

Sizewell C Stage 2 Consultation Proposals - 20 December 2016

**At an Extraordinary meeting of the LEISTON-cum-SIZEWELL TOWN COUNCIL
held in the COMMUNITY CENTRE, King Georges Avenue, Leiston, on
TUESDAY 20 DECEMBER 2016 at 7.00pm**

PRESENT

**Councillor Mrs L Hill (in the Chair)
Councillor D Bailey
Councillor D Boast
Councillor Mrs S Betson
Councillor T Cooper (until 8.00pm)
Councillor Mrs S Geater
Councillor C Ginger
Councillor P Harle
Councillor T E Hodgson
Councillor W M Howard
Councillor J Last
Councillor Mrs S Levermore
Councillor D Morsley
Councillor M Taylor**

**Also in attendance (and part of the meeting)
Rachel Hogger (Planning Aid England)
John Romanski (Planning Aid England)**

159. Minutes

It was proposed by Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr Last and agreed that the minutes for the meeting of 13 December 2016 be signed as a true record.

160. Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Nichols.

161. Chairman's Communications

Since the last meeting, the Chairman had had the pleasure of attending a carol concert at Leiston Primary School.

162. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Howard on TASC.

163. Discussion

Cllr Howard sought clarification about the proposals from SZB to move some its facilities to other parts of its site to accommodate the SZC project. Mr

Romanski confirmed that, although mention was made in the SZC Stage 2 consultation document that this would happen, it would be for the owners of SZB (Nuclear Generation Limited) to follow the normal planning process to achieve this and that it would not be considered as part of the DCO for SZC. He also pointed out that this would give the Town Council better access to interact and comment on the proposals as SCDC would be determining the application through the usual planning process.

Cllr Taylor raised the concerns over the land take currently being proposed against the map in EN-6 which contained a much smaller area on a map in the Annex to accommodate the project. Mr Romanski explained that it was up to EDF to show that the benefit of their proposals outweighed the impacts on the environment and other indicators in EN-6. PINS also commented that the maps in EN-6 did not show ancillary operations for the construction phase like accommodation, laydown and park and rides etc. Some members were concerned too at what they had heard at the JLAG event and some issues are raised below.

Mr Romanski gave some pointers to help members.

In view of the generic comments on lack of information and detail in the Stage 2 documents (throughout the meeting) he advised summarising all the information that members wanted to see at the next stage of the consultation. He advised including in the response members concerns about the size of the site and the fact that they wished ONR to comment on its suitability for purpose.

Both Mr Romanski and Ms Rachel Hogger stressed the value of including reference to the Neighbourhood Plan as these are becoming increasingly important in Planning processes and the Leiston Plan particularly demonstrates the extent of the work done on the town's future.

He advised laying out the response such that on subjects where an option was detailed then the "why" it was chosen should be included and the key mitigation measures that made it acceptable be put in and perhaps summarised at the end.

He advised including comment on items that were supported (rather than be silent – i.e. on drug and alcohol testing for example) as they may possibly be removed or changed at the next stage if not.

Accommodation

Cllr Ginger wondered whether the accommodation could be further into the site on land that EDF already owned as it currently took up too much of the AONB and it used greenfield sites he did not think the project required. Members were also concerned at the impact on Leiston Abbey. Some members asked that the use of Sizewell A site be investigated for accommodation with an associated travel plan. Some members still thought the accommodation should be in larger centres (Ipswich, Lowestoft etc.) although the traffic issues this would raise would need addressing.

Overall members agreed that option 2(ii) was the most acceptable of those offered as it left the Eastbridge Road intact and would provide legacy sports facilities in Leiston. These sports facilities would have to be accessible to all and protocols worked out for joint use. This would benefit the workforce as the facilities could be much better than any temporary ones and would be

extremely beneficial to Leiston. A 50m swimming pool was the main request here as the closest one for our embryo Olympic swimmers is currently Norwich. The facilities at the leisure centre in Red House Lane could be upgraded around that and an accommodation done with the Academy to use their land for a floodlit, all weather, all-purpose sports pitch and running track too. A shuttle bus would service the centre from the campus. Another option suggested was for the Sizewell Sports and Social Club to be used by the campus for recreation with facilities there being upgraded for the club to run in the future.

