW supported these proposals, provided there were no issues.
  - AMW suggested an alternative would be to set up a new company with stakeholders that are EWG.
  - AR noted the concerns of Wildlife wise and suggested that based on understanding in the wider area, training sessions could provide the largest benefit.

101622673  
Revision 01

## ECOLOGY WORKING GROUP (RECREATIONAL DISTURBANCE – MITIGATION AND MONITORING PLAN SUBGROUP)

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- NA – noted National Trust’s programme called ‘Dogs Welcome’ suggesting the learning around it could help with the next stages.
- **Action – NC to reach out to members around collective training/workshops around engaging dog walkers.**
- Wild Aldhurst Open Day spring 2026
  - NC noted that plans are being prepared to have an open day in Wild Aldhurst to encourage use of the site in spring 2026.
  - NC queried if members of the EWG would be willing to support the day and include.
  - AMW suggested that the National Landscapes Team might be interested.
  - SK noted that Wildlife Wise team would be happy to support and take part.
  - AR, BMcF and SMah noted attendance would need consider with their wider teams.

#### MMP Update – Proposals from RSPB (North Warren)

- AR presented a proposal to reduce incidents of harmful disturbance to breeding Woodlark, Nightjar and Dartford Warbler, on the open access heathland area at RSPB North Warren.
  - AR provided some background to the change of scheme from a scheme to address potential little turn disturbance and that a separate proposal has been developed to see if the quick access protocol developed works as intended.
  - AR provided an overview of potential issues at North Warren which could arise next spring noting an increase in footfall. Noting this had been raised by RSPB staff and members of the public. AR noted that the area is designated as open access land.
  - SMan, noted that the principle is supported but noted it doesn’t meet the current criteria (i.e. an emergency fund rather than a small works fund), but these could be changed so it does (which is supported). SMan agreed if pricing was put forward for use of RSPB staff or a preferred contractor this would be very much supported
  - AR noted the issue of permissions linked to shared resources. NC noted that the purchase of equipment can be quick, but access can be problematic. SMan noted that the preferred approach would be for the reserve managers to do the work, noting the Sizewell C staff should be a supporting role rather than a doing role.
  - It was noted that subject to further discussion, there may be the opportunity to install APCS at the North Warren site.
  - CS noted that there is potential for the work to be supported by volunteers within the National Landscapes team. AR noted that RSPB have used these resources before.
  - AR agreed the proposal would be resubmitted with the RSPB costs for progressing – **Action: RSPB to re-submit proposal with reframed costing**
  - JM noted that the purpose of the fund as an emergency fund rather than a small works fund could be brought to discussion to the Environment Review Group. **Action – to be raised by to the Environment Review Group**
- NA queried the application process for the quick access fund. JM provided a summary of the process.

101622673  
Revision 01

## ECOLOGY WORKING GROUP (RECREATIONAL DISTURBANCE – MITIGATION AND MONITORING PLAN SUBGROUP)

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**AOB**

- AR queried if the National Landscaped team should be engaged around the branding conversation.

**Next meeting dates**

- 10<sup>th</sup> December

**Actions Log:**

Date Raised	Ref.	Description	Lead	Date Due	Status
27 Feb	FebSG-1	Sizewell C to provide this process diagram for approvals to be provided outside of meetings	SZC	End of March 2025	Closed
27 Feb	FebSG-2	Sizewell C to provide a flow diagram of drawn down from the 'quick access fund' in due course once the process is agreed	SZC	Next Meeting	Closed
27 Feb	FebSG-3	CF to organise a meeting for demonstration of 'Place and Informatics' and members from NE, EA, NT, RSPB and Sizewell C to attend	CF	No timeframe set	Open
27 Feb	FebSG-4	NC and NA to arrange separate discussion monitoring	NC/NA	Next Meeting	Closed
27 Feb	FebSG-5	Sizewell C to share a matrix and Red-Amber-Green (RAG) scoring system relate to the identification of interventions.	SZC	End of March 2025	Closed (superseded)
27 Feb	FebSG-6	NC to arrange a discussion with the Natural England site manager to cover a range of sites identified.	NC	No timeframe set	Closed
21 May	MaySG-1	SZC to share completed quick access fund request form for demonstrative scenario	SZC	May 2025	Closed

101622673  
Revision 01

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Date Raised	Ref.	Description	Lead	Date Due	Status
21 May	MaySG-2	RSPB to construct a demonstrative scenario through the application form.	SZC	June 2025	Closed
21 May	MaySG-3	It was agreed retrospective request (using the quick access fund) would be discussed further following the completion of the demonstrative scenario	SZC	Next Meeting	Open
21 May	MaySG-4	Members to provide details of primary contacts.	SZC	Next Meeting	Open
3 <sup>rd</sup> September	SepSG-1	SZC to discuss open Forestry England action (FebSG-3) with relevant member.	SZC	October 2025	Open
3 <sup>rd</sup> September	SepSG-2	SZC to provide statement on extension of the Sizewell Marshes SSSI environmental Sheet pile barrier.	SZC	October 2025	Open
3 <sup>rd</sup> September	SepSG-3	SZC to provide update on signage at the next meeting.	SZC	Next Meeting	Open
3 <sup>rd</sup> September	SepSG-4	SZC to confirm if there would be a closure of the beach during a certain window over the winter	SZC	October 2025	Open
3 <sup>rd</sup> September	SepSG-5	NC to reach out to members around collective training/workshops around engaging dog walkers	SZC	Next Meeting	Open
3 <sup>rd</sup> September	SepSG-6	RSPB to re-submit proposal with reframed costing	RSPB	October 2025	Open
3 <sup>rd</sup> September	SepSG-7	The purpose of the fund as an emergency fund rather than a small works fund is to be brought to discussion at the Environment Review Group.	ESC (Chair)	October 2025	Open

**Author: Nick Stayt (SZC)**