



# The Sizewell C Project

## 6.8 Volume 7 Yoxford Roundabout and Other Highway Improvements Chapter 1 Introduction

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**None provided.**



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None provided.



## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction to the proposed development

1.1.1 This volume (**Volume 7**) of the **Environmental Statement (ES)** presents details of the new Yoxford roundabout and other highway improvements, referred to hereafter as the ‘proposed development’. This volume reports on the likely significant environmental effects during construction and operation of the proposed development.

1.1.2 The proposed development would be located across four sites:

- The junction of the A12 and B1122 (referred to as the ‘Yoxford roundabout’).
- Improvements at the A1094 and B1069 junction south of Knodishall.
- Improvements at the A12 and A144 junction south of Bramfield.
- Improvements at the A12 and B1119 junction at Saxmundham.

1.1.3 A detailed description of the proposed development is provided in **Chapter 2** of this volume of the **ES**, and further detail on the proposed development in the context of the Sizewell C Project is provided in the project overview (see **Volume 1, Chapter 2** of the **ES**).

1.1.4 Road safety analysis has also identified potential highway safety issues at two sites (the B1078 and B1079 junction east of Easton and Otley College and the A140 and B1078 junction west of Coddendam). Highway safety measures at these sites will be secured by an obligation in the Section 106 Agreement (see the **Section 106 Heads of Terms** appended to the Planning Statement (Doc. Ref. 8.4).

1.1.5 The location of the proposed highway improvement sites and the indicative location of the highway safety measures sites are shown on **Figure 1.1**.

1.1.6 This chapter provides details on:

- the structure and scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the proposed development;
- the planning policy relevant to the proposed development; and
- an overview of the highway improvement sites and surroundings.

## 1.2 Environmental Impact Assessment and this Environmental Statement

### a) Requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment

1.2.1 Schedule 1 to the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (SI 2017/572) (as amended) (hereafter referred to as the 'EIA Regulations') (Ref. 1.1) lists developments for which EIA is mandatory. Paragraph 2(2) of Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations includes nuclear power stations, 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

1.2.2 In June 2014 SZC Co. obtained a scoping opinion from the Secretary of State, under Regulation 8 of the 2009 EIA Regulations (Ref. 1.2). In May 2019 SZC Co. 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 included in the 2014 scoping opinion (see **Volume 1, Appendix 6A** of the **ES**). 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** of the **ES**).

### c) Structure of the Environmental Statement

1.2.3 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.

1.2.4 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 well-being; and major accidents and disasters, and are presented in **Volume 2** of the **ES** (Doc. Ref. 6.3).

1.2.5 This volume of the **ES** for the proposed Yoxford roundabout and other highway improvements is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 1:** Introduction (this chapter);
- **Chapter 2:** Description of Yoxford roundabout and other highway improvements;
- **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; and
- **Chapter 12:** Groundwater and surface water.

1.2.6 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. In addition, the **Consultation Report** (Doc Ref. 5.1) summarises the responses received from the public and statutory stakeholders to SZC Co.'s consultations, and explains how the proposed development has evolved in response to the consultations. 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** of the **ES**.

1.2.7 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** of the **ES**). These are identified in **Table 1.1** together with an explanation for why an assessment is not required.

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

Topic	Reasoning Why Assessment Was Not Required.
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

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

- introduction;
- legislation, policy and guidance;
- methodology;
- baseline environment;
- environmental design and mitigation;
- assessment (for construction and operation);
- mitigation and monitoring; and
- residual effects.

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

1.2.10 Cumulative effects arising from the proposed development in combination with other third party (i.e. non-Sizewell C Project) 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).

- 1.2.11 A **Non-Technical Summary** of this **ES** (Doc Ref. 6.1) has been prepared and is presented separately from this volume.
- 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** of the **ES**. 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** of the **ES**, 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** of the **ES** 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 applications for development consent.
- 1.3.7 An overview of the legislation and national planning, energy and nuclear policies which are material to the proposed development, is provided in **Volume 1, Chapter 3** of the **ES**.