The proposed caravan park was a concern for Cllr Bailey as it did not say how many units would be there although it was noted that it would be a managed site and on a permanent basis throughout the construction. Members were concerned that this needed careful managing. They also insisted that Kemp's Hill (Valley Road) be widened and a footpath cycle track be incorporated alongside it down from the caravan park to the railway bridge as this would be the main route into town for the park's residents. This would be for their safety and also as a legacy to allow HGV's to access the Water Treatment Plant without getting stuck at Archway Cottages in the future. CCTV would also be required along the route for workers' safety.

Cllr Ginger wanted EDF to start to dismantle the accommodation at the peak of construction as the number of workers began to diminish and blocks became redundant. There was no-one wishing to retain any for all the future outages.

Accommodation in the town was a big concern to. The demand for accommodation, some temporary and some more permanent, especially from better off workers, would distort the housing market in Leiston which, currently, is the only affordable area in East Suffolk. This would have a disproportionate effect on our young residents trying to get onto the housing ladder or rent at an affordable cost related to the low wages in the area. Members asked that EDF investigate a scheme to provide financial support to young local families affected by this to avoid them being priced out of the market.

Support for the Town Centre regeneration (identified in the Neighbourhood Plan) would be further way of ameliorating this as the accommodation being proposed there would be purely for local people.

Screening of the accommodation from the B1122 entrance area – and of all the works – but especially the accommodation must be sympathetic, should use mature trees and also use bunds etc. to mitigate the unsightly blight on the Suffolk landscape.

Transport

Rail was discussed. There needed to be a loop from Saxmundham to Wickham Market to ensure the East Suffolk Line (now finally on an hourly service) was not disrupted in any way by freight (like the Felixstowe line). This would be unacceptable to all commuters and travellers who rely on this line. Cllr Howard said that freight to site only made sense from the North as there is space in the time table and sidings still in place at Lowestoft. A thorough assessment of the impact of long, slow moving, diesel goods trains on the wider East Suffolk and Liverpool Street line is essential. Including impact on noise, vibration, air quality, disruption to other train and road users, use during anti-social hours and disturbance to householders.

The Green Route is the only acceptable route and mitigation would have to be made for the first two years for freight coming through Leiston until it was in use. It would be totally unacceptable to have manned crossings anywhere on the route so automatic barriers would have to be installed, before day one, at King George Avenue and Station Road. When the Green Route is constructed, again, there needs to be automatic barriers on Buckleswood Road and Abbey Road. It is not acceptable to block Buckleswood Road or any other road or divert other public rights of way for purposes of construction. (A bridge must be as costly as an automated crossing surely). The Green Route should be used to take traffic off Lovers lane and must be the preferred route for all the construction companies to avoid loading and unloading twice. Cllr Last enquired whether Mr McGarry had come back with the answer to his question regarding the length of time it was envisaged that a freight train would take to cross the road at the crossings as without timings it has to be assumed this will cause major congestion. The Clerk had not heard from EDF on this. An assessment of queuing time and impact on residents, workers at SZB and SZA and visitors, caused by the site access and train access at the level crossing is essential. This also affects emergency services.

Road. The first two years were of concern. The traffic would be going through SZB and therefore through the town (as raised by Cllr last). There were no figures for KGA in the documentation and this must be presented and mitigated for in the next consultation. It was agreed to ask EDF for funding to do a study on all aspects of traffic movement around and through Leiston with a view to getting recommendations on control measures, signage and enforcement to ensure the correct routes are used and that the town centre does not suffer. There was support (agreed by vote {7 to 4}) for a link road from the A12 to the site to relieve the pressure on the A12 and the B1122. This could follow the line of the Green Rail Route at the east end and would provide a much-needed emergency route as well. The traffic study could advise on this but this would need to be built early along with the Green Route. The Household Recycling and Waste site must be upgraded with a perimeter road around it for queueing traffic as the current operations, where traffic queues on Lovers Lane would be a disaster. EDF owns the land around the site and could easily do the construction with SCC re-licencing the site and working with EDF to make other improvements. This is an amenity and facility that is essential to Leiston and much of the surrounding area.

Sea. There was much discussion on this. Beach access for the public has to be maintained. This is part of the National Coastal path as well as being an essential route for access to some of the most beautiful parts of the coastline in East Suffolk. It is hoped that the various statutory consultees are doing the work on coastal process and the effects each of the options would have. Our coast cannot be allowed to be damaged by this project, not even a little. The wider jetty therefore looks the most likely to do this although the smaller one would have similar impact one presumes. The biggest impact on the amenity of residents using the coastline would be the Beach Landing Facility and, although it is intended to use it in the initial stages it must not be considered a viable option for the construction phase. Any bad weather or other problems would necessitate emergency rail freight and this would not be easy to schedule.

