



The Sizewell C Project

6.6 Volume 5 Two Village Bypass Chapter 1 Introduction

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This volume of the **Environmental Statement (ES)** presents details of the proposed two village bypass, referred to hereafter as the ‘proposed development’, and reports on the likely significant environmental effects during construction and operation.

1.1.2 The two village bypass site (hereafter referred to as the ‘site’) is located to the south and south-east of Stratford St Andrew, and to the south-west to south-east of Farnham (see **Figure 1.1**). The site is approximately 54.8 hectares (ha) and comprises of primarily agricultural land (which accounts for approximately 50.4ha of the site) as well as highway land.

1.1.3 The proposed development would comprise a new permanent two-lane single carriageway road that would depart the A12, creating a new route around the south of Farnham and Stratford St Andrew, before re-joining the A12 east of Farnham. A detailed description of the proposed development is provided in **Chapter 2** of this volume of the **ES**.

1.1.4 The proposed development would be used for construction traffic associated with the construction of the Sizewell C Project, as well as for general use by the public. The proposed development would therefore reduce the volume of existing and construction traffic traveling through Farnham and Stratford St Andrew, where there are existing, locally perceived, highway safety issues associated with a narrowing of the road in the centre of Farnham and impacts on the amenity of residents. The existing section of the A12 through the two villages, which would be retained and downgraded.

1.1.5 As the proposed development is permanent, once construction of Sizewell C is completed, it will remain open for general use by the public and would provide legacy benefit to the residents of Farnham and Stratford St Andrew.

1.1.6 This chapter provides details on:

- the structure and scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), provided in **Volume 1** of the **ES**, of the proposed development;
- the planning policy relevant to the proposed development; and
- an overview of the site and surrounding land uses.

1.2 Environmental Impact Assessment and this Environmental Statement

a) Requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment

1.2.2 Schedule 1 to the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (SI 2017/572) (hereafter referred to as the ‘EIA Regulations’) (Ref. 1.1) lists developments for which an EIA is mandatory. Nuclear power stations are listed as Schedule 1 development, and consequently EIA is required for the Sizewell C Project, including the proposed development. Further detail on the requirement for EIA is provided in **Volume 1** of the **ES**.

b) Environmental Impact Assessment scoping

1.2.3 In June 2014, EDF Energy obtained a scoping opinion from the Secretary of State, under Regulation 8 of the 2009 EIA Regulations (Ref. 1.2). In May 2019 EDF Energy submitted a further request to the Planning Inspectorate for a scoping opinion to include the scope of assessments for the revised Sizewell C Project proposals which were not previously scoped for (see **Volume 1, Appendix 6A**). This also included the scope of assessments for the additional environmental effects to be considered under the 2017 EIA Regulations (in particular, climate change, human health and risk of major accidents and disasters). A scoping opinion was issued by the Secretary of State in July 2019 (see **Volume 1, Appendix 6B**).

c) Structure of the Environmental Statement

1.2.4 This volume should be read in conjunction with **Volume 1** of the **ES** which presents an introduction to SZC Co. and the Sizewell C Project; the application for development consent; the EIA process and methodology; the legislative and policy context; the strategic alternatives considered; a description of the other permits and licences required; and a glossary of terms and list of abbreviations.

1.2.5 There are a number of project-wide technical environmental assessments, within which the impacts of the proposed development are considered. These include socio-economics; transport; radiological, conventional waste management; climate change; health and wellbeing; and major accidents and disasters, and are presented in **Volume 2** of the **ES**.

1.2.6 This volume (**Volume 5**) of the **ES** for the proposed two village bypass is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 1:** Introduction (this chapter).

- **Chapter 2:** Description of the two village bypass.
- **Chapter 3:** Alternatives and design evolution.
- **Chapter 4:** Noise and vibration.
- **Chapter 5:** Air quality.
- **Chapter 6:** Landscape and visual.
- **Chapter 7:** Terrestrial ecology and ornithology.
- **Chapter 8:** Amenity and recreation.
- **Chapter 9:** Terrestrial historic environment.
- **Chapter 10:** Soils and agriculture.
- **Chapter 11:** Geology and land quality.
- **Chapter 12:** Groundwater and surface water.