### i. National Policy Statements

- 1.3.8 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 NPS for Nuclear Power Generation (NPS EN-6) (Ref. 1.6).
- 1.3.9 In December 2017, the Government began the process of consulting on the preparation of a new NPS for nuclear power stations. In due course, it is anticipated that 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.
- 1.3.10 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. Paragraph 5.13.6 also states that applicants may also be willing to enter into planning obligations for funding infrastructure and otherwise mitigating adverse impacts.
- 1.3.11 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.”*
- 1.3.12 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.

1.3.13 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 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

1.3.14 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.

1.3.15 Paragraph 102 of the NPPF states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of development proposals so that, *inter alia*, 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** of the **ES** provides an assessment of potential transport impacts associated with the Sizewell C Project.

iii. Local policy

1.3.16 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)). The proposed development is one way in which the transport effects of a new power station would be managed. **Volume 2, Chapter 10** of the **ES** provides an assessment of potential transport impacts associated with the Sizewell C Project.

1.3.17 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*”.

1.3.18 The individual sites are not allocated for a specific use within the adopted local plan or proposed to be within the emerging 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 Nuclear Power Station, and that are well related to the A12 and A14 corridors. The emerging Local Plan

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 sites and surroundings: highway improvements

1.4.1 The sites cover a number of road junctions and highways across East Suffolk. The description of development in **Chapter 2** of this volume covers the proposed works at the sites in greater detail but a brief summary of the individual sites and surroundings can be found in the following section.

### a) A12 and B1122 Yoxford roundabout

1.4.2 The proposed Yoxford roundabout site (centred on Ordnance Survey grid reference TM398687) covers approximately 2.9 hectares (ha), and consists of existing road infrastructure and roadside vegetation, together with some grazing land. The new roundabout would replace the existing A12 and B1122 ghost island junction in Yoxford approximately 90 metres (m) north of the existing junction. See **Figures 1.2** and **1.3** for further information on the site and surrounding environment.

1.4.3 The site boundary largely follows the existing road layout. To the south and west existing hedgerows and tree belts define the boundary edge, whilst to the east the boundary would run through existing land used for horse grazing.

1.4.4 The surrounding area is predominantly grazing land, parkland and arable farmland, with well-defined hedgerow field boundaries, often treelined, and interspersed with scattered woodlands and copses.

1.4.5 The closest residential properties to the proposed Yoxford roundabout site are located around the junction of the B1122 and the A12, namely Rookery Lodge, Rookery Cottages, Pinn's Piece, Sunnypatch, Woodland Cottages, Sans Souci and White Lodge. The Piggeries and the Sewage works are located to the east of the site and Satis House Hotel adjacent to the western boundary of the site.

1.4.6 The majority of the site falls within Flood Zone 1 and the topography of the site is relatively flat and the wider landscape beyond the site is characterised by undulating farmland. There is a small area to the north of the site which is within Flood Zone 2, where the site is adjacent to the River Yox.

1.4.7 Heritage and landscape designations within the surrounding area are as follows:

- At a national level, the site is situated within National Character Area 82 (NCA82): South Coast and Heaths (Ref. 1.9). NCA82 shows characteristics of gently undulating farmland with areas of woodland and forest plantation in the surrounding area. At a local level, the site is located in the ‘rolling estate claylands’ landscape character type, with ‘*Valley Meadows and Fens*’ landscape character type located immediately to the north as identified in the Suffolk County Landscape Character Assessment (Ref. 1.10). The ‘*rolling estate claylands*’ is a valley-side landscape of clay loams with parklands and fragmented woodland. See **Figure 6.3** within **Chapter 6** of this volume for further details on the landscape character areas.
- Yoxford Conservation Area extends across the western side of the site boundary (and was extended in February 2020), see **Figure 1.3** for further detail.

1.4.8 European designated sites comprising special protection areas (SPAs), special areas of conservation (SACs) and Ramsar sites within a 5 kilometre (km) radius of the proposed Yoxford roundabout site (some sites carry more than one designation) include: the Dew’s Ponds SAC, Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SPA, SAC and Ramsar site. The locations of these European designated sites are shown in **Appendix 7A** of this volume.

