



CABINET

Monday 23 September 2019

SIZEWELL C STAGE 4 PUBLIC CONSULTATION RESPONSE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. EDF Energy is proposing to build a new nuclear power station at Sizewell. Following the Stage 3 consultation at the beginning of this year, which was discussed at Cabinet on 11 March 2019, a fourth round of consultation on specific elements of the proposal has been launched.

This report sets out a summary of the draft response to EDF Energy's Stage 4 consultation, with the full draft response in the appendix. It is proposed that Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council (referred to in this report as "the Councils"), both statutory consultees in this process, submit a joint response to the consultation, as they have done in the three previous consultation stages. It is considered that such a joint response gives greater weight to the views of the two Councils. Previously, the joint responses have been between Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council, with Waveney District Council sending their own independent response. Following the successful merger of the Councils earlier this year, Suffolk County Council are now working jointly with East Suffolk Council which represents the formerly identified areas of Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Districts. Post this round of consultation, it is expected that EDF Energy will formally submit an application for development consent early next year that will be determined by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) following examination by the Planning Inspectorate.
2. The primary purpose of this report is to explain the key changes in the proposals compared to Stage 3 and proposes a stance on these topic areas. The report also:
 - Updates on the progress that the Councils have made putting the case for Suffolk to Government. A particular issue within this is the cumulative impact of all the planning issues arising from all the national infrastructure projects in East Suffolk and the representations the Councils will make to Government;
 - Considers the next steps for the Councils;
 - Includes consideration of a consultation by BEIS, on the "Regulated Asset Base" funding model which is proposed to be used for Sizewell C.
3. The Councils' report is prepared after a community consultation event with the Parish Councils on 26 July 2019 and, alongside representations from local residents, draws upon their advice and local understanding. The Councils have also discussed the issues raised by

EDF Energy with other statutory consultees. The Councils are referencing existing work and understanding arising from our membership of the New Nuclear Local Authority Group (NNLAG), this includes reference to the draft version of a longitudinal study funded by NNLAG regarding impacts of Hinkley Point C (HPC) which is in its final stages but not yet published. Members are asked to consider and if they are content endorse the recommendations in this report and in particular the responses set out in this report and the Appendix.

5. Evidence to support these recommendations is set out in the main body of the report with further technical detail contained in the Appendix.

6. Suffolk County Council is taking a similar report with the same response attached to their Cabinet meeting on the 24 September 2019.

Cabinet Members have been provided with copies of EDF Energy's consultation documents.

7. They are also available on EDF Energy's website at <https://www.edfenergy.com/energy/nuclear-new-build-projects/sizewell-c/proposals/stage-4>

Is the report Open or Exempt?	Open
Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable

Wards Affected:	<p>Directly: Aldeburgh and Leiston, Wickham Market, Kelsale and Yoxford, Saxmundham, Halesworth and Blything, Orwell and Villages, Rendlesham and Orford, and Deben.</p> <p>Indirectly: Melton, Martlesham and Purdis Farm, Woodbridge, Framlingham, Lowestoft Wards: Gunton and St Margarets, Oulton Broad, Harbour and Normanston, Carlton and Whitton, and Kirkley and Pakefield.</p>
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Cabinet Member:	Cllr Craig Rivett, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development.
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Supporting Officer:	<p>Philip Ridley / Lisa Chandler Head of Planning & Coastal Management / Energy Projects Manager 01394 444432 / 01394 444538 Philip.ridley@eastsoffolk.gov.uk / lisa.chandler@eastsoffolk.gov.uk</p>
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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 EDF Energy is proposing to build a nuclear power station at Sizewell. This would be a very significant development for Suffolk. This proposal will be considered under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) process, under the Planning Act 2008, where the process of consultation is undertaken and “owned” by the development promoter and not by the local authorities. The planning application will be examined by the Planning Inspectorate who will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). The Secretary of State will then make the decision whether the proposal will be approved. However, as important consultees, the Councils have a key role to play in putting forward the views of the local community, by responding to this consultation, as well as providing a Local Impact Report for the Examination of the application by the Planning Inspectorate. In these contexts, the roles of the two Councils are equal. The Councils will be responsible for discharging the Requirements (planning conditions) on the Development Consent Order (DCO) in consultation with others, and be responsible for the monitoring and enforcement of any DCO made.
- 1.2 A more detailed overview of the scale and the processes of the development can be found in the Cabinet Report from March 2019.
- 1.3 EDF Energy is consulting on its Stage 4 proposals, in relation to specific aspects of their plans to build a nuclear power station at Sizewell. This fourth stage consultation is in addition to those originally planned and was only announced in July 2019. The Stage 4 consultation closely follows and extends EDF Energy’s Stage 3 consultation in January to March 2019, to which the two Councils jointly responded in March 2019. The Stage 4 consultation needs to be considered in conjunction with those Stage 3 proposals which still stand (unless revised by virtue of this response). EDF Energy are clear that there still is an opportunity to comment on Stage 3 proposals, but that there is no need for consultees to resubmit unchanged feedback submitted under Stage 3.
- 1.4 Accordingly, the Councils’ Stage 4 representation will be complementary to our Stage 3 submission and will not supersede it and our previous Stage 3 response still stands.
- 1.5 It is expected that, following the fourth consultation stage, EDF Energy will submit early next year its application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Secretary of State for BEIS, for consideration via the National Infrastructure Planning section of the Planning Inspectorate (<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>). At that point, there will be the opportunity for the Councils and others to raise any unresolved issues through representations directly to the Planning Inspectorate. It is desirable that the Councils do all that is possible to influence EDF Energy prior to submission of their DCO but where this proves to be unsuccessful the Councils will be able to raise any concerns or objections they might still have directly to the Planning Inspectorate.
- 1.6 If consent is given, it is anticipated it will take 10 to 12 years to build and complete the station. Following construction, Sizewell C will be operational for a minimum of 60 years.
- 1.7 The Stage 4 public consultation started on 18 July 2019, with a closing date of 27 September 2019. The Councils requested at previous consultations a minimum 12 week consultation period, without public holidays incorporated. We have raised our concerns

about this shorter 10 week period over the summer period for Stage 4 with EDF Energy, but EDF Energy noted that this was not a full scale consultation so considered that a 10 week period was sufficient.

- 1.8 The main changes presented in Stage 4 compared to Stage 3 are:
- a) The introduction of an integrated strategy for freight management which is a hybrid of the road-led and rail-led strategies presented at Stage 3. The rail-led and road-led options remain as alternative options, and are largely unchanged from Stage 3;
 - b) The possibility that all or parts of the Sizewell Link Road could be temporary i.e. be removed following the construction period;
 - c) The introduction of two flood compensation areas,
 - d) The identification of new ecological mitigation sites for Fen Meadow and Marsh Harriers;
 - e) The introduction of a revised layout for the LEEIE; and
 - f) That, for the purposes of transport as well as socio-economic mitigation requirements, EDF Energy use the figures of 7,900 workers plus 600 workers on Associated Development sites as maximum number of workers (at Stage 3, this was only used for sensitivity testing).
- 1.9 Other more minor changes include minor revisions to red line boundaries at the Main Development and Associated Development sites, as well as minor changes to vertical alignment and junctions along the proposed Sizewell Link Road and the two village bypass. EDF Energy also proposes an additional alternative option for traffic mitigation in Wickham Market. The Coastal Path diversion route has been amended, and it is proposed to upgrade Kenton Hill car park. The offsite sports facilities at Leiston Sports Centre / Alde Valley Academy have been confirmed and there are minor red line changes in this area now that the specific location has been decided.
- 1.10 Stage 4 does not cover any socio-economic information, other than EDF Energy referring to the economic benefits of Sizewell C, including some welcomed new commitments, such as a minimum 1000 apprentice, work with Suffolk Colleges and businesses, and the aim to meet the nuclear sector target of a 40% female workforce, and reference to a Community Fund. EDF Energy refers in Stage 4 for the first time to property support, confirming that it will work with local potentially affected residents to explore alternatives to statutory blight claims.
- 1.11 Since Stage 3, EDF Energy submitted in April 2019 an updated request for a Scoping Opinion as required by the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations to the Planning Inspectorate. The Councils were consulted on this submission. A joint response from the Councils was sent to the Planning Inspectorate dated 22 May 2014 giving our comments and opinion on the submission. This was taken into consideration by the Planning Inspectorate in its formal Scoping Opinion published in July 2019 (see <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN010012/EN010012-000735-SIZE%20-%20Scoping%20Opinion.pdf>). This Scoping Opinion sets out the required contents of the Environmental Statement necessary to accompany the DCO submission.