1.2.7 This volume should be read in conjunction with the **Transport Assessment** (Doc Ref. 8.5) which provides further information on the rationale for, and the design of, the proposed development. Information regarding the site alternatives considered for the two village bypass and design evolution, can be found in **Chapter 3** of this volume. In addition, the **Consultation Report** (Doc Ref. 5.1) summarises the responses received from the public and statutory stakeholders SZC Co.'s consultations and explains how the proposed development has evolved in response to the consultations.

1.2.8 In line with the requirements of regulation 14(4) of the EIA Regulations, this **ES** has been prepared by competent experts. A statement of competence outlining the relevant expertise and qualifications of the technical specialists, along with their role in undertaking the EIA has been provided within **Volume 1, Appendix 1B**.

1.2.9 A number of topics have been scoped out from the assessment of the proposed development (as confirmed in the scoping opinion issued by the Secretary of State in July 2019, see **Volume 1, Appendix 6B**). These are identified in **Table 1.1** together with an explanation as to why an assessment is not required.

Table 1.1: Topics scoped out of requiring assessment for the proposed development.

Topic	How the Requirement has been Addressed.
Marine historic environment.	The proposed development does not include any marine infrastructure and there are no pathways which would lead to any likely significant effects on the marine environment.
Coastal geomorphology and hydrodynamics.	
Marine water quality and sediments.	
Marine ecology.	
Marine navigation.	

d) Structure of the environmental topic chapters

1.2.10 The environmental topic chapters (**Chapters 4 to 12**) contained in this volume have been prepared to a standard format broadly following the below structure:

- Introduction.
- Legislation, policy and guidance.
- Methodology.
- Baseline environment.
- Environmental design and mitigation.
- Assessment (for construction and operation).
- Mitigation and monitoring.
- Residual effects.

1.2.11 Appendices are provided for each chapter as required, and contain for example, detailed baseline information, assessments and other technical reports.

1.2.12 Cumulative effects arising from the proposed development in combination with other third-party developments, plans and/or programmes are detailed in **Volume 10** of the **ES**, as well as an assessment of cumulative effects with other parts of the Sizewell C Project (where applicable).

1.2.13 A **Non-Technical Summary** of this **ES** has been prepared and is presented separately from this volume (Doc Ref. 6.1).

1.3 Policy context

1.3.1 The overarching planning context for the Sizewell C Project, including an overview of legislation and national planning, energy and nuclear policies which are material to the proposed development, is presented in **Volume 1, Chapter 3**. This chapter provides an overview of national and local policies which are relevant to the proposed development.

1.3.2 A separate **Planning Statement** (Doc Ref. 8.4) has been prepared and includes consideration of how the Sizewell C Project complies with relevant policies.

1.3.3 Where topic specific policy differs from the generic policy outlined in **Volume 1, Chapter 3**, this is presented within the topic chapters that follow within this volume. This is limited to legislation, policy and guidance which could influence the sensitivity of receptors, and/or could influence the scope and/or methodology of the assessment.

a) International policy

1.3.4 No international policy over and above that described in **Volume 1, Chapter 4** is deemed relevant to the assessment for this site.

b) National and local policy

1.3.5 National infrastructure projects are determined in accordance with the decision-making framework in the Planning Act 2008 (Ref. 1.3), and relevant national policy statements for major infrastructure, as well as any other matters that are relevant (which may include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ref. 1.4), or local policy.

1.3.6 The NPPF and local planning policy do not contain specific policies for nationally significant infrastructure projects, however, the decision maker may determine that one, or both are important and relevant to the proposed development and may be a material consideration in making decisions on planning applications.

i. National Policy Statements

1.3.7 The primary policy basis for determining any application for development consent for a nuclear power station is the policy framework set out in the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (NPS EN-1) (Ref. 1.5) and National Policy Statement for Nuclear Power Generation (NPS EN-6) (Ref. 1.6).