1.4.9 A non-statutory designated nature reserve (Roadside Nature Reserve 197) is located within the site boundary on the southern side of the B1122 (Middleton Road) along the southern boundary of Yoxford junction, see **Figure 1.3**. It is designated on account of the presence of the Sandy Stilt Puffball fungus (*Battarraea phalloides*). Other non-statutory designated ecological sites within 2 km of the roundabout include: Minsmere Valley Reckford Bridge to Beveriche Manor County Wildlife Site (CWS) located approximately 320m east; and Yoxford Wood CWS and Suffolk Coastal 212 CWS (which is also Roadside Nature Reserve Number 102) located between 1.5km and 2km north and south respectively.

b) [Improvements at the A1094 and B1069 junction south of Knodishall](#)

1.4.10 The A1094 and B1069 junction is a single carriageway priority T-junction located approximately 2.6km south of Knodishall and 1.1km south-east of Friston. The site (Ordnance Survey grid reference TM419592) is approximately 1.5 ha and is comprised of highway land. See **Figures 1.4** and **1.5** for further information on the site and surrounding environment.



- 1.4.11 Currently the junction has a narrow, painted island for right-turning traffic from the A1094 onto the B1069, but this is not wide enough for through traffic to pass a vehicle waiting to turn right. The speed limit at the junction is 60mph and neither the A1094 nor the B1069 have street lighting. Road safety analysis shows a higher than expected accident record for the volume of traffic carried due to the 60mph speeds on the A1094 and poor visibility from the B1069 approach to the junction.
- 1.4.12 The site is bounded by woodland and hedgerows. There are no designated ecological sites within 500m of the site, however, Sandlings Special Protection Area (SPA), Alde-Ore Estuary SPA, Alde-Ore and Butley Estuaries Special Area of Conservation, Alde-Ore Estuary SSSI, and Snape Warren SSSI are within 2km of the site.
- 1.4.13 There is a single residential property (West Lodge) opposite the junction but the surrounding land is predominantly used for large scale arable farming. Topography in the vicinity of the proposed improvements is gently undulating, with the junction itself located on a plateau area. The Suffolk Coasts and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is located along the south-western boundary of the site. There are no designated historic assets within 500m of the site.
- 1.4.14 The site is within Flood Zone 1 but the land to the south of the junction is within Flood Zones 2 and 3.
- c) **Improvements at the A12 and A144 junction south of Bramfield**
- 1.4.15 The A12 and A144 junction is a rural ghost island priority T-junction situated approximately 2.7km south of Bramfield and 950m north of the northern park and ride (see **Volume 3** of the **ES**). The site (Ordnance Survey grid reference TM415714) is approximately 1.2 ha and is comprised of highway land and areas of agricultural land. **Figures 1.6** and **1.7** show the site and surrounding environment.
- 1.4.16 The route is currently a single carriageway rural road with a 60mph speed limit. There are no road safety concerns at this ghost island junction, but due to the speed and volume of traffic on the A12, right turning vehicles on the A144 queue, and are delayed while they seek suitable gaps in the northbound and southbound traffic streams.
- 1.4.17 There are residential properties along the road to the north and south of the site, including the Grade II listed Stone Cottage adjacent to the north side of the junction of the A12 and the A144.

- 1.4.18 The site is bounded by hedgerows, and beyond the garden boundaries of these residential properties, the land is predominantly large-scale arable farmland on either side.
- 1.4.19 The River Dunwich and a tributary of Minsmere Old River are located in the vicinity of the site. There are also a number of surface water drains and ponds within 500m of the site boundary. The site falls within Flood Zone 1.
- d) **Improvements at the A12 and B1119 junction at Saxmundham**
- 1.4.20 The A12 and B1119 junction is a ghost island staggered crossroads on the A12 situated west of Saxmundham (Ordnance Survey grid reference TM375634). The site is approximately 0.9 ha and is comprised of highway land. See **Figures 1.8** and **1.9** for further information on the site and surrounding environment.
- 1.4.21 The speed limit at the junction is 60mph, and neither the A12 nor the B1119 has street lighting. In addition to the usual staggered crossroad 'give way' lines, there are additional 'give way' lines for both A12 left-turn movements and offside divergent lanes for right-turning traffic.
- 1.4.22 The site is located on the western fringe of Saxmundham. No residential properties are located within the site boundary; however, there are a number of residential properties close to the site, east of the A12 and an isolated property (Burnt House Farm) along the B1119. East of the A12, on the north of the B1119, the residential properties are set back from the A12, and the site, separated by a grassed verge, hedgerow and trees, whilst on the south side, the residential properties are closer to the A12 and separated by intervening hedgerow and trees.
- 1.4.23 There are no designated ecological or historic assets within 500m of the site, however, a number of Grade II\* and Grade II listed buildings are located within Saxmundham.
- 1.4.24 The site falls within Flood Zone 1. There are no watercourses within the site boundary, however, a tributary of the River Fromus is approximately 75m to the north of the site boundary.
- 1.5 **The sites and surroundings: highway safety measures**
- 1.5.1 The indicative areas where highway safety measures are proposed are described in greater detail in **Chapter 2** of this volume but a brief summary of the individual sites and surroundings can be found in the following sections.

