



## **BRIEFING ON THE PLANNING PROCESS FOR SIZEWELL C: UPDATE – November 2020**

This briefing document on the planning process for Sizewell C was sent to stakeholders on 27 May, with an update following on 25 June ahead of the Pre-Examination / Section 56 Notification Stage. This update aims to provide an explanation on the next steps.

### **THE PROCESS SO FAR...**

The application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to build a new nuclear power station, with two reactors capable of generating enough safe, low-carbon electricity for about six million homes, was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) in May 2020.

The following month, PINS confirmed that we had satisfied our legal responsibility to adequately consult the public in advance of submitting the proposals and formally accepted the DCO application. The Section 56 (s56) Notification Stage then ran between 8 July and 30 September.

### **NEXT STEPS IN 2020**

We have identified opportunities to deliver improvements to the Sizewell C project and to reduce some impacts. These proposals follow on from continued engagement with stakeholders, the public and contractors. In advance of seeking approval from PINS to amend the application, we intend to carry out a consultation on the proposed changes.

These are summarised below:

1. Increase in the frequency of freight train movements to facilitate bulk material imports by rail.
2. Enhancement of the permanent beach landing facility and options for a new temporary beach landing facility to facilitate material imports by sea.
3. Change SSSI crossing design to a single span bridge with embankments.
4. Surface water removed early in the construction process to be discharged to the foreshore via a temporary outfall.
5. Change to the sea defence to make the scheme more efficient and resilient to climate change.
6. Greater flexibility as to where certain Sizewell B facilities are relocated to, potentially avoiding the need for car parking on Pillbox Field.
7. Change to certain parameter heights and activities on the main development site to facilitate the construction process.
8. Change to the location of the Water Resource Storage Area and the addition of flood mitigation measures to lower flood risk.



9. Revisions to tree retention on the main development site.
10. A new bridleway link between Aldhurst Farm and Kenton Hills.
11. Extension of the Order Limits to provide for fen meadow habitat at Pakenham as further mitigation for fen meadow loss.
12. Extension and reduction of the Order Limits for works on the main development site and related sites (fen meadow mitigation sites and marsh harrier improvement sites).
13. Extension of landscaped bund and other minor changes at the Southern park and ride site, including a minor reduction of the Order Limits.
14. Minor reductions to the Order Limits at the Northern park and ride site.
15. Extension of the Order Limits for works on the Two Village Bypass, change to the public right of way around Walk Barn Farm and additional habitat mitigation proposals.
16. Extension to and reduction of the Order Limits for works on the Sizewell Link Road.
17. Minor reductions to the Order Limits for Yoxford Roundabout, the A12/B1119 junction at Saxmundham and the A1094/B1069 south of Knodishall.

#### **CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE DCO APPLICATION**

There will be a 30-day public consultation on these proposed changes to the DCO application, running between Wednesday 18 November and Friday 18 December 2020. The consultation will be operated in strict accordance with COVID-19 pandemic guidelines.

The proposed changes will be available to download online at [www.sizewellc.co.uk](http://www.sizewellc.co.uk) from Wednesday 18 November 2020. Printed copies of the consultation document and USB sticks containing the information will be available. Please contact if you require any and they will be sent to you.

The document is around 200 pages (i.e. not of the scale of the full DCO application).

You can view a virtual exhibition from Wednesday 18 November - visit [www.sizewellc.co.uk](http://www.sizewellc.co.uk).

We will also be producing a newsletter which will include a summary of the proposed changes. This will be delivered to homes and businesses in the area around Sizewell and associated development sites next week. Large print, easy read and audio versions of the newsletter will be available on request.

The Sizewell C Project Team will be available to provide a presentation and answer questions at online Parish Council meetings. Please get in touch if this is of interest.

We have consistently said that we will continue to listen to communities and stakeholders, including after the DCO application was submitted. However, before going any further, we are carrying out this consultation to ask people for their opinions on the proposed changes.



Should you have any further questions, or would like to discuss any aspects of the planning process, please call the Sizewell C Community Freephone line on 0800 197 6102 or email us at [info@sizewellc.co.uk](mailto:info@sizewellc.co.uk).