- 1.12 EDF Energy is seeking the views of the Councils alongside those of other bodies and the public. As with Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 responses, East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council aim to issue a joint response to EDF Energy in relation to the Stage 4 public consultation.
- 1.13 The appendix contains the draft joint response from the Councils to EDF Energy's Stage 4 proposals. The draft response has been developed with, and informed by, close joint working between the two Councils. The lead members on Sizewell C are meeting regularly with local members representing the most affected wards to ensure that local views are considered and this has proved invaluable in that it has helped to strengthen all the Councils' submissions to date. In addition, the District Council's Strategic Planning Committee has the role to scrutinise the consultation proposals and make recommendations and comments to be considered by the District Council's Cabinet.
- 1.14 At Stage 3, there was not enough information or evidence in a number of key areas for the Councils to be able to fully consider the impacts; as such the Councils stated our disappointment in this area. When a Stage 4 public consultation was announced, we expected there to be additional clarity and detail to enable us to build on our Stage 3 response, unfortunately, while providing some additional detail on the proposals, the combined evidence of Stage 3 and 4 still remains insufficient for the Councils to fully evaluate the adequacy of the proposed mitigation proposals and to reach a final conclusion with regard to the development as a whole.
- 1.15 The Councils expect to continue to work with EDF Energy towards a position where the Cabinets can conclude an opinion on EDF Energy's proposals that are based on evidence and fact rather than assumptions and possibilities. As stated in the Stage 3 Cabinet report, it is in both parties' interest that the Sizewell C proposal becomes a proposal which can work in and for Suffolk. It is now for EDF Energy to decide how it will respond to the representations made at all four stages of public consultation. We expect EDF Energy to continue working collaboratively with us up to and including during the DCO submission process.
- 1.16 This report sets out the rationale behind the draft responses. The key issues to consider are whether the proposed draft response to EDF Energy is appropriate in robustness and ambition, without putting undeliverable demands on EDF Energy.

2 POLICY CONTEXT

National Policies

- 2.1 The Stage 3 Cabinet report from March 2019 set out in detail the relevant planning policies. A short summary is provided below.
- 2.2 The Planning Act 2008 requires that major infrastructure proposals must be considered in accordance with a relevant National Policy Statement (NPS); in the context of this proposal, these are: the overarching NPS for Energy (EN-1) and the NPS for Nuclear Power Generation (EN-6).
- 2.3 It states that the Infrastructure Planning Commission (now the National Infrastructure Planning section of the Planning Inspectorate) "*must decide an application for energy infrastructure in accordance with the relevant NPSs except to the extent it is satisfied that to do so would result in adverse impacts from the development outweighing the benefits.*"

The fact that a site is identified as potentially suitable within this NPS does not prevent the impacts being considered greater than the benefits.” This is particularly important in the context of EN-6 recognising that the Sizewell C site is located in a sensitive area (including Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)), and that there may be adverse effects on the integrity of nine European sites. Sizewell is one of eight sites across England and Wales that was identified to be potentially suitable for new nuclear development.

Local Policies

- 2.3 The NPSs state that it is appropriate for other matters to be considered by the Planning Inspectorate. This must include relevant policies from the key plans, including the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and emerging Local Plan Review, the County’s Local Transport Plan and its Minerals Local Plan Core Strategy and its emerging Local Plan Review, as well as other strategies the East Suffolk Business Plan 2015-2023 and the AONB Management Plan.

3 HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO THE EAST SUFFOLK BUSINESS PLAN?

- 3.1 The East Suffolk Business Plan (2015 – 2023) identifies the new nuclear power station at Sizewell C as a huge opportunity to grow the east Suffolk economy. It states that East Suffolk Council will continue to work closely with EDF Energy and a wide range of partners to maximise the economic benefits of this development, whilst minimising and managing any negative impact.

4 FINANCIAL AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The resource and risk implications remain the same as outlined in detail in the Stage 3 Cabinet report. In summary, these are:
- a. A Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station would bring significant financial opportunities to Suffolk and strengthen the Suffolk economy and employment market. The development could also provide significant additional business rate income to the local councils; however, Government has not yet confirmed any detail on proportions to be retained.
 - b. When making its decisions, Cabinet needs to be mindful that a balanced and evidenced based approach to EDF Energy’s proposals is required. If the response is not robust and ambitious enough, Suffolk may risk not achieving adequate mitigation for the development. Inadequate mitigation could have a significant damaging impact on the local environment, local communities, the transport network or tourism and other industries. However, if the response puts undeliverable demands on EDF Energy, the Councils’ views are less likely to be taken into account by the Planning Inspectorate.
 - c. Whilst there is an agreed Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) level of contribution from EDF Energy for 2019, to cover officer and consultancy time to respond to the Sizewell C proposals, it is expected that additional funding from the Councils’ own

resources may be required to develop a comprehensive engagement process over the next few years, including during examination.

5 OTHER KEY ISSUES

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was not undertaken as we are responding to the planning proposals of EDF Energy. As such, EDF Energy is required to satisfy the EqIA requirements. The Councils will reconsider at later stages in the process whether an EqIA will be required.

6 TIMESCALES

- 6.1 Following the decisions of Suffolk County Council's and East Suffolk Council's Cabinet meetings, taking place consecutively on 23 and 24 September 2019, an agreed joint response for EDF Energy's Stage 4 public consultation will have to be submitted by 27 September 2019.
- 6.2 As to the legal implications, EDF Energy is under a statutory duty under the Planning Act 2008 (the Planning Act) to carry out pre-application consultation prior to its application to the Planning Inspectorate for the Development Consent Order. The Secretary of State cannot accept an application for Sizewell C unless and until it is satisfied that EDF Energy has met all the requirements to the required standards.
- 6.3 The Planning Act enables the relevant local authorities to make representations to the Secretary of State about the adequacy of consultation to which he or she must have regard in determining whether an application should be accepted for examination.
- 6.4 It is expected that, following Stage 4, EDF Energy will formally submit its application for development consent for Sizewell C in quarter one 2020 which will be determined by the Secretary of State for BEIS.
- 6.5 If development consent is given, it is anticipated it will take 10 to 12 years to build and complete the station. Following construction, Sizewell C will be operational for a minimum of 60 years.
- 6.6 Following the Cabinet Meetings, an agreed joint response for the Regulated Asset Base consultation will have to be submitted to BEIS by 14 October 2019.

