

Meeting Note

Northern Transport Forum

Meeting Type: Northern Transport Forum

Meeting held on: Wednesday 6 August 2025

Sizewell C Attendees:

Brian Stewart, Chair
Richard Bull, Head of Planning
Stephen Keighley, Senior Project Manager – Rail
Richard Knight, Senior Community Relations
Steve Merry, SCC Highways
David Peacop, Site Operations Director
Zoe Botten, Community Relations Manager
Rebecca Quigg, Transport Co-ordinator
David Seal, Offsite Delivery Manager
David Taylor, Network Rail
Jez Porter, Stakeholder and External Roads Lead

External Attendees:

Cllr Alexander Nicoll, Suffolk County Council
Cllr Andrew Turner, Westleton PC
Cllr Paul Ashton, East Suffolk Council
Cllr Charles Macdowell, Middleton-cum-Fordley PC
Cllr Stuart Walmsley, Darsham PC
Cllr David Sims, Sibton PC
Cllr Josie Bassinette, Walberswick PC
Cllr Debbie Hughes, Bramfield and Thorington PC
Cllr Paul Collins, Theberton and Eastbridge PC
Cllr Edwina Galloway, Kelsale-cum-Carlton PC
Cllr David Morsley, Leiston-cum-Sizewell TC
Cllr Roderick Orr-Ewing, Blythburgh PC

Apologies and Substitutions:

Cllr Zoe Horlock, Peasenhall Parish Council, substituting for Cllr Sam Seddon
Cllr John Walford, Yoxford PC, substituting for Cllr Ian Patterson
Apologies from Marjorie Barnes, Head of READ

1. **Welcome and Introduction of the Chair and Panel**
2. **Meeting Note and Matters Arising from Previous Meeting (7 May 2025)**
3. **Corporate and Community Relations**
4. **Road and Construction Update**
5. **Rail Update**
6. **Traffic and Transport**
7. **Q&A via Town and Parish Council Representatives**
8. **Date of Next Meeting**
9. **Close**

DRAFT Meeting Notes – 06/08/2025

Minute Ref	Actions/Comments	Who	By when
1	Welcome and Introduction of the Chair and Panel		
1.01	Brian Stewart welcomed the attendees. It was noted that Saxmundham Town Council had stepped down from the Northern Transport Forum.		
2	Meeting Note and Matters Arising from Previous Meeting (7 May 2025)		
2.01	The minutes of 7 May 2025 were approved.		

Northern Transport Forum

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2.02	<p>The matters arising were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Items 2.02 and 5.24 – Brian Stewart confirmed that the footpaths issue was in hand. Ongoing Item 5.03 – David Seal would provide the overlays requested by Cllr Walford once available. Closed Item 5.20 – David Peacop would share further details in terms of freight and the volume of material coming from offshore at future meetings. Closed Item 5.21 – The marine strategy would be shared in due course. Closed Item 6.05 – Steve Merry would provide an update on cumulative traffic impact during the meeting. Closed 		
2.03	Cllr Walmsley highlighted item 2.03 and the recurring issue of cycle paths.		
2.04	<p>Richard Knight confirmed that the path along the A12 had been deemed fit for purpose. A further review carried out, with an update provided before the next forum.</p> <p>ACTION: Additional review of the cycle path along the A12 to be carried out.</p>	Richard Knight	September
3	Corporate and Community Relations		
3.01	Richard Knight invited representatives to contact him if materials were yet to be included in town and parish council newsletters. The Government had given the project its permission in June alongside the final investment decision. The Community Fund continued, and applications were encouraged. The College on the Coast project was outlined. The planning permission process would go through East Suffolk Council.		
3.02	Pakefield was now operational, and engagement on the plan to extend was ongoing. Land at Darsham High Lodge had been acquired, and work was ongoing with the partner that had already been granted planning permission for the site. A pre-consultation public exhibition would be held in autumn. The proposed Sizewell C (SZC) occupancy was 680 persons, which was lower than the 970 that had originally been proposed. A bus service would run from High Lodge directly to the site. All SZC workers were subject to a strict code of conduct.		
	Questions and Answers		
3.03	Cllr Walford asked how many students the college would cater for. Richard Knight stated that the college would have capacity for 200 students.		
3.04	Cllr Macdowell asked if the target for the number of workers on site at SZC had changed. Richard Bull stated that the target had not changed.		
3.05	Cllr Bassinette asked how staffing numbers at SZC would be kept within targeted limits, given that there were 15,000 workers at Hinkley. Richard Bull noted that SZC had a different model, with satellite roles located country-wide and not on site. David Peacop added that it had been learned at Hinkley that pre-assembly could be done off-site, reducing the volume of on-site staff required.		
3.06	Cllr Hughes observed that the entrance to the High Lodge site was in Bramfield and Thorington, yet the parish council had been missed from the list of those to be consulted on the project. Richard Knight noted that no consultation had yet taken place. There would be engagement with Bramfield and Thorington Parish Council, including a private viewing of the exhibition, if this were deemed helpful.		
3.07	Cllr Turner asked if all 680 persons on site at High Lodge would have permission to have a car. Richard Bull stated that there would be approximately 400 parking spaces at High Lodge. There would be a car share strategy implemented.		

