

## **PLA(19)140**

### **Sizewell Stage 4 Final Response from MPC**

Melton Parish Council (“MPC”) submitted a comprehensive paper at Stage 3 and we still believe the points made to be valid and await an appropriate response from EDF to them.

This response focuses on the further information released by EDF at Stage 4 and elsewhere on which MPC has a number of additional points to make.

### **SZC Project overall**

Nothing in the Stage 4 documents released by EDF provides sufficient reassurance that the benefits and mitigations proposed will outweigh the costs and dis-benefits to Suffolk of proceeding with this project. Indeed the proposed integrated transport strategy will, when compared to an appropriate rail-led strategy, in our view, increase the damage to Suffolk’s environment and tourist industry by significantly increasing the traffic using the local roads, adding to the already high levels of congestion in the area and in turn reducing the air quality further. The addition of the pylons will do nothing to mitigate the blight on the landscape which is inevitable with the construction of Sizewell C. This will all be detrimental of Suffolk’s residents and to the draw that is the beauty of Suffolk for tourists.

### **Main Development Site Overall**

EDF have now proposed two options for pylons to be erected within the AONB. These are for either 4 pylons with 3 reduced in height by 25% or 5 pylons all reduced in height by 25%. Our view remains that it is unacceptable to erect any pylons here and an alternative must be found as was the case during the construction of Sizewell B.

### **People and Economy**

MPC notes the confirmation of expected employment numbers (7,900 on the main development site and 600 on associated development sites) as well as 900 new jobs once the station is operational. MPC welcomes the confirmation of a minimum of 1,000 apprenticeships and notes EDF is now working to involve Suffolk colleges in these schemes. However the inadequacy of the proposed compensation funds for Community, Property and Tourism referred to in detail in our Stage 3 submission has not been addressed.

### **Transport of Materials**

MPC maintains that if a sea-led strategy cannot be implemented, a rail-led strategy including appropriate improvements to lines and infrastructure should be used. Improvements to the road infrastructure beyond those proposed by EDF are needed also, as detailed in our Stage 3 submission. These issues have not been addressed by EDF.

As well as maintaining the previous road-led and rail-led options unchanged, EDF have now put forward a new “integrated” option, a hybrid between the rail-led and road-led options. The integrated option aims to put less traffic on the rail lines than the rail-led option and as a result suggests that there is no need for any rail improvements other than on the branch line between Saxmundham and Leiston.

The integrated option would increase HGV movements by 43% compared with the rail-led option. This means that on the busiest days there would be 1,000 HGV movements on Suffolk’s roads and 650 HGV movements on typical days. MPC’s view remains that this level of traffic increase on the roads is unacceptable particularly as EDF has not changed its stance on road mitigation schemes to any significant extent.

The 'integrated' solution is also a retrograde step in our view. In paragraphs 33 – 39 of our earlier submission, we highlighted the issues with freight trains through Melton. These still stand except that the impact on Melton will now be significantly increased if the integrated solution is adopted without any improvements being made.

By not making any improvements to the rail line and thereby being forced to slow the speed of the freight trains from 40 miles per hour to 20 miles per hour, it is inevitable that level crossings will be closed for longer leading to standing traffic, increased air pollution and further congestion on our already heavily congested roads through the villages. In particular, the level crossing at Melton Station, which is a major road used by traffic to and from the peninsular, as well as by local residents, will be closed for twice as long as originally envisaged whilst the freight trains pass. Given that the proposal is to run a number of trains at night between the hours of midnight and 6am, the noise from the level crossing alarms will also be disruptive to very many local residents. This is wholly unacceptable and was the reason we asked that trains were not allowed to run during these times.

MPC's view remains that, should Sizewell C go ahead, the rail-led option should be pursued, but with considerably more investment in improvement of the rail infrastructure than proposed by EDF.

### **Southern Park and Ride**

If the Wickham Market Park & Ride option were to prove unsuitable after all, necessitating a change of plan, please note that we would very strongly object to the pursuit of the former Woodbridge/Melton reserve option in its place. This has been our consistent view through all stages of the consultation process. Our objection is given even greater force by the new housing developments adjacent to the Woods Lane roundabout on the A12, together with other housing developments along Woods Lane and elsewhere in Melton and the Deben Peninsula. The result has been a recent extraordinary increase in traffic, congestion and pollution at that A12 junction and along the A1152, from Woods Lane to the middle of Melton village, the Melton level crossing, the Wilford Bridge and the roundabout junction with the B1083 (through which passes traffic from the Deben Peninsula). The impact on adjoining roads has also been severe.

In short, the area adjacent to the Woods lane roundabout is now even more unsuitable for a Southern Park & Ride site than it was at the Stage 2 consultation. We state in the strongest possible terms that this option must remain off the table.

### **Water Supply**

Since the Stage 3 consultation, we have also become aware that there is an ongoing issue with water supply in the Suffolk area. The main concerns expressed are:

- Sizewell C will need 2 million litres of drinking quality water every day to cool the reactors
- Suffolk is the most arid area of the UK and has challenges re water supplies for the farming industry and domestic use.
- Inevitably, when operational, priority would have to be given to keeping the reactors safe
- Therefore in times of stress other users would be cut off unless something drastic is put in place to deal with supply issues in Suffolk
- Suffolk continues to support the national drive for more housing, so this problem is already set to get worse
- No plan has been developed or published so far within the Sizewell consultation or elsewhere to mitigate this risk.

As a result, we are concerned that the proposal to build Sizewell C in our area will have a detrimental effect on existing households and businesses, many of whom use boreholes and wells

from the underground aquifers to supply their homes. Without appropriate mitigation on this point, we cannot see how the development of Sizewell C can be considered appropriate for Suffolk as a whole.

Indeed MPC, whilst wishing to be as constructive in its responses as possible, is now of the view, given the comments expressed above and the apparent lack of willingness on the part of EDF to address important points already made, that the dis-benefits to the local environment far outweigh the opportunities for investment and any legacy benefits accruing from the construction of Sizewell C.

**Melton Parish Council**  
**September 2019**