### **FOLLOWING CONSULTATION**

Once the consultation closes, we will digest the feedback before confirming which changes will be taken forward in an application to PINS for changes to the DCO application. We will submit this early in the new year. It will comprise a consultation report and other supporting information (e.g. Explanatory Report – to pull everything together, Addendum to the Environment Statement, Flood Risk Assessment addendum and other documents).

PINS will then decide whether to accept the changes and if so, they will undertake the Examination.

### **PLANNING AID ENGLAND (PAE)**

PAE has provided a 'neutral facilitator' role to support local Parish and Town Councils affected by Sizewell C proposals during the pre-application stages of consultation. During these times the PAE team – who remain completely independent from the Sizewell C Project – have run various workshops and operated an e-mail service to help Parish and Town Councillors to both understand the proposals and work out how best to present their views and concerns into the planning process.

PAE will also be offering a similar service during this public consultation period, only it will be delivered remotely due to the current circumstances. Their support programme will comprise:

- A downloadable briefing pack, which will be made available via web link on 18 November;
- Four topic-focussed virtual Question and Answer (Q&A) sessions, held during the week of Monday 23rd November, where you will be able to hear from our panel of advisors on the procedural aspects of these changes and ask for information and advice on making your representations to the set of proposed changes;
- Individual video/telephone calls with members of our panel to advise your council on responding regarding specific issues affecting your communities. These will be held between Tuesday 1 – Friday 11 December and will be available by appointment;
- An email advice service operating from the week beginning 30 November until the end of the consultation at 23.59 on 18 December.



## NEXT STEPS IN THE DCO APPLICATION PROCESS

### WHO IS INVOLVED?

**The Applicant/Developer:** Sizewell C Co. has submitted the DCO application to build Sizewell C to the Planning Inspectorate. Sizewell C Co. is the applicant for the DCO and all environmental permit applications. EDF is the current owner of 80% of Sizewell C Co.

**The Planning Inspectorate (PINS):** Responsible for examining the application and making a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy as to whether or not development consent for the Sizewell C Project should be granted.

**Statutory Stakeholders:** Statutory stakeholders are defined in the Planning Act 2008 as having a key role in the consultation and examination of a DCO application. Some have particular responsibilities during the process, such as the local authorities (Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council) who will be asked by PINS if the applicant's pre-application consultation was adequate.

**Interested Parties:** Anyone with an interest in the DCO application for Sizewell C who has registered their interest on the PINS website through a short, written summary of their views. Those registering can then take a full part in the examination itself if they wish. Any party with an interest in the land affected by the application is automatically registered.

**Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS):** After receiving the recommendation from PINS, the Secretary of State has three months to announce the decision.

### WHAT HAPPENS AND WHEN?

There are six stages for the application process:

DCO PLANNING STAGE	COMPLETED
Pre-application	✓
Acceptance	✓
Pre-examination	✓
Consultation on proposed changes to the DCO application	18 November – 18 December 2020
Examination	
Decision	
Post-decision	



### **EXAMINATION (up to six months)**

The Examination period commences after the close of a Preliminary Meeting. The Examining Authority will publish the timetable and arrangements. The Planning Act 2008 requires the examination of the application to be completed within six months. The process is intended to be conducted principally in writing but there will be public meetings and hearings. Registered Interested Parties can send written comments to PINS and can ask to speak at public hearings.

### **RECOMMENDATION (up to six months) and DECISION (up to three months)**

PINS will then prepare a report on the application to the Secretary of State, including a recommendation, within three months of the close of the six-month Examination stage. The Secretary of State for BEIS has a further three months to make the decision on whether to grant or refuse development consent.

### **POST-DECISION (up to six weeks)**

Once the Secretary of State has issued a decision, there is a six-week period in which the decision may be challenged in the High Court. This process of legal challenge is known as Judicial Review.

To get more information on the planning process, including information on how to get involved, go to the PINS website at: [www.infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk](http://www.infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk)