

Minutes of a Meeting of the **Sizewell 'C' Task Group** held in the **Deben Conference Room**  
at **East Suffolk House, Riduna Park, Melton, Woodbridge**  
on **Wednesday 11 January 2017** at **4.30pm**

**Members of the Task Group present:**

G Holdcroft (Chairman), A Cooper (Vice Chairman), S Burroughes, R Catchpole, J Fisher, R Herring, M Jones, P Mulcahy, C Poulter, I Pratt, A Smith

**Other Members present:**

S Harvey

**Officers present:**

K Abbott (Democratic Services Business Manager), L Chandler (Sizewell C Planning Project Advisor), P Ridley (Head of Planning and Coastal Management), C Roberts (Democratic Services Business Manager), P Wood (Head of Economic Development and Regeneration).

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dunnett, Councillor Gallant and Councillor Ritchie.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Burroughes declared a Local Non Pecuniary Interest as a Co-opted Member of the Committee attending on behalf of Suffolk County Council.

**3. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED**

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 October 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**4. NOTES OF THE SIZEWELL C JOINT LOCAL AUTHORITIES GROUP**

The Task Group received and noted the Notes of the Meeting of the Sizewell C Joint Local Authorities Group held on 23 September 2016.

**5. SIZEWELL C – STAGE 2 CONSULTATION – SUMMARY DOCUMENT**

The Task Group received report **SZ01/17** by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development (also the Chairman of the Task Group) who introduced the report. The report sought the Task Group's consideration of the issues within the Stage 2 Consultation and the questions raised by EDF Energy in order to assist Cabinet in the

formulation of its response. The Chairman reminded members of the Task Group of the opportunity to attend recent internal workshops held in December 2016 and January 2017, EDF Energy's exhibitions at various locations within the community and held in November and December 2016, as well as a Town and Parish Council community engagement event in early December 2016. He added that much of the Council's response would be predicated on the determination of the modal split.

The Chairman invited the Head of Planning and Coastal Management and the Sizewell C Planning Project Advisor to give their presentation.

The Head of Planning and Coastal Management referred the Task Group to the policy position which included the over-arching national policy statement for Energy (EN1), the national policy statement for nuclear power generation (EN6), as well as the Council's Development Policy on nuclear energy (SP13). The Head of Planning and Coastal Management said the consultation, to date, had been limited in the amount of detail provided and the issues which communities wished to be informed on. He added that the presentation would focus on the specific questions within the consultation document, but would also include some generic, more cross-cutting or emerging issues which would be predicated, in part, on the determination of the modal split. The Head of Planning and Coastal Management reminded the Task Group that, at Stage 1, the principle of a new nuclear power station at Sizewell had been accepted by the Council in its response; it was now time to maximise the benefits and opportunities which the new power station would provide and to deal positively with any mitigating issues which might be required to off-set the negative impacts.

The Sizewell C Planning Project Advisor referred to the options within the consultation questionnaire and which would be raised for consideration, one by one, within the presentation.

#### Site of Significant Scientific Interest (SSSI) Crossing

There were four options presented by EDF Energy within the consultation document; each would have an impact on the area of SSSI.

- A permanent causeway over the culvert
- Two single span bridges, with permanent and temporary crossings
- A three span bridge, with permanent and temporary crossings
- A short term causeway over the culvert with an adjacent short-term bridge

The Sizewell 'C' Planning Project Advisor stated that each option and related documentation had been reviewed by the technical experts. It was proposed that, within the formal response to the consultation, the Council would seek consideration of the minimisation of the considerable land-take from the SSSI as a priority. Therefore, in order to ensure the functionality of the SSSI in the long term and to minimise the land-take as far as possible, the Task Group was recommended to consider, as the preferred option, the three span bridge (option 3).

There were no questions of the Officers.

In the absence of any other options, the Task Group supported the recommended option of the three span bridge, however, it was noted that this was caveated on the determination of the modal split.

### Borrow pits

The Head of Planning and Coastal Management referred to the proposals for Borrow Pits which were, essentially, significant areas used to stockpile and manage construction materials. The borrow pits were anticipated to require some 15 hectares of land and three potential field combinations had been identified and submitted for consideration within the consultation.

- Field west of the Eastbridge Road (Field 1) and field east of the Eastbridge Road (field 2)
- Field east of the Eastbridge Road (field 2) and field north of Ash Wood (field 3)
- Field north of Ash Wood (field 3) and field west of Ash Wood (field 4)

The Task Group was informed that Options 2 and 3 had the potential for a negative impact on the habitat of the Marsh Harrier. Also, there was a lack of clarity on EDF Energy's overall strategy for how the site would be constructed and the options for the transport of materials in and out of the construction site. The Task Group noted that Officers were unconvinced that any of the submitted options would, ultimately, be acceptable and that more information would be required, particularly on the environmental impact and the concerns raised.