7 WHO WILL BE AFFECTED BY THIS DECISION

- 7.1 In terms of the economic and employment benefits, the development of a Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station would have an impact on residents throughout Suffolk and beyond. The tourism industry along the East Suffolk coast will be particularly affected by the development – whether beneficially or detrimentally this needs to be quantified. Residents in the vicinity of the development site, particularly those in Leiston-cum-Sizewell and Theberton and Eastbridge parishes will be most affected by identified and perceived negative impacts of the development.
- 7.2 The freight management strategy proposals in Stage 4 have an impact on residents and road users, particularly of the A12 (between Seven Hills, Woodbridge and Lowestoft) and the B1122, but road transport impacts will affect wider areas, including along the B1078,

the A1120, the A145 and a number of rural roads, as well as the wider strategic road network. The proposals will also have an impact on residents living in proximity to the East Suffolk Rail Line and the Sizewell Branch Line.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 This report sets out the Councils' joint response to EDF Energy's Stage 4 public consultation. Whilst this is not a consultation process for which the Councils are responsible, there has been a comprehensive approach to engaging with key stakeholders and community representatives ahead of finalising the Councils' stance.

8.2 Post Stage 3 public consultation, there has been further engagement by the Councils with EDF Energy through a series of meetings under Planning Performance Agreements (PPA) which are in place to provide support for the Councils to comment on and inform on emerging proposals.

8.3 The Councils held a community engagement event in July 2019, where all Town and Parish Councils in the vicinity of the proposed development were invited to contribute their views of the Stage 4 proposals to help inform the Councils' response. The event allowed Lead Members and officers to gain valuable insight and detail into the concerns of the local communities, and the information received allowed us to draft a more comprehensive response, influencing the recommendations as set out in this report. The Lead Members meet regularly with local councillors representing the hosting wards for the development, and associated developments, and also listen to local representations.

8.4 At the community engagement event, the town and parish council representatives presented an appreciation for EDF Energy undertaking a Stage 4 public consultation, but confirmed that they still had a number of areas and issues that had not been addressed in the consultation documentation. The areas that were highlighted by the communities, through round table discussions included traffic impacts, impacts on natural environment and coastal processes and commentary that the revised proposal for pylons from EDF Energy did not mitigate the impact on the environment. The full summary of concerns raised at the event is available on the Stage 4 Public Consultation pages of the Sizewell Nuclear Power Station section at www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/sizewell-nuclear-power-station/.

- 8.5 The Councils are committed to continuing their engagement with Town and Parish Councils following on from the Stage 4 public consultation.

STAGE 3

- 8.6 The Cabinets of the two councils agreed a comprehensive response to the Stage 3 public consultation in March 2019. This response still stands in its entirety (unless specified), and the Councils' Stage 4 response will need to be considered with reference to the stage 3 response.

Strategic rationale for proposed response in the appendix

Overview

- 8.7 The following section sets out the rationale for the response set out in the appendix.
- 8.8 In advance of the Stage 2 consultation, the Councils agreed on their common strategic objectives for the delivery of a new nuclear power station at Sizewell. It is against these objectives that we assess the proposals of Stage 4, as we have done for Stage 2 and Stage 3 proposals. The Councils' agreed strategic objectives are that the development:
- a. Provides a lasting legacy for the local communities and the economy;
 - b. Appropriately mitigates and/or compensates for local impacts;
 - c. Secures skills and education benefits for the wider area;
 - d. Supports economic growth of the region and East Suffolk in particular;
 - e. Acts as an environmental exemplar within the protected landscape, Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
 - f. Secures an infrastructure legacy;
 - g. Provides for funding of long-term community benefit; and
 - h. Has an appropriate decommissioning and removal of nuclear waste strategy.
- 8.9 The Councils recognise that Sizewell C would be an important contribution to the national energy strategy and welcome the benefits such a development would bring to Suffolk, regarding jobs, skills and legacy. However, to make the development work for Suffolk, it is essential that local impacts are minimised, by following the mitigation hierarchy, prioritising sustainable transport modes and by addressing the sensibility of its location and any arising community impacts.
- 8.10 The Councils welcome this further round of public consultation to provide some additional detail and amendments to the proposals presented at Stage 3. The Councils are, however, disappointed that EDF Energy has not used the opportunity of a Stage 4 consultation to address more of the considerable list of issues and concerns raised by the Councils and other consultees at Stage 3, and we are aware that many communities share this frustration. The Councils are still in a position where we consider there is significant amount of work required

for EDF Energy to sufficiently identify the impacts (negative and positive) of and mitigation proposals for the development. We will seek the opportunity to engage further with EDF Energy to help them develop their proposals, including seeking to mutually resolve the necessary mitigation and compensation arising from identified impacts.

- 8.11 The Councils' expectation is that the development will create a lasting economic legacy, will support and develop local talent, will act as an environmental exemplar and will make appropriate provision for necessary mitigation measures and the funding of wider community benefits. Overall the Councils' approach to Sizewell C is to maximise the positive impacts that development can bring whilst minimising the negative impacts. The Stage 4 public consultation does not provide any focus on socio-economic aspects, other than listing a few of the benefits.
- 8.12 Beyond mitigation and direct compensation, we will seek from EDF Energy recognition of the many intangible and residual impacts a project of this scale causes on the quality of life of local residents. This is expected to be in the form of a Community Impacts Fund similar to that which EDF Energy provided in relation to the Hinkley Point C (HPC) development. In addition, given the location of Sizewell C in the AONB, the Councils expect a compensation fund in response to the residual environmental impacts of the proposals. We welcome the repeated notion of a Community Fund in the Stage 4 public consultation; however the level of detail has not evolved since Stage 3. We will seek to continue to work with local communities and EDF Energy in order to ensure that a Community Fund meets the recognised and residual impacts of the development on the local community.

Freight Management Strategy

- 8.13 At Stage 3, EDF Energy presented two freight management strategy options: a road-led and a rail-led strategy. At that point, it had removed the possibility of a marine-led strategy. The Councils made our position clear that we expect EDF Energy to have a sustainable transport strategy to transport materials to/from the site. At Stage 3, the Councils in our response were not content with the un-evidenced or justified removal of a marine-led freight management strategy. The Councils continued to support marine-led and rail-led transport strategies as the most sustainable options and had not yet seen convincing evidence that a marine-led strategy was not feasible and/or environmentally preferable. If the marine-led option was proven to be undeliverable, the Councils wished to see the rail-led strategy implemented. The Councils, at Stage 3, were not content with a road-led option, as this would result in a detrimental effect on Suffolk's road network. The Councils, at Stage 3, were not content with the possibility of a relaxation of HGV operating hours into the night-time, as the potential impacts of this had not been demonstrated.
- 8.14 The Councils, at Stage 4, maintain our position that EDF Energy should prioritise a deliverable sustainable transport strategy solution.
- 8.15 EDF Energy considers that the embedded mitigation proposed with their freight management strategies, be it rail, integrated or road, significantly reduces the adverse impact on the transport infrastructure. While the Councils accept that the mitigation reduces the impact, we consider that:
- a) All transport strategy options require more detail and evidence for the Councils to robustly assess their impacts;

- b) The volume of traffic (HGVs, buses, cars) is so large over a significant proportion of the network that, whilst the proposed mitigation reduces the impact on parts of the network, these may remain severe at a number of locations, most notably at the A12 between the A14 and Wickham Market bypass and the single carriageway section from Marlesford to Little Glemham and (for the rail-led option only) the B1122; and
- c) The phasing/schedule for the delivery of mitigation has not been provided and therefore we will insist that necessary mitigation measures must be in place at an appropriate time before impacts become severe – this will be controlled through caps on HGVs if required.