e) **Safety measures at the B1078 and B1079 junction east of Easton and Otley College**

1.5.2 The proposed improvements concern a rural priority T-junction approximately 1.5km south of Otley and 400m east of the Otley College of Agriculture and Horticulture campus (associated with Easton and Otley College) (Ordnance Survey grid reference TG146095). The site covers approximately 0.5 ha and is comprised of highway land. See **Figures 1.10** and **1.11** for further information on the site and surrounding environment.

1.5.3 The B1078 is subject to a 40 miles per hour (mph) speed limit, whilst the B1079 is 60mph. Both are single carriageways and neither have street lighting. Road safety analysis indicates a higher than expected number of collisions on the B1078 between the College and the B1079 junction. There is limited forward visibility and this has contributed to accidents in the area.

1.5.4 The River Lark is located approximately 30m to the north-east of the site. Part of the site is situated within Flood Zone 3.

1.5.5 Nether Hall, a Grade II listed asset, is located adjacent to the site boundary. Additionally, Motte castle known as The Mount (Scheduled Monument) and Charity (Grade II) are located within 500m of the site boundary.

1.5.6 The nearest designated ecological receptor is the Moat Farm Meadows, Otley Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) approximately 2.6km to the north-east of the proposed improvements. The junction of the B1078 and B1079 is located adjacent to Woodpasture and Parkland (Biodiversity Action Plan) Priority Habitat (Ref. 1.11) and broadleaved woodland, and woodland is located adjacent to the eastern side of the B1079.

f) **Safety measures at the A140 and B1078 junction west of Coddenham**

1.5.7 The A140 and B1078 junction is a priority T-junction on a dual carriageway (Ordnance Survey grid reference TM111548). It is situated approximately 3.2km east of Needham Market and 650m north-east of the A14 and A140 Beacon Hill junction. The site is approximately 1.1 ha and is predominantly comprised of highway land. See **Figures 1.12** and **1.13** for further information on the site and surrounding environment.

1.5.8 The A140 northbound to B1078 movement is provided by a right-turn off-slip, whilst the B1078 traffic is restricted to a left-turn movement only onto the A140 southbound.

1.5.9 The nearest properties comprise Bridge Place Farm and Bridge Place Cottage, which are located along the site boundary. To the north of the off-slip the land between the dualled sections of the A140 consists of hedging

and trees, whilst the central section to the south of the off-slip is open grassland. On either side of the B1078 there is a row of dense tree planting.

- 1.5.10 There are no designated ecological sites within 500m of the site, however, Creeting St. Mary Pits SSSI and Needham Lake Local Nature Reserve are within 2km of the site boundary.
- 1.5.11 There are no designated historic assets within the site. However, within 500m of the site boundary, Shrubland Hall (Grade I listed park and garden) is located approximately 400m to the south of the site and a Grade II listed Chimney Pot is located approximately 260m to the north.
- 1.5.12 The north of the site is situated within Flood Zone 1. In the southern side of the site, a tributary of the River Gipping runs through the site along Coddendam Road. This area of the site is located with Flood Zones 2 and 3.



## References

- 1.1 Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (SI 2017/572) (as amended) HMSO.
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