The Chairman invited questions.

A member of the Task Group asked if a comprehensive environmental impact assessment would take place, if the geology in all the fields was the same, and if the RSPB had commented. The Head of Planning and Coastal Management said he anticipated geological and environmental assessments would provide more information to justify the proposed alternatives and in order to ultimately deliver the most appropriate proposals. A meeting with the DEFRA family, Natural England, Environment Agency and the Marine Management Organisation would take place very shortly.

Another member of the Task Group said that if suitable aggregate was identified in the suggested fields, it would obviously reduce the traffic requirements for transporting construction materials to and from the site; he said this was an important principle to consider and support. The member added that it would also be more ecologically sound for transportation to be over short distances.

A member asked about the current bridleway which ran from the identified fields to Lover's Lane. The Head of Planning and Coastal Management said this would be closed during the construction phase but it was current understanding that it would be maintained in situ, not least because it was a corridor for bats, and would be returned to use post-construction.

The Chairman said that the sourcing of materials local to the site was welcomed.

The Task Group accepted the broad principle for the use of locally sourced materials, subject to the caveat that any resulting borrow pits were well-managed and the receipt of appropriate evidence of why one option was considered preferable to another.

#### Main development site accommodation campus

The Head of Planning and Coastal Management said it was proposed to develop a single, on-site campus which was within walking distance of the construction site and able to accommodate c2400 workers. There were three current options for the campus.

Option 1 – A 3 storey modular building to the west of the Eastbridge Road and a four storey building to the east of the road; a new link to the road; leisure and social amenities on the campus site.

Option 2(i) – A 3, 4 and 5 storey modular building on the east side of the Eastbridge Road with leisure and social facilities on site.

Option 2(ii) – As 2(i) but sports facilities would be located on a site within the local community (yet to be identified).

The Task Group was advised that Officers favoured option 2(ii) as this provided an opportunity for the community to benefit from new sporting facilities and was in accord with the aims of the Leiston First programme's ambitions. The Task Group was further advised that EDF Energy would be encouraged to work with the Councils and landowners to help maximise the growth opportunities in Leiston. In terms of the principle of an accommodation campus at the site entrance, this was considered to be of benefit in terms of reduced disruption in the wider vicinity, reduced impact of traffic and because it enabled better management of the site and its workers. The Head of Planning and Coastal Management suggested that EDF Energy be encouraged to utilise the land to the east and west of the Eastbridge Road as the site of the accommodation campus, but the sporting facilities to be located within Leiston. It was further suggested that EDF Energy be encouraged to reduce the height of the modular accommodation and to utilise landscaping to soften the impact of the site on local residents and communities.

The Chairman said that the rationale for locating a single campus close to the entrance of the main construction site was clear, however, it was hoped that EDF Energy would soften the impact of the campus through a well-designed accommodation block, a reduction to the height of the modular building, landscaping etc. The Chairman said he had attended a number of public meetings where concerns about the campus had been raised. The Chairman said the campus site would be managed via EDF Energy's very robust policy whereby one incident of inappropriate behaviour would see construction staff dismissed. The Chairman supported Officers working with EDF Energy to utilise the land take to best effect, to minimise the height of the accommodation building, to soften the impact of the campus site through landscaping and to see the siting of sporting facilities in Leiston, rather than on the campus. The Chairman said that Leiston Town Council wholly supported the Council's stance and proposals; he acknowledged that Theberton and Eastbridge Parish Councils had voiced concerns.

The Chairman invited questions.

A member of the Task Group asked if Suffolk Constabulary, as a statutory consultee, had commented upon the campus site. The Head of Planning and Coastal Management said that he was not aware that Suffolk Constabulary had raised any specific issues. He too referred to EDF Energy's very robust policy which, he said, would mean both the construction and campus sites would be very well-managed environments. Another member of the Task Group asked if the Civil Nuclear Constabulary would be present at the campus site. The Head of Planning and Coastal Management said that the construction site and campus would both be secure areas and those working or visiting would be subject to robust checks etc., therefore, both would be very controlled and secure environments. However, the Civil Nuclear Constabulary would not be on site until nuclear fuel was in situ and the site was active.

Another member of the Task Group agreed that the advantages of locating a large number of construction workers close to the main site and in a manageable location were clear. The member acknowledged that the earlier Sizewell A and, to a lesser extent, B sites had encountered some issues but EDF Energy was taking action to ensure this was not repeated. With reference to the potential for sporting facilities to be located in Leiston, the member said this provided an important opportunity as part of the building of a legacy for the vicinity and he considered it important to maximise all such legacy opportunities. With reference to the location of the campus site, a further member of the Task Group said that building it close to the construction site would help to reduce transport issues; this view was supported by another member of the Task Group who said this would benefit Theberton and Eastbridge.