- 8.16 At Stage 4, both road-led and rail-led strategies remain as an option (unchanged to the proposals from Stage 3), and no further evidence is presented that a marine-led strategy is not feasible. However, EDF Energy states that *“they have become concerned that the rail-led strategy may not be deliverable within the necessary timescale to limit the impacts of construction traffic”*. EDF Energy is therefore proposing an additional freight management option, which it refers to as an integrated strategy.
- 8.17 All three strategies present a mix of use of the road and rail network to transport freight to and from the site, as well as the use of the Beach Landing Facility for some Abnormal Indivisible Loads. The Councils consider that it would be more accurate to describe the integrated strategy as a hybrid of the road- and rail-led approaches that is, in terms of HGV impacts, skewed towards the road led approach; for ease of reference, the Councils nevertheless use EDF Energy’s terminology of integrated strategy throughout this report. In Stage 4, with the introduction of the integrated option and the pessimistic descriptions of the ability to achieve the rail-led option within the necessary timescales, EDF Energy appears to be moving towards a road transport dominated option – through either the integrated or road-led options. This is regrettable.
- 8.18 From the representations of local communities we have seen from the Stage 3 consultation, there was little local support for the road-led strategy. It was not supported by the Councils in our Stage 3 response. The integrated strategy does represent a limited increase in the use of the rail network and some decrease in HGV movements. The integrated strategy takes on all road mitigation schemes from the road-led option (i.e. Sizewell Link Road, two village bypass, Yoxford Roundabout, Freight Management Facility), and combines these with a direct rail route into the temporary construction area from the rail-led option. Table 1 shows the difference in mitigation between the three options.

Table 1: Comparison of mitigation measures of rail-led, integrated and road-led freight management strategies (Table from the Stage 4 consultation document)

RAIL - LED	INTEGRATED	ROAD - LED
A12 - Two-village bypass	A12 - Two-village bypass	A12 - Two-village bypass
A12/B1122 - Yoxford roundabout	A12/B1122 - Yoxford roundabout	A12/B1122 - Yoxford roundabout
B1122 - Theberton bypass	B1122 - Sizewell link road	B1122 - Sizewell link road
Other minor road improvements	Other minor road improvements	Other minor road improvements
	Freight management facility	Freight management facility
Rail - Green rail route to the temporary construction area	Rail - Green rail route to the temporary construction area	
Rail - East Suffolk line upgrades and level crossings works		
Rail - Branch line upgrades and level crossings works	Rail - Branch line upgrades and level crossings works	Rail - Branch line upgrades and level crossings works
Rail - Sizewell Halt or rail siding at LEEIE for early years	Rail - Sizewell Halt or rail siding at LEEIE for early years	Rail - Sizewell Halt or rail siding at LEEIE for construction period
Beach landing facility	Beach landing facility	Beach landing facility
HGV operation 07:00 – 23:00 HGVs 225 average at peak/350 busiest day Up to 5 trains a day	HGV operation potential for extended hours HGVs 325 average at peak/500 busiest day Up to 3 trains a day	HGV operation potential for extended hours HGVs 375 average at peak/575 busiest day Up to 2 trains a day

- 8.19 The integrated strategy would provide three rail deliveries (six rail movements) over a 24-hour period – one more than the road-led option but two less than the rail-led option. It is important to note that of these six rail movements, five are during the night between the last and first passenger trains on the East Suffolk line, i.e. between 11pm and 6am. This is unlike the rail-led strategy where all rail deliveries are expected to occur during daytime (except for during the early years). The noise and vibration impact of these night-time movements on residents along the East Suffolk Line and Sizewell Branch line should not be underestimated. It should be noted that for the road-led and integrated options, trains would operate at a speed of 20mph, whereas with the rail improvements under the rail-led options, speeds could increase to 40mph. A rough calculation has identified at least 380 dwellings sited within 30 metres of the East Suffolk rail-line between Westerfield and the site.
- 8.20 Whilst the Councils wish to see a maximum amount of materials to be transported by rail to site, the Councils have concerns about the additional environmental impacts of the integrated strategy, with five night time trains running along the East Suffolk Line for a seven to ten year period following the ‘Early Years’ construction period. This would have associated impacts on communities, with significant numbers of residents living close to the rail line being affected in places including Ipswich, Woodbridge, and Saxmundham. EDF Energy has not included any mitigation proposals related to these impacts in its consultation documents and we are not convinced that there are appropriate mitigating measures that could address the impacts.
- 8.21 In terms of the rail network, the integrated and road-led strategies offer no legacy benefit, as no improvements to the East Suffolk Line are being proposed as part of the integrated and road-led strategies. The rail-led proposal continues to offer legacy benefits with improvements to the line speed, a passing loop and, as a result, improved network resilience; it did also include proposals for a number of level crossing closures which would require further review given the Councils’ comments and the objections by local residents. The rail legacy benefits would support aspirations for increased passenger service in the longer term.

- 8.22 Whilst not having rail legacy benefits, the integrated and road-led strategies have some degree of additional road network legacy benefits over and above the rail-led strategy proposals with the proposal of the full Sizewell Link Road (the two village bypass and minor junction improvements are included in all scenarios). No data has been provided to evaluate the environmental impact of each of the three strategies, such as the resulting carbon emissions.
- 8.23 In all options, during the early years of construction (before the new branch line into site is completed), four overnight rail movements on the East Suffolk Line from/to the start of the branch line near Saxmundham would occur; this would be held at the start of the branch line overnight and would then continue during daytime to Sizewell Halt.
- 8.24 Table 2 compares the rail movements of all three strategies.

Table 2: Comparison of rail movements in the different freight management strategies

	Rail – East Suffolk Line		Rail – branch line	
	No. of rail movements daytime	No. of rail movements between 11pm and 6am	No. of rail movements daytime	No. of rail movements between 11pm and 6am
Rail-led	10	0	10 (into site)	0
Integrated	1	5	1 (into site)	5 (into site)
Road-led	0	4	4 (to LEEIE)	0

- 8.25 In terms of HGV movements, the integrated strategy would increase the number of HGV deliveries to site by about 43% compared to the rail-led option (the road-led option would see a 65% increase), with 650 HGVs on a typical peak day (450 in rail-led) and 1000 (700 in rail-led) on “busiest” days. This evidences the statement above that the integrated strategy is more of a road-based than a rail-based strategy.
- 8.26 The majority of additional HGVs would come on the A12 from the South: To the south of the site along the A12 the relative increase on a typical day is an additional 170 HGV movements between the rail-led and integrated scenarios and an additional 260 HGV movements between the rail-led and road-led scenarios. To the north of the site along the A12 the relative increase on a typical day is an additional 20 HGV movements between the rail-led and integrated scenarios and an additional 30 HGV movements between the rail-led and road-led scenarios. The HGV movements are greater by a factor of 50% on the busiest day, and it should be noted that in the integrated and road-led options, HGV movements may be “*potentially over extended hours*” beyond the 7:00-23:00 operating hours for the rail-led scenario resulting overnight use of the A12 and Sizewell Link Road.
- 8.27 The only location where there would be a reduction in HGV movements in the integrated and road-led strategies compared to the rail-led strategy is along the B1122 between Yoxford

Roundabout and Middleton Moor, as all 450 HGVs would take the Sizewell Link Road rather than the existing B1122, and through the village of Yoxford as HGVs coming from the South would take the Sizewell Link Road before entering the village. However, in the rail-led strategy HGV movements would be restricted to 7:00 to 23:00 operating hours. As stated in our response, the Councils would require evidence whether further mitigation would be required for the affected villages within the rail-led strategy.

8.28 As the Green Rail Route would not be delivered for the road-led scenario, there would be additional 140 HGV movements between the LEEIE and the secondary site entrance on a typical day at peak construction for this option.