Construction. Members were worried that the SZB flood risk would be increased by SZC being adjacent on a much higher platform. The whole issue of Leiston River and the sluice at minsmere, and minsmere itself must be thoroughly addressed as the local knowledge of this area cannot see how this delicate landscape cannot be affected by this project. The flood risk and climate change concerns need to be thoroughly documented and consented to by our local statutory agencies. The "Borrow Pits" are a big concern, it is difficult to imagine how such a vast movement of material will affect the surrounding water table and flood risk. It is also difficult to understand what material will be taken out, where it will go and how it will be incorporated into the landscape on completion. Again, the statutory bodies must provide a clear consensus to residents on the acceptability of this. The benefits must outweigh the impact. Regarding the options for the piles then 3 and 4 would mean not crossing the Eastbridge Road but they are closer to the levels and potential runoff etc. The whole project will be unavoidably ugly, extremely ugly for residents used to living in an AONB. The finished project will be unsightly (based on experience from other recent EPR projects) and this project, in essence, should just not be allowed to proceed at this site without substantial improvement to the fundamental design and material finishes.

Environment. Environmental impact is unimaginable and everywhere you look. Coastal process, noise, air pollution/quality, flood risk, groundwater extraction and of course, disruption and loss of amenity for all the local residents (to name a few).

The EIA will be very comprehensive, large and difficult to understand in all likelihood and the fear is that the Non-technical summary will be too simple. EDF are requested to produce something in the middle which details how they will be mitigating and monitoring all the expected threats to the environment. This could be air quality monitors at junctions and rail crossings which send an alarm at certain levels for instance automatically triggering pre-determined actions designed to ameliorate the threat.

The aftermath of the project is difficult to imagine at this stage but the landscape, as a minimum, must be restored to at least as good as British Energy achieved around SZB and there has to be good public access wherever possible during construction (i.e. Kenton Hills to the shoreline) and throughout the site via permissive paths on completion.

Economy. Members wanted there to be a lot of emphasis in the response for EDF to support ancillary skills and vocational training at a new local training centre in Leiston (another legacy project). Cllr Last requested information at the earliest opportunity on how EDF were going to manage the retention issues in the local tourism and hospitality trades and other local economy jobs in a low paid area.

Community. There were many ways EDF could help the community. The Clerk had tried to lay them out in the draft response. The 50m pool was a big ask but was a feasible and would be hugely impressive legacy for EDF to consider. There could also be a programme, funded by EDF, to install solar panels or other ground-breaking renewable energy sources onto community buildings in the parish. (The churches, halls and schools).

The main addition members asked for, bearing in mind the Suffolk Constabulary's current financial problems, would be to fund two PCSO's in

Leiston to cover the 15 years of construction. This would be a valuable resource for the Town Council and EDF to address all the issues, including parking, that are bound to be present in various forms. They could advise both parties on issues that come to their attention where action can be taken to mitigate or stop any escalation.

The Clerk is enquiring whether the Surgery is responding to the consultation and will help them if they need advice.

Members again asked for CCTV in key areas of the town to help protect workers and residents alike over the coming years.

Comment was asked for from EDF on how, with the increased traffic, heavy industry and other associated issues they would anticipate supporting the On-call (retained) fire brigade in Leiston (as raised by Cllr Last). Employers cannot be expected to lose their workforce even half as many times more than they currently do. The other emergency services will respond one supposes but the response times will be in danger of increasing with the traffic on the local roads so Leiston residents will suffer there too.

Emergency Plan. This needs to be very clear in how each phase is catered for – and should be made very public so everyone knows.

Darsham Park and Ride. There was concern at the congestion that would occur on the A12 at the entrance and exit to this site. It was also noted that Park and Rides would have to be in place on day one.

Mapping. This was one of the main problems members encountered with the consultation. It was appreciated that the consultation hoped to be simple and give options for future work but it was felt that a little more accuracy and detail in the mapping would have helped members inform themselves.

164. Draft response. Members noted the next meeting was on 10 January at the Longshop starting at 7pm. Rachel and John offered to look over the draft response and advise on its structure where necessary. They were also around the Leiston area on 10 Jan and would come to the next meeting. The clerk would attempt to get something out for discussion in good time for that meeting.

165. Questions to the Chairman

Cllr Bailey asked if the Suffolk Constabulary had contacted us regards PCSO's now that the financial settlement of 14th December was known. The Clerk informed him that they had not.

The meeting finished at 9.40pm.

Chair

Dated