Northern Transport Forum

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3.08	Cllr Turner noted that the owner of High Lodge Ltd had urged that the term 'High Lodge' not be used on its own in order to prevent confusion. David Peacop confirmed the intention to change the name of the site.		
3.09	Cllr Nicoll asked if the 400 parking spaces referred to as High Lodge were the spaces already on site. Richard Bull confirmed that the original consent order included permission for 400 parking spaces.		
3.10	Cllr Galloway asked about the car share commitments in the DCO. Richard Bull clarified that the DCO commitment for car sharing was 1.1 for home-based workers and 1.6 for non-home-based worker. The car share strategy was in its early stages but a report on progress would be provided at future forum's.		
3.11	Cllr Bassinette asked if the A12 turning at High Lodge would be widened in light of the new accommodation project. If this was possible, the A12/B1387 turning should also be widened. Richard Bull noted that this had been extensively discussed at the B1125 Working Group this junction needed to strike a balance between improving safe access and egress whilst not encouraging more traffic along smaller roads.		
4	Road and Construction Update		
	Updated Drone Footage		
4.01	David Peacop presented the footage. Since the previous meeting, Orwell Logistics Park had gone into operation. A significant volume of earthworks had commenced, and infrastructure construction at the main site had begun.		
	Road Schemes		
4.02	David Seal highlighted the Blythburgh B1125 and B1387 schemes. The former was funded by SZC but overseen by Suffolk County Council. Speed cameras had been installed and, though already working, would be on full power from September. Vehicle-activated signs would be installed on the B1122 in Q3.		
4.03	Work on the roundabout section of the Northern park and ride was underway. It was anticipated that a small percentage of the car park would be opened in October. Abbey Road work was ongoing. The road would be raised by 1.5 m to facilitate the railway.		
4.04	Pre-commencement work for the SZC link road would begin on Monday 11 August. Jez Porter added that this would result in a number of transverse road closures, notably Pretty Road in October, pending council agreement and consultation. As more detailed plans were developed with the contractor, the community would be informed of further road closures.		
4.05	David Seal noted that the contractor for Yoxford roundabout been appointed, and initial site levelling had started.		
	Questions and Answers		
4.06	Cllr Macdowell asked about planned remedial footpath work in Middleton. David Seal clarified that this work was planned for spring 2026 and not Q4 2025.		
4.07	Cllr Macdowell asked about the Hawthorne Road diversion route. Steve Merry had agreed that this road was not suitable as a diversion. David Seal stated that this feedback would be taken away for consideration.		
4.08	Cllr Morsley requested further explanation of the Abbey Road works. David Seal explained that the road currently had a dip that must be raised and the road levelled to facilitate the		