1.3.8 In December 2017, the Government began the process of consulting on the preparation of a new National Policy Statement (NPS) for nuclear power

stations. In due course, the sites listed in NPS EN–6 (including Sizewell) will be covered by the policy in the new NPS. In the meantime, the Government's consultation on the new NPS for nuclear power stations makes clear that the Government will continue to consider those sites to be appropriate and that they will retain strong Government support pending the designation of the new NPS.

1.3.9 Paragraph 5.13.6 of NPS EN-1 states that a new energy NSIP may give rise to substantial impacts on the surrounding transport infrastructure and the decision maker should therefore ensure that the applicant has sought to mitigate these impacts, including during the construction phase of the development. Where the proposed mitigation measures are insufficient to reduce the impact on the transport infrastructure to acceptable levels, the decision maker should consider requirements to mitigate adverse impacts on transport networks arising from the development.

1.3.10 Paragraph 5.13.7 of NPS EN-1 states that:

“Provided that the applicant is willing to enter into planning obligations or requirements can be imposed to mitigate transport impacts identified in the NATA/WebTAG transport assessment, with attribution of costs calculated in accordance with the Department for Transport’s guidance, then development consent should not be withheld, and appropriately limited weight should be applied to residual effects on the surrounding transport infrastructure.”

1.3.11 Paragraph 5.13.8 of NPS EN-1 requires that demand management measures must be considered before considering new inland transport infrastructure to deal with remaining transport impacts. Paragraph 5.13.9 goes on to say that the decision maker should have regard to the cost-effectiveness of demand management measures compared to new transport infrastructure, as well as the aim to secure more sustainable patterns of transport development when considering mitigation measures.

1.3.12 Paragraph 5.13.11 of NPS EN-1 states that the decision maker may attach requirements to a consent where there is likely to be substantial heavy goods vehicle (HGV) traffic to ‘control numbers of HGV movements to and from the site in a specified period during its construction and possibly on the routing of such movements’.

ii. National Planning Policy Framework

1.3.13 The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policy at the national level. As set out in paragraph 5 of the NPPF, it does not contain specific policies for nationally significant infrastructure projects.

1.3.14 The NPPF states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of development proposals so that, amongst other things, the potential impact of development on transport networks can be addressed and the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account. The proposed development is one way in which the potential impact of the Sizewell C Project on transport networks can be addressed. **Volume 2, Chapter 10** provides an assessment of potential transport impacts associated with the Sizewell C Project.

iii. [Local policy](#)

1.3.15 The local development plan recognises that the transport effects of a new nuclear power station would be assessed in line with policies set out in the NPS EN-1 and NPS EN-6 (paragraph 3.116, Core strategy and Development Management Policies, 2013 (Ref. 1.7)). **Volume 2, Chapter 10** provides an assessment of potential transport impacts associated with the Sizewell C Project.

1.3.16 Policy SCLP3.4 of the emerging Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (Final draft, 2019 (Ref. 1.8)), which is intended to be adopted by East Suffolk Council, concerns proposals for major energy infrastructure projects. It states that such proposals will require that *“Appropriate road and highway measures are introduced (including diversion routes) for construction, operational and commercial traffic to reduce the pressure on the local communities”*.

1.3.17 The site is not allocated for a specific use within the adopted Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (contained within Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy and Development Management Policies) (Ref 1.7) or proposed to be within the emerging Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (Ref. 1.8). The emerging Suffolk Coastal Local Plan however states at paragraph 3.15 that the Council will take a positive approach to land allocations which are required to meet the demands of Sizewell C nuclear power station, and that are well related to the A12 and A14 corridors. The emerging Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (Ref 1.8) recognises that these land requirements may be in excess of that outlined in the Employment Land Needs Assessment, and notes that any additional allocations will need to be justified by specific evidence relating to the demand.

1.4 [The site and surroundings](#)

1.4.1 **Figures 1.2 and 1.3** show the site and surrounding environment.