8.29 Table 3 provides an overview of the HGV numbers.

Table 3: Comparison of HGV numbers in the different freight management strategies

	HGV numbers at peak			
	Typical	Busiest day	HGV increase compared to rail-led	HGV operating hours
Rail-led	450	700	n/a	7:00-23:00
Integrated	650	1000	ca. 43%	“Potentially over extended hours”
Road-led	750	1150	ca. 65%	“Potentially over extended hours”

8.30 It is clear from the impacts discussed above that impacts are significantly increased as a result of the integrated strategy (and even more the road-led strategy) in comparison with the rail-led strategy. As such, the Councils expect EDF Energy and other stakeholders including Network Rail to prioritise pursuing the rail-led strategy.

8.31 The Councils are disappointed that the lack of progress on the rail-led strategy now appears to be jeopardising delivery of this option. One of the main risks of delay of the rail-led strategy appears to be the permission process of going through a Transport and Works Act Order for the East Suffolk Line upgrades. The Councils have not seen evidence why the East Suffolk Line upgrades could not be included within DCO application with an extended red line, thus de-risking this element of the rail-led option.

8.32 The Councils consider that increased collaboration between Network Rail, EDF Energy, the Department for Transport and the Councils would result in the ability to deliver the rail strategy. In particular, the statement that the Stage 3 ‘option selection’ of the Governance for

Railway Investment Projects (GRIP, a management and control process developed by Network Rail for delivering projects on the operational railway) only commenced this year concerns us. No information is included in Stage 4 as to whether reports resulting from Stage 3 of the GRIP process are available, their conclusion or a timeline for GRIP Stages 4 and 5. Our concern is that EDF Energy will be making its decision on the preferred transport strategy for the DCO without having the full necessary information on deliverability of the rail-led strategy.

- 8.33 The Councils will not consider either a road led or an integrated strategy to be acceptable until it is demonstrated that every reasonable effort has been made to deliver a rail-led strategy.
- 8.34 The Councils urge all parties to continue to work together as a matter of priority in order to promote the rail-led option. The Councils expect that increased collaboration aiming to deliver the rail-led strategy should be pursued by a number of actions, including:
- a) EDF Energy and Network Rail to provide clarity on progress to date, for example by sharing all reports associated with the GRIP3 feasibility report with the Councils;
 - b) EDF Energy and Network Rail to provide a clear programme for delivery of the works required for the rail-led option showing gateways such as progress through stages of design (GRIP) and delivery including those associated with the Transport and Work Acts Order, as well as investigating whether the inclusion of East Suffolk Line upgrades within the DCO may accelerate the programme;
 - c) The Councils and Government to support EDF Energy and Network Rail in delivering the Rail Led Option by recommending solutions to blockages or mediating between parties.

Other transport changes in Stage 4

- 8.35 Most other changes in relation to transport schemes are minor, with tweaks to red line boundaries and minor amendments such as changes to vertical alignment and junctions for the road schemes. The alignment of the Sizewell Link Road and the two village bypass has remained principally the same as proposed in Stage 3.
- 8.36 EDF Energy confirms at Stage 4 the routing of the Sizewell Link Road, stating in the consultation document that further analysis since Stage 3 supports the route selection of the Sizewell Link Road as the most appropriate option, in comparison to routes further South referred to in Stage 3, including the Route "W" from South of Saxmundham to Leiston (similar to the "D2" route).
- 8.37 EDF Energy is consulting at Stage 4 whether all or parts of the Sizewell Link Road should be temporary, i.e. be removed following the construction period.
- 8.38 The District Council at Stage 3 was of the opinion that the Sizewell Link Road has legacy potential in providing a direct access to the new C station as well as the existing A and B stations; this opinion has not changed since that time. The District Council would not support removal of the Sizewell Link Road post-construction.
- 8.39 To mitigate potential delays on the B1078 in Wickham Market, the Stage 3 proposals included two options, between Border Cot Lane and the River Deben Bridge, as a result of increased car traffic on the B1078. Option 1 was the temporary removal/restriction of on-street parking on this stretch of the road, while Option 2 was a diversion via Glevering Bridge, with

improvements to Valley Road and Easton Road. The Councils had significant concerns about each of these two options at Stage 3. At Stage 4, EDF Energy is providing an additional alternative option, to *“work with the Parish Council to bring forward a public realm improvement scheme within the public highway”*, considering footway and pedestrian crossing provision and a review of on-street parking to meet parking demand. No further detail has been provided on this proposal. It is disappointing that EDF Energy has not taken this opportunity to expand further upon alternative proposals to mitigate traffic impacts through Wickham Market.

- 8.40 The Councils expect EDF Energy to provide proportional mitigation to address their impacts at locations where its traffic is exacerbating a capacity or road safety concern. Within its assessment, EDF Energy have identified that this is most prominently the case at the A12 Woodbridge. The Councils have recognised the need for improvements here and are currently exploring the feasibility of installing a dedicated northbound slip road at Seckford Roundabout, duelling of the Seckford to B1079 roundabout and improvements to the A12/B1079 roundabout and seek opportunities to fund the design and implementation of such a scheme. The Councils consider it appropriate to expect EDF Energy to contribute proportionately to such a scheme to mitigate the relative impact of Sizewell C. However, EDF Energy does not refer to any Woodbridge mitigations in Stage 4.
- 8.41 As set out at Stage 3, there are a number of other locations where EDF Energy is expected to provide traffic figures so that there is a better understanding of the overall impacts across the network. It is disappointing that Stage 4 has not provided details for these locations, as we expect that for a number of these, improvements are likely to be required as part of EDF Energy’s mitigation package.

Main development site – Stage 4 changes to the scheme

- 8.42 Most of the changes at the main development site are minor and related to changes to the red line boundary. The response in the Appendix provides some technical comments on these changes; however, generally the comments raised in Stage 3 remain unchanged.
- 8.43 In the Stage 4 consultation, EDF Energy make further reference to proposed electricity pylons on the site. At the Stage 3 consultation, four new pylons were proposed to connect the turbine halls with the National Grid substation; in advance of Stage 3, it had been proposed to underground these cables. In their Stage 3 response, the Councils raised significant objections to this element of the scheme due to the very significant additional adverse impacts on the identified special qualities of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and urged EDF Energy to pursue alternative options.
- 8.44 At Stage 4, EDF Energy states that it continues to assess the practicability of undergrounding the electrical connections and thereby removing the need for pylons. However, EDF Energy has also considered ways to reduce the visual impact of the pylons. As such, it consults on two options:
- a. To reduce the height of three of the four pylons by 25%; however, in this option the visually most prominent Northern pylon would retain its full size; and
 - b. To reduce the height of all new pylons by 25%; however, this would require an additional fifth new pylon at the North of the site.

- 8.45 The Councils remain unconvinced that it is impossible to underground the cables and has not seen the technical evidence to prove this. Therefore, we are not supporting either of the proposals made. Notwithstanding this, the Councils note, should the pylons be proven to be essential, that any measures to further reduce the visual impact of pylons should be pursued, but that it is unlikely that an additional fifth pylon would be beneficial even if the height of the northern pylon could be reduced.
- 8.46 The Councils urge EDF Energy to undertake further work to make undergrounding of the cables possible. We are seeking technical advice to inform and support this discussion and expect to engage further with EDF Energy on this matter.