Northern Transport Forum

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	railway cutting across. The intention was to proceed without road closures. If this became necessary, there would be an out-of-hours and weekends approach.		
4.09	Cllr Walford asked about A12 zebra crossing work planned for May 2025. David Seal confirmed that this would take place in Q4.		
4.10	Cllr Walmsley asked if part of the park and ride would be made available soon and the roundabout opened. David Seal confirmed that this remained the intention. A workaround would be implemented to keep to the target date if necessary.		
4.11	Cllr Walmsley asked about limiting light escaping from temporary works lighting. David Seal agreed there were lessons to be learned from past work. The contractor understood the need to start on the right foot with the community. ACTION: David Peacop to share different lighting options.	David Peacop	November meeting
4.12	Cllr Orr-Ewing sought clarity on when B1387 works would commence. Dave Seal stated that this work was due to start in Q4. Steve Merry added that it was possible the project would be delivered in two parts.		
4.13	Cllr Galloway asked that relevant residents be specifically informed about work in Kelsale. David Seal confirmed that formalised communication would be adopted as the programme began. Richard Knight added that door knocking had been carried out ahead of road resurfacing in the area.		
4.14	Cllr Collins highlighted convoys of HGVs on the B1122. Rebecca Quigg confirmed that she would look into this.		
4.15	Cllr Collins requested clarification of David Seal's comments about speed cameras going on 'full power'. David Seal explained that the cameras were currently being run by fuel cells. They would be permanently powered from September.		
4.16	Cllr Collins suggested that the A12 as a diversion from Pretty Road and Moat Road was not credible. Richard Bull highlighted that, now that the contractors were on board, there could be a more granular approach to the programme of work provided. David Seal added that the intention was to stagger works across Q3 and Q4 to limit the impact of road closures. Rebecca Quigg noted that the contractors would attend relevant working groups to discuss local roads projects.		
4.17	Cllr Ashton asked if the impact of the 30 mph speed limit and resulting rat running on Leiston businesses had been considered. Richard Bull suggested that the additional traffic counts planned might capture issue of rat running. He would take away the suggestion of monitoring impact on Leiston specifically.		
5	Rail Schemes		
5.01	Stephen Keighley reported that soil stabilisation work at Buckleswood was complete. The ACA site was ready for the construction of ancillary sidings from September. Main track installation along the branch line had commenced in July.		
5.02	Earthworks on the green rail route would continue until December, after which track installation would begin. By February 2026, there would be sufficient infrastructure in place to commence railway operations.		
5.03	David Taylor noted that site surveying work at Darsham level crossing continued, often taking place overnight. The spring 2027 commission date remained in place.		

Northern Transport Forum

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	Questions and Answers		
5.04	Cllr Galloway asked about interim remedial work for Darsham level crossing. David Taylor stated that plans for this work had yet to be finalised.		
5.05	Cllr Nicoll noted the need for a clear explanation of the recent Melton level crossing road closure. The delayed explanation from Network Rail had been unacceptable. David Taylor explained that the sub-contractor had put into place road closures intended for October. It was disappointing that the community's trust had been compromised.		
6	Traffic and Transport		
6.01	Rebecca Quigg explained the HDV cap, which controlled the number of HDVs related to SZC that could route on the B1122 between Theberton and Middleton Moor. There were also targets for the number of HGVs travelling between the main site and the ACA.		
6.02	The transport monitoring reporting from Q2 2025 was presented. The figures were well below the daily HDV cap of 600 two-way movements, though the directional split had yet to meet target. The average maximum LGV movements were well below forecast.		
6.03	Since the last forum meeting, three schemes had been accepted by the relevant working groups. The latest traffic monitoring exercise had taken place in April and had been presented to the Transport Review Group (TRG) in July. A further snapshot survey was due in August, covering off a standard week and a bank holiday weekend. The TRG had agreed to take seven permanent monitoring sites forward pending funding arrangements.		
6.04	Steve Merry reported that funding had been secured to build a new flood defence at Benacre. The planning process was underway.		
6.05	The TRG had reviewed non-compliance incidents and the exceeding of peak hours targets. The group was considering working with local hauliers on more logical routing. Rebecca Quigg added that the contractors would provide routing options to the TRG where access was required.		
	Questions and Answers		
6.06	Cllr Collins asked if the rail route into the ACA would be used permanently throughout construction. It was agreed that Stephen Keighley and Richard Bull would address this with Cllr Collins after the meeting.		
6.07	Cllr Morsley asked about traffic monitoring into Leiston. Rebecca Quigg stated that she would check if there was permanent monitoring planned for this area.		
7	Q&A via Town and Parish Council Representatives		
7.01	<p>Q1. Are all the vehicles working on the extensive groundwork for SZC and all the related road/rail construction works being marked with the SZC blue plaque please?</p> <p>Q2. If not, could they be marked please? As this would reassure Peasenhall residents that the vehicles passing through our village are not related to SZC.</p> <p>Responses to Peasenhall Parish Council: David Peacop stated that all known vehicles would have plaques on the back. There might be other vehicles making irregular deliveries, for example, that would not have plaques. If any vehicle had done something wrong, residents were advised to take down the number and get in contact for action would be taken.</p>		