In summary, the Chairman repeated that Officers would work with EDF Energy on the proposal for a single accommodation campus, featuring well-designed landscaped buildings of a reduced height together with legacy sporting facilities in Leiston.

#### Rail transport

The Sizewell C Planning Project Advisor presented the two proposed options for rail travel which were a temporary rail extension of the Saxmundham to Leiston line into the construction site ('green' route) or a new rail terminal and freight laydown site to the east of the Eastlands Industrial Estate on the eastern edge of Leiston. The Officer continued that the proposals included use of the existing Sizewell Halt, subject to some adaptations, for deliveries. The 'green' route would go across country and so had implications for rights of way etc., the other proposal for a new rail terminal had highway implications for Lover's Lane.

The Task Group was advised there was currently insufficient information on the impact of noise, the frequency of trains, and the hours that the trains would run etc., but a study to provide this information was planned. The Task Group both accepted and welcomed the use of rail transportation but needed more information on the implications of both proposals before supporting a preferred option.

In response to a query by a member of the Task Group, the Sizewell C Planning Project Advisor said that proposed diversions included footpaths, bridleways and a footbridge over Buckleswood Road; she also confirmed that rights of way issues would be included within the Council's response to the consultation.

The Head of Planning and Coastal Management said the potential expansion of Eastlands Industrial Estate could have legacy benefits for east Suffolk in the medium to long term through job opportunities, and passenger transport options; as such, he hoped local communities would see the potential for positive impacts on road and rail infrastructure and local growth opportunities and would support their promotion.

The Chairman agreed that it was important to maximise all such opportunities and that the construction of Sizewell C would be an important catalyst for growth opportunities.

### Sea transport

The Sizewell C Planning Project Advisor outlined the three proposed options for transportation of construction materials by sea.

- A temporary wide jetty approximately 800m long with two berths on the north side for vessels importing bulk materials and, potentially, exporting excavated materials; one berth on the south side for the delivery of very large loads.
- A temporary narrow jetty (800m long) with an open support structure for handling abnormally large cargo deliveries but not suitable for the movement of bulk materials such as aggregates or excavated materials.
- A beach landing facility for the construction phase (in addition to the permanent beach landing facility for the operational phase).

The Sizewell C Planning Project Advisor referred to professional advice which had been obtained and had raised concerns at the significant number of pilings which would be cut off at the end of the construction phase but remain in situ. It was felt there was a general lack of information to enable a proper determination of the impact to be made.

A member of the Task Group expressed his concerns about long term issues of coastal management and coastal defences and to what could, potentially, become a permanent promontory. He suggested that consideration be given to coastal management, rather than defences alone, and to the most appropriate approach for the location. He further suggested that EDF Energy be asked to provide additional clarity and more detailed information before the Council considered its preferred option. The Chairman agreed it would be important to consider both the construction phase and the operational phase, and beyond, and their accumulative affect on the coastline. He said the Council's response to the consultation would include what was, temporarily, referred to as a "technical annexe" which would consider all such issues on all phases.

The Chairman invited questions.

A member asked if the beach landing area would go further out to sea or into the SSSI. The Chairman responded that the exact location was one of the issues that needed to be fully clarified by EDF Energy; he added that EDF Energy would be asked for its rationale in selecting its site and to produce evidence to support this.

A member of the Task Group said Leiston Town Council would like to be assured that the local walkway would be unspoilt by construction and operational phases. The Head of Planning and Coastal Management said the proposed engineering methods and any consequences needed to be worked through with EDF Energy and would be included in the 'technical annexe'.

### Park and Ride

The Sizewell C Planning Project Adviser presented the two options for park and ride facilities on the A12 in order to intercept traffic travelling from the north and south. The southern park and ride was proposed for just north of Wickham Market and would include parking for 900 cars, a bus terminus, an HGV holding area for use in incident management, the use of existing screening provided by existing woodland and further planting of hedgerows. The Officer said EDF Energy had been asked to look at other sites closer to Ipswich and so as to intercept traffic at an earlier point on its journey; the Council would continue to encourage them to consider this as another option. Also, a freight management policy had been sought which might mean that a traffic incident facility to intercept HGVs might not be required.

The second and northern park and ride facility was proposed for Darsham and was in close proximity to the railway station which, it was hoped, would facilitate worker interchange between rail and bus options. The proposal included parking for 1000 cars, a bus terminus and parking, postal consolidation facility and associated infrastructure, existing boundary vegetation and new planting to mitigate visual, noise and air quality effects, and additional drainage. The Officer said it had been suggested to EDF Energy that additional landscaping was required.