Ecological mitigation and compensation

- 8.47 At Stage 3, the Councils raised concern that the consultation failed to recognise or truly acknowledge the environmental challenge that the development at this site faces, nor the likelihood of residual impacts in several areas. The Councils noted at Stage 3 there needed to be further significant ecological work to seek to survey, understand, quantify and qualify these impacts. The Stage 4 consultation does not provide any further ecological survey evidence which is highly disappointing. This remains a significant concern, not least as some of the survey data may be out of date.
- 8.48 Stage 4 does recognise that additional ecological mitigation to that proposed at Stage 3 is required. To that extent, EDF Energy consults on three potential sites to compensate for the loss of foraging areas for marsh harriers, as well as two potential sites to compensate for the loss of fen meadow habitat (to be lost as part of the land-take into the Site of Specific Scientific interest (SSSI) to the North of the nuclear power station site).
- 8.49 Whilst these additional habitat compensation schemes are welcome, the Councils remain concerned that ecological impact mitigation and compensation measures remain insufficient and that further land may be required.
- 8.50 For the specific proposals for Fen Meadow and Marsh Harriers, more information is required for the Councils to establish an informed view, including of the wider impact of the proposals, and whether the level of mitigation/compensation is sufficient in relation to the ecological impacts.

Flood storage mitigation

- 8.51 EDF Energy proposes flood compensation land within the wider main development site, to compensate for loss of flood plan at the SSSI crossing. Whilst the effectiveness of these proposals is to be determined by the Environment Agency, the Councils require more detail and evidence on the ecological and archaeological impact of these proposals to determine whether they are acceptable.

Land east of Eastlands Industrial Estate (LEEIE)

- 8.52 Whilst retaining the options from Stage 3 for developments at the LEEIE, at Stage 4, EDF Energy presents an alternative design for the LEEIE. However, the proposals remain too vague to comment in more detail. The newly proposed layout of the LEEIE is an improvement from an environmental health aspect, as the distance of stockpiling from residences on Valley Road has been increased as has the site area for the caravan site.

- 8.53 We request further detail on how the LEEIE will operate, at the different stages of the construction phase as we believe the usage will evolve over the years. Further detail is required on topics including: The park and ride (what the park and ride area is used for later on if it is only used during the early years), the HGV parking area, clarity on rail movements, cycle path provision from LEEIE to the construction site, environmental health impacts on neighbouring uses including the caravan site, and post-construction considerations including biodiversity net gain.
- 8.54 As raised at Stage 3, we have concerns about the lack of details / proposals to deal with surface water drainage at the LEEIE as we are aware that surface water flooding is a key issue in this part of Leiston.

Coastal Path diversion

- 8.55 Stage 4 proposes some improvements to the proposals for the diversion of Bridleway 19 and the England Coast Path, with less road crossings, which is welcomed. The Coastal Path is of national significance, has substantial amenity value and is an important part of Suffolk's tourist offer. There are a number of details still to be discussed and improved, including a missing link between the northern end of the proposed diversion route and Eastbridge.

Economic impacts, skills, community impact

- 8.56 The Stage 4 consultation includes very limited additional socio-economic information. The Councils are disappointed about this lack of detail following feedback at Stage 3.
- 8.57 The Councils welcome the re-statement of the economic aspirations for the local area, and some of the new project benefit aspirations included, such as a minimum target of 1,000 apprentices and a target of 40% female workforce in line with the Government's Industrial Strategy.
- 8.58 The Stage 4 proposals include an increase in the maximum number of workers from 6,100 to 8,500 (at Stage 3, the 8,500 figure was referred to only for sensitivity testing). The Councils welcome in principle that, by using the 8,500 figure as a maximum number, any proposed mitigation is based on the maximum workforce number, rather than including contingencies to deliver a higher number. Further engagement is required on the impacts of this increase. The Councils' concerns to be addressed include labour availability and displacement issues for local businesses, increased opportunities to provide work opportunities for those furthest from the labour market, and negative impacts on local infrastructure, particularly accommodation. The potential impact on the local housing market is a key consideration as the extra workers will all be non-home based which will put pressure on an already stretched local housing market potentially resulting in displacement of vulnerable members of society. An increased Housing Fund along with other alternatives to boost market supply will be required to mitigate this adverse impact.

Missing in the consultation

- 8.59 As stated above, the Councils are disappointed that the opportunity of a Stage 4 consultation was not used to clarify and fully evidence at least some more of the issues we raised at Stage 3 (and previous), leaving the Councils unable to come to an evidence-based view on so many matters. Amongst many other issues, we are particularly disappointed that the following matters are not addressed in Stage 4:

- a) Stage 4 still does not provide a full justification for the removal of a marine-led strategy;
- b) There is no reference in Stage 4 to any attempt to reduce additional development in the AONB, at Goose Hill and as part of the relocated Sizewell B facilities. This has been a key concern raised in our Stage 3 response, and we expect further detail on this matter;
- c) No mitigation proposals for the increased workforce;
- d) Lack of further ecological surveys and mitigation proposals;
- e) Our significant concerns highlighted regarding the platform footprint and position;
- f) No further detail on/mention of the considerable concerns related to coastal processes – in particular, we had requested detail on an ongoing monitoring regime;
- g) No reference to an independent review of the design of the nuclear power station – we had requested a Design Council review at Stage 3;
- h) No further information on the SSSI crossing – we raised concerns at Stage 3 that have not been addressed;
- i) For the Beach Landing Facility, the Councils raised concerns at Stage 3 that this round of consultation has not taken the opportunity to address;
- j) No further information related to the Northern Mound proposals;
- k) No further detail and evidence related to the spoil management proposals and the concerns we raised at Stage 3;
- l) Evidence for justifying the siting of the accommodation campus – we are still waiting for further evidence as to why the campus is not sited in Ipswich or Lowestoft. The County Council is awaiting a response to their suggestion that Leiston Airfield be considered as an alternative campus location;
- m) Surface, ground and potable water impacts – further detail and reassurance is required in this area;
- n) Our concerns related to impacts on the Leiston Recycling Centre, Lovers Lane – this has not been addressed;
- o) Stage 4 does not respond to network highway issues, particularly along the A12, and on the wider road, rights of way and cycling network, as raised by the Councils at Stage 3;
- p) There are no further details of the construction programme and the timescales of the delivery of associated sites; and
- q) Lack of justification for the number of car parking spaces proposed was requested at Stage 3.

In general, it is fair to say that Stage 4 provides only very limited responses to the wide-ranging comments and concerns raised by the Councils (and other consultees) at Stage 3.

In-Combination effects

- 8.60 We raised in our Stage 3 consultation concern around the in-combination effects of Sizewell C with other energy projects on the East Suffolk Coast, the East Anglia Offshore Wind Array (by Scottish Power Renewables), two interconnectors to Belgium and the Netherlands by National Grid Ventures, possible extensions to the Galloper and Greater Gabbard windfarms

and a further Round 4 of offshore windfarm proposals by The Crown Estate. The concerns related to the impacts of these nationally significant projects on our communities but also the process for the consideration and determination of the applications and the subsequent phasing of development.

- 8.61 Since Stage 3, the Leaders of the Councils (including the former Waveney and Suffolk Coastal Councils) have written to Ministers highlighting these concerns. The fact that approximately 25% of all the country's electricity is likely to be sent to the Grid via the power lines from Sizewell highlights the importance to the nation of these projects and the burden placed on these East Suffolk communities. The responses from Ministers have been welcomed and the Councils have met with a Minister and with officials on several occasions. Officers have had subsequent meetings with civil servants from across a number of government departments. Both the process issues and the assessment of cumulative impacts are now better understood across the government departments and further engagement is ongoing with East Suffolk being potentially used as a case study to highlight the need for better cross department working in Government. This dialogue continues.
- 8.62 While the Councils will have to consider each proposal on its own merit, they want to ensure the in-combination effects are also fully considered and appropriately sequenced. The Councils will continue to promote and lobby the government for support to fully mitigate for the full and complete in-combination effects of all the major energy projects, to be factored alongside already planned growth in the area. This is especially the case in relation to transport infrastructure but there are many other concerns that need to be raised including grid capacity. Officers also consider that there is merit in seeking to potentially link some of the mitigation packages to ensure that the most effective form of mitigation can be provided to our communities.