Northern Transport Forum

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7.02	<p>Q1. Bramfield and Thorington Parish Council would like clarity with regard to the A12 and A144 junction together with that of the A12 and Hinton Road. In the original scheme for Sizewell C, potential improvement of the A12/A144 junction received very little attention. The proposed scheme for High Lodge would significantly change that proposal in the view of our councillors and that of the local residents. What proposals do Sizewell C have for what is already a difficult set of junctions with a record for accidents on a regular basis?</p> <p>Q2. The village of Bramfield is mainly a conservation area with a significant number of old (some 400 years old) buildings less than four feet from the road. The A144 is also a road with a significant history of traffic incidents. What support do Sizewell C suggest for the protection of the village of Bramfield with the sizeable increase in the traffic on the A144 that will result from the proposed development at High Lodge?</p> <p>Responses to Bramfield and Thorington Parish Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Richard Bull highlighted the local roads scheme being delivered in the area, improving junction safety. It was a significant scheme there should be included in the updates at future forum meetings. 2. Concern about traffic through Bramfield may relate to the unequal directional split. Monitoring through the TRG would determine if this was a consistent trend and, if so, consider the impact. 		
7.03	<p>Q1. Darsham Parish Council has grave concerns about the SZC plan to use High Lodge leisure facilities for workforce accommodation. Can the forum please provide details of the total number of SZC personnel that will occupy the site at any one time?</p> <p>Q2. Given the proximity of the village and the difficulty of turning out on to the A12, can the forum also explain how staff will be ferried backwards and forwards from High Lodge to avoid adding to the already congested sections of the A12 between Darsham and Yoxford?</p> <p>Cllr Walmsley agreed that these questions had been addressed earlier in meeting.</p>		
7.04	<p>The Council had been made aware of concerns from residents on connection with the current rail movements through the town.</p> <p>Q1. Firstly, wagons are uncovered and during the dry weather residents along the trackside are reporting dust inside their properties and have concerns about health issues from breathing in dust particles. Please can this be looked into and consideration given to covering the wagons?</p> <p>Q2. For each delivery, the engine idles for up to 20 minutes very close to properties near the crossing gates. Residents report that diesel fumes and noise are uncomfortable. While we understand that until automatic barriers are in place the gates need opening manually, we ask if there could be a better alternative to this arrangement to avoid long periods when the engine is idling close to homes.</p> <p>Q3. The Network Rail website reports that there will be two deliveries (there and back) daily from Saxmundham to the ACA from January until the green rail route is completed. This is more than we had been led to believe. Please can you clarify the movements there will be on this route once the green rail route is in operation?</p> <p>Responses to Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stephen Keighley explained that the wagons used were from Network Rail's internal materials supplier. The fleet did not have the capacity for covers and 		

Northern Transport Forum

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	<p>adding just any cover would become a safety issue. Before leaving the depot, the wagons were dampened down. There was also a water canon in operation upon unloading.</p> <p>2. There were safety issues associated with switching off the engines, plus the noise of restarting the train, as required every 20 minutes, would be more disruptive.</p> <p>ACTION: Stephen Keighley to speak with the contractor to determine if anything could be done to streamline the process.</p> <p>Two trains per day ran into the ACA. Running trains through Leiston at night was not permitted. There had been a focus on delivering train paths into the temporary construction area, minimising trains through Leiston. The detail of the green rail programme was being finalised. The running of limited services into TCA or ACA in advance of this was envisioned.</p>	Stephen Keighley	
7.05	<p>Q1. What facilities will be provided for workers at the High Lodge site? Will they be free to use private cars to travel to nearby pubs? Will workers at the High Lodge site be travelling there in their private vehicles at the beginning and end of their working week?</p> <p>Q2. Does Sizewell have any plans to facilitate/support the availability of public vehicle charging points in the area (constrained by poor electricity supply currently)?</p> <p>Responses to Blythburgh Parish Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The question had been addressed earlier in the meeting. 2. Richard Bull stated that there were currently no plans to open electric charging points to the public. Those available would not be rapid chargers. 		
7.06	It was agreed that the questions submitted by Sibton Parish Council would be addressed outside the meeting.		
7.07	<p>Q1. There have been multiple observations and complaints from residents regarding the placement of temporary road signage by contractors associated with the Sizewell C project. In particular, signage is often positioned in ways that obstruct critical lines of sight at junctions and along roadsides, creating hazardous conditions for all road users. It is understood that Suffolk County Council employees undergo extensive training and follow strict criteria when installing temporary road signage to ensure safety and compliance with regulations. There is growing concern that SZC contractors may not be subject to the same level of training or oversight and, as a result, may be failing to meet necessary safety standards. This poses a serious risk to public safety and requires urgent attention.</p> <p>Q2. The recent closure of B1122 Abbey Road, by Persimmon, and the Leiston Level Crossing, by SZC, were scheduled to cause maximum disruption by one following the other a day later. Further disruption was caused by the signage about what was closed and when. This contributed to articulated vehicles and HGVs using Westward Ho to escape the closure as there was no ability to turn around at the level crossing. Can SZC ensure that Persimmon and any other required closures are properly coordinated to avoid one following the other and provide clear signage? One of the issues we are facing now is that there are so many diversion signs for multiple reasons that, unless you are local and know your way around, confusion reigns. Having said that, even the locals are being caught out by the plethora of diversions and signage.</p> <p>Responses to Theberton and Eastbridge Parish Council:</p>		