- 1.4.2 The site is approximately 2.4 kilometres (km) in length. At its western end, the site includes a section of the A12 to the south-west of Stratford St Andrew (Ordnance Survey grid reference: TM353597) and at the eastern side, includes the junction of the A12 with A12/A1094 Friday Street (Ordnance Survey grid reference: TM371604). Stratford St Andrew and Farnham are located to the north and west of the site, and there are a number of dispersed farmsteads along the site, including Friday Street Farm; Mollett's Farm; Farnham Hall, Pond Barn Cottages and Farnham Hall Farmhouse to the south of Farnham.
- 1.4.3 The existing land within the site is predominantly used for agricultural purposes, with some pasture in the Alde Valley (Ref. 1.9). The site also intersects Nuttery Belt and 'The Belt' deciduous woodland, as well as hedgerows between field boundaries. Foxburrow Wood (on the Ancient Woodland Inventory) is located adjacent to the site boundary.
- 1.4.4 The site also includes a section of the River Alde and associated floodplain. The majority of the site is located in Flood Zone 1, where fluvial flood risk is low. However, where the bypass would cross the River Alde, areas of the site would be located in flood zones 2 and 3.
- 1.4.5 There are several footpaths within the site, including: E-243/001/0, E-243/003/0, E-243/004/0, E-137/028/0 and E-137/029/0 and E-243/011/0. They extend along field and woodland edges, along tracks or over fields south and east of Farnham.
- 1.4.6 One designated heritage asset, Glemham Hall Registered Park and Garden, lies at the north-eastern edge of the site. The site extends into the park boundary for 50m along the existing A12. There are also seven Historic Environment Records that lie within the site. There are also fifteen listed buildings within 750 metres (m) of the site boundary of which two are Grade II* listed, The Church of St Mary and the Church of St Andrew. The other listed buildings are designated as Grade II and primarily comprise houses, and shops to either side of the A12 in Farnham and Stratford St Andrew. Farnham Manor is located to the south-east of the village and is within 50m of the site boundary. The Grade II listed Benhallstock Cottages are located adjacent to the A12 to the south of Benhall Park.
- 1.4.7 The western end of the site falls within a locally designated landscape that covers the River Alde valley. This wraps around to the north of Farnham, immediately adjacent to the eastern end of the site route (where the site re-joins the A12), as well as along the valley of the River Fromus to the east. These are referred to as Special Landscape Areas and are shown on **Figures 1.2 and 1.3**.

- 1.4.8 In the wider surroundings, the site is situated within National Character Area 82 (NCA82): South Coast and Heaths (Ref. 1.10). NCA82 comprises low-lying gently undulating farmland with areas of woodland, heath and forest plantation. The valley of the River Alde is typical of the transition between this character area and the adjacent National Character Area 83: South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands to the west (Ref. 1.11) which is a predominantly flat clay plateau incised by numerous small-scale wooded river valleys. The national character areas are illustrated on **Figure 6.3** of **chapter 6** of this volume.
- 1.4.9 Statutory designated sites of nature conservation importance within 5km of the site include: Gromford Meadow SSSI; Blaxhall Heath SSSI; Sandlings SPA; Sandlings Forest SSSI; Alde-Ore Estuary SPA, SAC, Ramsar site and SSSI; Iken Wood SSSI; Snape Warren SSSI; Tunstall Common SSSI; and Cransford Meadow SSSI. The locations of these designated sites are shown in **Annex 7A** of this volume.
- 1.4.10 Further detail on the site and the environmental baseline is provided in (**Chapters 4 to 12**) of this volume.

References

- 1.1 Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (SI 2017/572) (as amended) HMSO.
- 1.2 Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 (SI2009/2263) HMSO.
- 1.3 HM Government. Planning Act 2008. London: HMSO, 2008.
- 1.4 Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2018) National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.5 Department of Energy and Climate Change. Overarching national policy statement for energy (EN-1). London: HMSO, 2011.
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- 1.8 Suffolk Coastal District Council. Suffolk Coastal Local Plan. Final Draft. 2019.
- 1.9 Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF), Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales. Revised Guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land, 1988 (1988).
- 1.10 Natural England, National Character Area profile: 82. South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands (Sheffield, 2014).
- 1.11 Natural England, National Character Area profile: 83. Suffolk Coast and Heaths (Sheffield, 2015).
- 1.12 Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment (2011). Available at: <http://www.suffolklandscape.org.uk/>