Suffolk Energy Gateway (SEGWay)

- 8.63 At Stage 2, and again at Stage 3, the Councils were committed to the objective of a four-village bypass for Farnham, Stratford St Andrew, Little Glemham and Marlesford, known as the SEGWay, and were seeking Government funding to make this a reality. Based on Stage 2 information, we had accepted that EDF Energy would not be the sole contributor to this scheme, as the four-village bypass could not be justified based on the impacts of the Sizewell C development alone. We did however secure an in-principle agreement from EDF Energy that they would contribute to the wider scheme if it went ahead in a timely manner.
- 8.64 At the time of Stage 3 the Councils were awaiting an announcement from Government in response to the County Council's bid for funding to add to the EDF Energy contribution to make SEGWay possible. This announcement had already been postponed since September 2018 and after some further delay the Department for Transport (DfT) finally informed us on 9 May 2019 that they had been unable to prioritise our proposal for a Suffolk Energy Gateway.
- 8.65 It is our understanding that one of the reasons the DfT came to their decision was that the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) was not as great as in other projects. This was in part due to the build of Sizewell C itself not adding to the BCR, and the BCR had to be based on the Councils' existing growth commitments. Another major obstacle was that the DfT was not able to underwrite the local EDF Energy contribution in the event that Sizewell C did not go ahead.

- 8.66 After further discussion with EDF Energy the Councils have regrettably concluded that it is no longer possible to deliver this much needed road in time for the crucial stages of the Sizewell C development. The Councils gave serious consideration to continuing to pursue DfT funding as further opportunities arose, but this is not be a practical proposition due to the pressure of timescales. EDF Energy cannot postpone their development and will therefore want to proceed with its own two village bypass as set out in the Stage 4 consultation. There is no possibility of the County Council seeking to build a further road during the construction period if EDF Energy proceeds with the two village bypass.
- 8.67 EDF Energy may experience delays in the project but any such delays will almost certainly emerge in an incremental manner which would not change the circumstances the project faces today. SEGWay remains in the Highway Authorities' Local Transport Plan and will remain as an objective that the Councils will return to if Sizewell C does not go ahead.

Study on the impact of Hinkley Point C

- 8.68 The Councils, as members of NNLAG, have jointly commissioned (with other local authority members of NNLAG) a study to consider the impacts of the early stages of construction of the Hinkley Point C (HPC) Nuclear Power Station. NNLAG is a Local Government Association Special Interest Group, consisting of fifteen local authorities from across the UK that already host or are likely to host nuclear new build projects.
- 8.69 We jointly commissioned this independent study to better understand and plan for new nuclear build in our areas. The study was undertaken by Oxford Brookes University, with a team led by the well-respected Professor John Glasson, who undertook in the 1990s a still often quoted study on the socio-economic impacts of Sizewell B.
- 8.70 The HPC development has been under construction since 2012 and is therefore the best opportunity to learn about the scale, nature and extent of the likely impacts of new nuclear builds, and to gather both quantitative and qualitative evidence of the impact in practice.
- 8.71 Learning from HPC provides vital information for Sizewell C. This study will help us and other stakeholders to work with the developers to plan for and implement Sizewell C in a way that benefits are maximised and negative impacts are minimised, to the advantage of all parties. Whilst it cannot be assumed that all the learning points from HPC will apply to Sizewell C, it provides a useful starting point that should help the parties to develop effective solutions and maximise the opportunities for host communities, the local economy, the environment and for developers.
- 8.72 The study will be published this autumn and will provide invaluable evidence for the Councils' representation at the DCO examination.

Regulated Asset Base consultation

- 8.73 Government is currently consulting on a new financing model for Sizewell C, called the "Regulated Asset Base" (RAB) model. EDF Energy is a supporter of this approach to allow Sizewell C to secure the required finances.
- 8.74 The consultation describes the model as follows:

"A RAB model is a type of economic regulation typically used in the UK for monopoly infrastructure assets such as water, gas and electricity networks. The company receives a licence from an economic regulator, which grants it the right to charge a regulated price to

users in exchange for provision of the infrastructure in question. The charge is set by an independent regulator who holds the company to account to ensure any expenditure is in the interest of users. In the case of a nuclear RAB, suppliers would be charged as users of the electricity system and would be able to pass these costs onto their consumers who also use the electricity system. In 2016 the model was applied successfully for the first time to a single asset construction project – the £4.2bn Thames Tideway Tunnel (TTT) sewerage project. Much of the c.£1bn of private sector equity finance that was raised to deliver the project came from UK pension funds, representing a quarter of the UK’s largest 25 pension funds.”

- 8.75 The proposal is that, as the consultation describes it, “allowed Revenue” would be charged to consumers during both the construction and operational periods. The consultation recognises that: *“A potential challenge to this approach is that it would expose consumers to the risk that they provide funding to a project which is never completed.”*
- 8.76 To overcome this, it is proposed that the regulator (unspecified in the consultation but it would be sensible to assume this will be the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem)) would grant a nuclear RAB licence and Government Support Package only to projects where the “risk of non-completion was highly remote” following “robust due diligence”. Such due diligence would take the form of an assessment process which it is suggested would need to be coherent and consistent but would remain separate from the other consenting processes such as granting of a DCO and Nuclear Site Licence, (but the consultation notes that granting of a RAB licence, full or conditional, would be informed by granting of other consents or progress towards them).
- 8.77 Central to the assessment process is value for money; the consultation proposes that value for money would be identified as:
- a) **the cost of the project**, having regard to safety and environment protection and risk transfer to suppliers (and, therefore, their consumers) and to taxpayers;
 - b) **overall cost of the electricity system** to consumers over time under different scenarios (including with and without the plant);
 - c) **wider benefits, specific to the project**, which would influence a decision as to whether, on balance, proceeding was in the interests of consumers and taxpayers.
- 8.78 The Councils recognise that the proposed scheme increases the likelihood of further nuclear power stations to be built by releasing finance, with all the contingent energy, climate change and socio-economic benefits associated with that. However, the approach seems likely to have an impact on the DCO planning process and has the potential risk to reduce required mitigation and compensation measures for host communities if it is not appropriately designed.
- 8.79 With regard to the DCO process, the consultation is not clear at what point the RAB licencing process would take place in relation to the granting of DCO consent. A post DCO consent licencing process could undermine or attempt to reopen decisions made by a Secretary of State on the advice of the Planning Inspectorate in the absence of safeguards. It is also notable that measures and costs required to ensure planning consent is secured are not included in the consultation document as cost for which to have regard in the assessment of value for money.

- 8.80 It is important that any “value for money” assessments by Ofgem would fully take into account the need for mitigation and compensation measures, as found necessary by the Planning Inspectorate. We consider it important that the RAB model make it clear and explicit that Nuclear New Build project costs must include all costs of delivering the project, and specifically including those of necessary design quality, mitigation and compensatory measures as are been found to be necessary by the Planning Inspectorate and Secretary of State.
- 8.81 Cabinet is advised that officers of the Councils will respond to the consultation, requesting clarification on the following issues to ensure that there is not the potential that, as a result of the RAB model, DCO conclusions on required mitigation and compensation or community benefit potential are not under minded.
- 8.82 With regard to host communities and required mitigation and compensation of impacts and community benefit, it is not clear whether section 106 provisions could be re-evaluated and potentially removed as part of the assessment of value for money. BEIS should be clear in the final RAB model that Section 106 provisions agreed by the Planning Inspectorate as part of the DCO process need to be upheld, and Ofgem being required to ensure the promotor delivers the DCO outcomes and rulings.
- 8.83 Likewise, it is important that the assessment of value for money by Ofgem will not affect any community impact mitigation funding scheme, secured by local authorities in part to acknowledge residual impacts resulting from such a development, such a fund would be in addition to S106 agreements that would seek to directly mitigate effects or impacts of a scheme.