Northern Transport Forum

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> David Peacop confirmed that all staff were trained to the required standard. The ongoing theme of signage in the wrong places would be investigated. David Seal noted that best efforts were made to plan road closures appropriately. Feedback on this was welcome. 		
7.08	<p>Q1. We understand that SZC has bought the land which was previously the High Lodge golf course in Hinton in order to accommodate numerous workers. As these workers will not have been included in the SZC projections of traffic through Westleton, can you confirm that no worker housed at High Lodge will be given a parking space on the SZC site and that they will therefore all have to take buses from the Darsham park and ride (or from High Lodge) to site? Given that SZC must be planning to accommodate large numbers of workers at High Lodge, and given that they may well use local pubs, will you be providing funds to Suffolk Constabulary to enhance neighbourhood policing in the surrounding villages?</p> <p>Q2. The A12 between Stratford St Andrew and Blythburgh is in effect now one extremely long 30 mph speed limit zone yet, apart from a few junctions, we struggle to see the safety need. Not only is it making drivers irate, we are also seeing drivers using back roads to avoid the speed limit and the associated congestion, which reduces road safety on the surrounding B roads. Please can you reduce the length of the 30 mph zones to where they are actually needed for road safety purposes and/or introduce a variable speed limit so 30 mph is only applied when needed, allowing traffic to flow more freely outside construction hours?</p> <p>Responses to Westleton Parish Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Richard Bull confirmed that all workers would be required to take buses to site. There would likely be facilities at the High Lodge site, pending discussions with the Council about consenting requirements. Workers would be subject to a strict code of conduct and concerns would be dealt with. The forum would be kept up to date on discussions with Suffolk Constabulary. Steve Merry shared his understanding that some of the speed limit zones would be shortened. They were in place for safety reasons and contractors could not be overruled on this. He would research further the use of variable speed limits. 		
7.09	<p>Q1. What SZC identity are contractor HGVs displaying to identify them as being on contract to SZC?</p> <p>Q2. What is the latest planned date for the activation of electronic warning sign at the junction of the B1122 and Mill Street, and the permanent 30 reminder roundels on the B1122 from Yoxford to Leiston?</p> <p>Responses to Middleton Parish Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The question had been addressed earlier in the meeting. Jez Porter confirmed that the electronic warning sign would be installed by the end of September. This had been delayed to prevent further slippage at the site. 		
7.10	<p>Q1. The residents cannot see safely at the junction of Town Farm Lane to get onto the A12 because of the temporary fencing. What is being done about this fence to make it safer for the residents who live in that area to be able to see along the A12 before exiting Town Farm Lane?</p> <p>Responses to Kelsale-cum-Carlton Parish Council:</p>		



Northern Transport Forum

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	1. Jez Porter noted that the speed limit had been reduced to 30 mph in part to address this concern. The work was now approaching completion. Barriers would be pulled back to facilitate signage.		
7.11	Responding to Cllr Walford, Zoe Botten confirmed that no questions had been received from Yoxford Parish Council ahead of the meeting.		
7.12	Cllr Walford asked if police or security staff funded by Sizewell C could operate at weekends and out of hours. Visitors were not sticking to the 30 mph speed limits and there was no police presence. Richard Knight noted that he could not comment on police operations but would discuss with the police service their ongoing presence in the area. A reduction in the length of the speed limit zone was being considered.		
8	Date of Next Meeting		
8.01	Brian Stewart confirmed that the next meeting would be on 5 November 2025.		
9	Close		
9.01	Brian Stewart closed the meeting.		