

Leiston-cum-Sizevell Town Council



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Scottish Power Renewables EA2 and EA1N
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Freepost
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Our Ref: 251018
Your Ref: Stage 3.5
consultation

7 November 2018

Dear Sir/Madam

EA2 and EA1N Windfarms Statutory Stage 2.5 Consultation (Phase 3.5) – introduction of Broom Covert to the potential sites for the onshore substations

The new proposals for Broom Covert put into the public domain for consultation from 29 September were not expected and needed more time than 29 October for residents and the community to respond. The extension to 12 November was appreciated and Leiston Town Council have now been able to consult their residents and form an opinion with the limited outline details you have provided.

The Town Council continues to believe that the construction of such visually intrusive complexes in or adjacent to an AONB is wrong and should be avoided. It behoves the principal authorities to uphold these site designations and fully support their function of protecting the UK's natural heritage as detailed in statute. Such large scale industrial developments will always be wholly uncharacteristic to this area and will affect tourism and local amenity on a large scale. Any further expansion of the energy industry outside of the current EDF, Magnox and onshore wind farm complex would irrevocably tip the balance and harm tourism. It would severely affect our community's quality of life and leave a visual blight on the landscape. Just as it is unacceptable to place these complexes within the close confines of rural villages like Friston, Sizewell, in the form of Broom Covert, should engage equal protection and consideration. In the initial consultation we deemed that any of the sites to the west of Leiston in the onshore study area would extend and introduce the industrial development area right out into the countryside in a random fashion blighting a much larger area than was initially considered (in the AONB). However, the extension of the Sizewell "industrial" area out onto Broom Covert (or other areas of the AONB) would be much worse. It remains our view that this is the wrong landfall and other options should be urgently pursued elsewhere, in areas better able to absorb industrialisation than the Sandlings and AONB. In short, neither proposed options are considered suitable in any form.

The Town Council advocated the inclusion of land on the north of the Sizewell Gap Road be included in your assessment at the last stage. This was before it was really grasped just how big the EA2 and EA1N complex would be and there was a thought that it could be absorbed within a much tighter area around the Gabbard/Galloper complex. It has become clear now however, with the plans and montages presented at this stage, that this option is not workable and that the topographical disguise available on the immediate site could not accommodate this project after all. It is therefore our view that the siting of

these projects on Broom Covert should now be completely discounted. They are too high on the rising ground and the lighting would also be too intrusive. The area in your plans has had many years hard work invested in it to create various habitats for wildlife and could not be meaningfully replaced elsewhere for the proposed habitat creation or reptile receptor area that EDF might require in the near future.

Regarding EDF, it is still incredibly frustrating and baffling that the bigger picture cannot be strategically assessed to see just how unsustainable all the proposed energy generation and transmission projects will be in such a small area. National Grid appears to have no forward-looking policy and just allocates connections as the projects appear. This parish (if all the proposals go ahead) will be responsible for a quarter of the country's electricity supply by the 2030s. In addition to Sizewell C, the cumulative impact of huge pieces of highly visible windfarm related infrastructure, with no additional local jobs once built, would clearly be visible on our flat landscape and be unacceptable. Scottish Power Renewables are also consulting on placing their substation at the end of a corridor in Friston, where 5 miles of countryside will needlessly have to be dug up for cables or in the AONB itself where multiple huge buildings, completely out of context and highly incongruous to the landscape would be the harbingers of further projects in the future. Every effort should be made at the highest levels to move some of the proposed connections elsewhere to other energy hubs but in the immediate future it must be recognised that the choice of location by SPR for these substations are both completely unacceptable and must be rethought.

Finally, without any detail on the transport support required for these projects, it is abundantly obvious that the proposed transport routes for either option are clearly inadequate. The landfall at Thorpeness, which would be the first main site, has no access other than ripping up the countryside and this (like the cable route) cannot be re-instated on the sandy soil inherent in this area in any timescale that would not leave the area scarred, damaged and spoilt for residents and tourists for many years. The public footpaths across the Aldringham Walks and the scenery enjoyed from them, whichever site is considered, would be totally spoilt and desecrated.

Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council cannot support or condone any of the proposals put forward to date and, again, ask SPR to reconsider using this connection offer as a matter of urgency.

Yours faithfully

John Rayner
Town Clerk

Copy to:

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