Next Steps

- 8.84 It has been only been six months since the Stage 3 consultation. It is clear that many issues raised in our Stage 3 response have still not been addressed through the Stage 4 consultation. This has frustrated many communities and indeed the Councils who are keen to resolve as many issues as possible with EDF Energy in advance of the submission of the DCO, in order to minimise the impact of Sizewell C.
- 8.85 The recommended text in the Appendix clearly sets out the response to the new Stage 4 proposals, as well as emphasising that the Stage 3 response by the Councils is still valid in full. The Councils will seek to work constructively with EDF Energy and other partners to resolve the long list of issues raised in our Stage 3 response as well as the new issues raised in this report, looking to influence the outcome in a way that is beneficial to the people of Suffolk. As a consultee we are not the decision maker, but we will work with all parties to do all that we can to maximise the benefits for the area and influence positive outcomes.
- 8.86 Against this background it should also be understood that, whilst there is no certainty on timescales for this development, the Councils have to be prepared for the process to move forward quickly. It has already been stated that EDF Energy may submit their DCO application in early 2020. HPC is under construction and it has been stated that there are economy of scale savings to be derived from the timely phasing of the developments at Hinkley and Sizewell.

- 8.87 The Councils will have a challenging task ahead in preparing for the DCO submission and the subsequent time pressured examination process and Cabinets will have a role to play in this process. The roles and responsibilities will be detailed in a paper to Cabinet at a later date.
- 8.88 It is therefore recommended that the Cabinets endorse the need for significant engagement with the Councils through 2019 and into 2020, working closely with other statutory and non-statutory bodies, as required, to develop an evidence base on the impacts of all aspects of the development and insist on the implementation of the avoid/mitigate/compensate hierarchy.

9 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 9.1 Cabinet may wish to consider a different stance on some of the issues raised in the draft response to EDF Energy, and/or propose different or additional wider engagement activities with Government and other key stakeholders to further enhance the outcomes of the proposed development for Suffolk.

10 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 10.1 These recommendations are based on continued intense work led by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets and Cabinet Lead for Sizewell C for Suffolk County Council and the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development for East Suffolk Council in the lead up to and during the Stage 4 public consultation. It presents the Councils' proposed way forward based on the information supplied by EDF Energy through their public consultation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That East Suffolk Council responds to the EDF Energy Stage 4 consultation, and that it continues engagement with Government and key partners as set out below. This set of recommendations is aligned to a report being taken to Suffolk County Council's Cabinet on 24 September 2019.
2. That following agreement by the Cabinet of East Suffolk Council (and by Suffolk County Council on 24 September 2019), the response set out in detail in the Appendix and summarised below will be submitted jointly.
3. That EDF Energy is informed that, in line with the position agreed at the Cabinet Meeting on the 11 March 2019, the Stage 3 representation submitted by Suffolk County Council and (then) Suffolk Coastal District Council, and the response submitted by Waveney District Council remains valid with additional comments raised in the response in the Appendix.
4. That this Council welcome EDF Energy carrying out a Stage 4 public consultation and the opportunity to comment on revised / updated aspects of its proposals. However, it is disappointed that EDF Energy has not taken this opportunity to respond to key elements of concern raised in our Stage 3 response as detailed in paragraph 8.59.
5. Based on the new information put forward in the Stage 4 Consultation, this Council wishes EDF Energy to particularly address the following points:
 - a) As highlighted in the joint Stage 3 response, this Council expects EDF Energy to use a deliverable sustainable transport strategy to transport materials to/from the site. Unless there is strong appropriate evidence and justification, deviation away from a sustainable transport strategy should be considered to be unacceptable and this Council continues to

expect maximising the use of marine- and rail- based transport to transport materials to / from the site. This Council is disappointed that Stage 4 suggests that the lack of progress on the rail-led strategy is now jeopardising delivery of this option.

- b) Based on the above, this Council expects EDF Energy and other stakeholders including Network Rail to prioritise pursuing the rail-led strategy and confirms that we will support EDF Energy where required in pursuing a rail-led strategy above alternative road-led options. This Council expects EDF Energy to provide proportional mitigation to address its impacts at locations where their traffic is exacerbating a capacity or road safety concern, most prominently at the A12 in Woodbridge, but also other locations to the North of Woodbridge.
 - c) This Council expresses its continued opposition to four new tall pylons to the development site, which would have considerable detrimental impact on the AONB, and the options presented at Stage 4 do not appear to significantly reduce this impact;
 - d) This Council is pleased to see revisions to the layout of the Land east of Eastlands Industrial Estate (LEEIE) but expresses concern about the continued lack of detail in particular in relation to surface water drainage solutions for the site.
 - e) This Council welcomes the additional ecological mitigation and compensation areas, for Fen Meadow and Marsh Harriers, but is concerned that the feasibility of these sites cannot be evidenced and overall ecological mitigation and compensation for the whole Sizewell C DCO remains insufficient.
 - f) This Council welcomes the identification of flood compensation areas but will rely on the Environment Agency to provide expert advice as to their suitability, size and locations. Further detail is required for this Council to comment on the environmental impacts of these options.
 - g) At Stage 3, this Council was content with EDF Energy's explanation for their selection of the route of the Sizewell C Link Road. We did not consider there was any value in removing the Link Road post-construction, we recognise the legacy benefit of a Sizewell Link Road in providing a direct HGV link to the existing Sizewell A and B sites as well as the proposed Sizewell C station.
 - h) This Council welcomes the commitments made for project and economic benefits of the programme including the Community Fund, but requires further work related to the increase workforce number of 8,500 and its impact and required mitigation on local housing and tourism accommodation, workforce displacement, health and other socio-economic issues.
6. That the Head of Planning & Coastal Management in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development be authorised to make any amendments to the draft response as agreed with the appropriate representatives of this Council.
7. That this Council engages with EDF Energy and Network Rail, and where appropriate the Department for Transport, to identify and remove barriers to delivery of the improvements to the East Suffolk Line and hence timely implementation of the rail-led strategy, whether this is through the DCO process or Transport Works Act Order.
8. That Cabinet notes the continued work with Government, namely Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and BEIS with regards to cumulative impacts in East Suffolk of the numerous energy related projects existing and forthcoming.

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APPENDICES (List the title of each separate Appendix below)	
Appendix A	Draft joint response to EDF Energy's Stage 4 Public Consultation from Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council.

BACKGROUND PAPERS (List below those documents for which the report author has materially relied upon to produce the report and which are available for the public to view. This is not necessary for confidential/exempt reports so, for these reports, this box can be deleted altogether).

For CABINET, CABINET MEMBER, CABINET SUB-COMMITTEES OR A JOINT COMMITTEE COMPRISED OF CABINET MEMBERS EXERCISING EXECUTIVE POWERS only – The following wording must be included. For any non-Cabinet reports, delete the wording (except where the report will progress onto the Cabinet).

Please note that copies of background papers have not been published on the Council's website www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk but copies of the background papers listed below are available for public inspection free of charge by contacting the relevant Council Department.

Date	Type	Available From
July 2019	EDF Energy Stage 4 documents	https://www.edfenergy.com/energy/nuclear-new-build-projects/sizewell-c/proposals/stage-4#documents
March 2019	Joint response to Stage 3 Public Consultation	http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/sizewell-nuclear-power-station/stage-three-consultation/
March 2019	Waveney District Council response to Stage 3 Public Consultation	http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/sizewell-nuclear-power-station/stage-three-consultation/