

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Meeting:	Water Levels Management Group
Date:	10 th January 2024, 11:00 - 12:00
Location:	MS Teams
Chair:	TBC
Attendees:	Steve M, Nick S, James Meyer (ESC), Naomi Goold (ESC), Cathryn Brady (ESC IDB), Nikolas Bretholdt (Natural England), Sean Mahoney (Natural England), Ayden Hassan (EA), Cameron Sked (EA), Adam Rowlands (RSPB), Ben MacFarland (SWT), Andrew Murray Wood (SCC)
Apologies:	Eleanor Wright (Quod on behalf of SZC)

Meeting Notes:

1 INTRODUCTION AND ROLES

Steve Mannings (SZC) - SMan
 Nick Stayt (AECOM on behalf of SZC)
 James Meyer (ESC)
 Naomi Goold (ESC)
 Cathryn Brady (ESC Internal Drainage Board)
 Nikolas Bretholdt (Natural England)
 Sean Mahoney (Natural England) -SMah
 Ayden Hassan (EA)
 Cameron Sked (EA)
 Adam Rowlands (RSPB)
 Ben MacFarland (SWT)
 Andrew Murray Wood (SCC)

2 ROLES AND PURPOSE OF WLMG

SMan clarified the Secretariat role to be fulfilled by Sizewell C Limited and that draft minutes of this meeting would be shared in 5 days. Final minutes would be issued in due course and also uploaded on to the ESC portal for public view.

SMan explained that the content of the draft ToR reflects the content of the Deed of Obligation (DoO).

SMan provided an overview of the responsibilities of the Water Levels Management Group (WLMG) stating the focus is for relevant landowners, regulators and stakeholders to discuss maintenance requirements of the ditch network up and downstream of Sizewell in the context of water level management. SMan stated that this is a forum for agreeing joined up approach for the management of the network.

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AR questioned if that is the main focus of this group and stated that there does not seem to be any relationship to the management of potential impacts of the Sizewell C Project. AR suggested there should be a responsibility directly relating to the Sizewell C Project rather than discussions entirely on management processes. SMan clarified that there ToR is for interpretation and is for the group to determine what is necessary. SMan provided a summary of why the purpose is important given the recent high levels and the joint intervention that was required to address the issue. AR noted that the same action could have been taken by the landowner without Sizewell C involvement. AR also noted that there was no requirement for what has been done identified within the DCO. SMan stated that the Water Management Working Group (WMWG) has closely aligned purposes and would be those specific to the implementation of the Sizewell C Project (the forum for reviewing the results of groundwater and surface water monitoring and the effectiveness of mitigation as per the Water Monitoring & Mitigation Plan secured by DCO Requirement 11). The WMWG is to be formed by commencement and to meet within 3 months of commencement.

BM raises a similar point to AR, stating that the real risk is water quality rather than water quantity. BM stated that Sizewell C Limited, NE and EA can manage levels appropriately at the risk of water quality. This group should be titled the water levels and quality management group. SMan re-confirmed that the mitigation aspect of the levels and quality aspect is the focus of the WMWG. This group (the WLMG) is specifically focussed on ensuring that water levels within the Sizewell Marshes SSSI are managed effectively. BM, happy that SWT involvement in this group is not required and therefore only interested in the WMWG.

NB added a point to BM's query stating that risk of the key issue is the source of the water and the quality, not just the quality. SMan thanked NB for the commentary but not for discussion in this group and identified that work has been undertaken that points raised by SWT are not as substantial issue as thought. SMan noted that it is harder to mitigate the impacts on water quality, but these are not predicted as supported by the studies undertaken by Sizewell C Limited as part of the Environmental Statement for the DCO.

JM suggested that after the initial inaugural meetings, is there a possibility of the meetings of the two water working groups to be run together. AR/NG supported this proposal and it was agreed that this would be reviewed for compliance with the DoO. CB queried the number of attendees if the meeting was to be joined and stated that there might be more than one relevant attendee from the IDBif this was allowable. SMan clarified that this is covered in the DoO but the members of the forum would welcome appropriate attendance and stated there are no voting rights for this forum.

Action: Sizewell C Limited, SCC and ESC to be checked that this action would be complaint with the DoO for both groups.

3 TOR

Action: SMan welcomed a discussion but also suggested that comments should be provided within 2 weeks (by the 24th January) and then formal TOR shared by Sizewell C limited a week later.

NG stated that given the discussion on combining the two groups additional time to consider necessary TOR for both groups.

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No commentary provided during the meeting.

4 FIRST COMMENCEMENT

SMan stated that there has been collaboration with ESC and SCC and Sizewell C have now completed the necessary requirements to trigger commencement. Formal commencement is anticipated next week.

NG added that first commencement relates to specific activities. It is not the full DCO it is just the work on King George's Avenue termed 'First Commencement'.

5 REQUIREMENT 11

SMan stated that the Water Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (WMMP) has been partially discharged and is now looking to be fully discharged. SMan queried whether members of the group would like a call to talk through what the updated plan looks like to support the discharge. AR queried what the geographic extent of this updated WMMP would be. SMan confirmed that it is for the full project and confirmed that the baseline has been refreshed and the plan has had a full refresh. AR welcomed an invite for further discussion. **Action: Sizewell C Limited to prepare and deliver a presentation on the scope of the draft plan identifying any changes/differences from the previous examination draft for comment ahead of formal submission to ESC.**

CB suggest that Sizewell C Limited should consider inviting the LLFA to the WMMP discussion referenced above. Matt Williams would be the representative from SCC.

6 AOB

AR suggested that the ToR for the WMG should be shared ahead of commencement. SMan stated that these would be issued following review of the action above. SMah stated that there is a meeting planned for the WMG on the 6th February 2024.

AR questions if Sizewell C Limited could clarify why the WLMG is to run for 5 years from operation whilst the WMG is only for construction. **Action: Sizewell C Limited to provide a response to this point as far as is practical.**

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Actions raised during the meeting:

Date Raised	Ref.	Description	Lead	Date Due
10 th January 2024	1	Sizewell C Limited, SCC and ESC to be checked that this action would be compliant with the DoO for both groups	Sizewell C Limited, ESC and SCC	Action Closed
10 th January 2024	2	Comments on draft TOR to be provided by WLMG members	WLMG members	Action Closed
10 th January 2024	3	Sizewell C Limited to prepare and deliver a presentation on the scope of the draft plan identifying any changes/differences from the previous examination draft for comment ahead of formal submission to ESC.	Sizewell C Limited	No date agreed
10 th January 2024	4	Sizewell C Limited to provide a response to this point as far as is practical – “why the WLMG is to run for 5 years from operation whilst the WMG is only for construction”	Sizewell C Limited	Action Closed

Author: Nick Stayt (AECOM)