The Sizewell C Planning Project Advisor said that, subject to further details including the possibility of new options closer to Ipswich for the southern park and ride, but, the preferred option for the northern park and ride was Darsham. The Ward Member for Darsham, also a member of the Task Group, confirmed that the Parish Council had not objections to the proposal.

The Chairman invited questions.

A member of the Task Group asked if the Darsham site might cause adverse traffic issues for the Yoxford area and its surrounding villages. The Head of Planning and Coastal Management said the road from Darsham to Yoxford had not yet been modelled but this would need to happen to get a complete picture and to be able to consider and manage any potential implications. The member replied that such a modelling was considered critical by the surrounding villages.

*Councillor Mulcahy left the meeting at 6.05pm*

### Improvements to the A12 at Farnham

The Head of Planning and Coastal Management outlined the four options proposed to mitigate the effect of Sizewell traffic at Farnham and so improve traffic flow and safety through the current narrow bend.

- To make no change
- To widen the existing bend at Farnham in order to address safety concerns associated with the narrowness of the current bend and so improve traffic flow.
- To create a single one-village bypass at Farnham. This would reduce traffic flow but mean building a road through farmland and open countryside, a new bridge over the River Alde and a flood plan
- To create a two-village by-pass for Farnham and Stratford St Andrew. The proposed new road would form a new section of the A12 to the south and would cross agricultural land, floodplains and the River Alde.

The Task Group was advised that the last of the above options, for a two-village by-pass, was predicated on work commissioned by Suffolk County Council to inform its proposals for a two village by-pass and to promote opportunities for a four-village by-pass (SEGway). The Head of Planning and Coastal Management said the last option presented opportunities to develop a business case for a four village by-pass, in collaboration with Suffolk County Council and EDF Energy, which would, in turn, help to support further growth in east Suffolk.

Officers strongly advocated option 4 – the creation of a two village by pass – to the Task Group as it which would enable the opportunities it presented to the district to be realised.

In response to a query by a member of the Task Group about the associated business case for the SEGway, the Chairman said the indicative business case included funding by central government and it was hoped monies would also be forthcoming from county and district councils. The Chairman added that, subject to the resolution of Cabinet at its meeting on 31 January 2017, the business case would be developed further to be submitted in full to Government by Autumn 2017 to keep that project on track.

#### Yoxford/B1122 junction

The Head of Planning and Coastal Management presented the two proposed options for improvements to the junction of the B1122 with the A12 at Yoxford and in order to try and mitigate the probable significant increase of traffic and to improve road safety.

- A roundabout
- A signalised junction

The Head of Planning and Coastal Management said more information on the technical highway aspects was required in order to identify the optimal solution. He added that there were some environmental concerns associated with both options because of their close proximity to historic buildings and gardens. The Task Group was advised that there was the potential to move the junction to the south east. At this time, Officers did not advocate either option as preferred but sought more discussions with EDF Energy and local communities.

The Chairman invited questions.



A member of the Task Group voiced concerns about the current levels of congestion at the junction; he said this issue must not be compounded and sought an intelligent traffic management scheme. The Chairman said an improved proposal with mitigation measures, and compensation, was required from EDF Energy. The Head of Planning and Coastal Management said that the consultation on these proposals was narrow in terms of the questions posed. He stated that Officers, within the “technical annexe” of the report to Cabinet on 31 January, would provide a very detailed appraisal of the project which would highlight all such issues and concerns. The Head of Planning and Coastal Management said the proposals for the junction were considered far from ideal and much would be predicated on the modal split.

The Chairman invited the Head of Economic Development and Regeneration to comment on the Sizewell ‘C’ project as a catalyst for significant change and growth opportunities. The Head of Economic Development and Regeneration said the consultation document presented EDF Energy’s vision for employment and training opportunities; however, there was a lack of detail on how this would be achieved. He added that the economic and workforce strategy by EDF Energy would be important in clarifying this; in addition, it would also be important for the Council to develop its own evidence base and economic impact assessment, in conjunction with SCC.

The Head of Economic Development and Regeneration said there were concerns on potential impacts on existing businesses in terms of displacement, also on the tourism economy and the wider impact of possible traffic congestion (subject to the final modal split). It would, therefore, be imperative to ensure clear messaging of the significant economic benefits to be gained from the development of Sizewell ‘C’, including significant inward investment in the long term. The Task Group noted that these principles would drive the Council’s response on the economic aspects of the consultation. He added that the Councils would work to mitigate and manage a ‘boom and bust’ scenario.

The Chairman moved to the recommendation which was proposed, seconded and unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

That the Task Group had noted and commented upon the contents of the summary document and in response to the questions posed in the summary document

**6. EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

**RESOLVED:**

That under Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the Meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act

## **7. EXEMPT MINUTES**

### **RESOLVED:**

That the Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 October 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

The meeting concluded at 6.30pm.