



# The Sizewell C Project

## 6.9 Volume 8 Freight Management Facility Chapter 1 Introduction

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This volume (**Volume 8**) of the **Environmental Statement (ES)** presents details of the proposed freight management facility (FMF) at Seven Hills, referred to hereafter in this volume as the ‘proposed development’, and reports on the likely significant environmental effects during construction and operation, as well as when the development is removed and the site is reinstated.

1.1.2 The proposed development site (referred to hereafter in this volume as the ‘site’) is approximately 11 hectares (ha), predominantly comprised of agricultural land, and is located on land to the south the A14, approximately 800 metres (m) south of Bucklesham and 700m to the south-east of the A12/A14 junction (see **Figure 1.1**). A detailed description of the proposed development and site context is provided in **Chapter 2** of this volume of the **ES**.

1.1.3 As described in **Volume 1, Chapter 2** of the **ES**, which provides an overview of the Sizewell C Project, an FMF is proposed. This would provide spaces for approximately 150 heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and would allow a controlled pattern of deliveries to the Sizewell C main development site with reduced movements during peak or sensitive hours on the highway network. It would provide facilities where paperwork and goods can be checked prior to delivery to the Sizewell C main development site, and a location where HGVs can be held while they wait for their delivery time to enter the main development site. In the event of an accident on the local road network which prevents access to the site, HGVs would be held here (or at the Traffic Incident Management Area (TIMA) at the southern park and ride at Wickham Market) to take them off of the local highway network.

1.1.4 The proposed development is temporary and would be *in situ* until it is no longer required for the construction of the Sizewell C power station (between 9–12 years).

1.1.5 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 site and surrounding land uses.

## 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. Nuclear power stations are listed as Schedule 1 development, and consequently an EIA is required for the Sizewell C Project, including the proposed FMF. Further detail on the requirement for an EIA is provided in **Volume 1** of the **ES**.

### b) EIA Scoping

1.2.2 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, 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 scoped for, provided in **Volume 1, Appendix 6A** of the **ES**. This also included the scopes 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, provided in **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 wellbeing; and major accidents and disasters, and are presented in **Volume 2** of the **ES**.

1.2.5 This volume of the **ES** for the proposed FMF is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1: Introduction (this chapter).
- Chapter 2: Description of the FMF.
- 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.

1.2.6 This volume should also 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.

1.2.7 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**.

1.2.8 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, provided in **Volume 1 Appendix 6B** of the **ES**. These topics 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; 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**

1.2.9 The environmental topic chapters, **Chapters 4 to 12** of 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, operation and removal and reinstatement).

- Mitigation and monitoring.
  - Residual effects.
- 1.2.10 Appendices are provided for each chapter as required, and contain for example, detailed baseline information, assessments and other technical reports.
- 1.2.11 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 the project-wide effects with other parts of the Sizewell C Project (where applicable).
- 1.2.12 A **Non-Technical Summary** of the **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 legislation or 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 (NSIP), 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 (NPS) for Energy (EN-1) (Ref. 1.5) and NPS for Nuclear Power Generation (EN-6) (Ref. 1.6).

1.3.8 In December 2017, the Government began the process of consulting on the preparation of a new 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 5.13.4 of NPS EN-1 states that where appropriate, the applicant should prepare a travel plan including demand management measures to mitigate transport impacts. The applicant should also provide details of proposed measures to improve access by public transport, walking and cycling, to reduce the need for parking associated with the proposal and to mitigate transport impacts.

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 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.

1.3.11 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.” (Ref. 1.5)*

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”* (Ref. 1.5).

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 NSIPs.

1.3.15 Paragraph 102 of 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** 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 of the associated development proposals, which will contribute to mitigating the transport effects of the Sizewell C Project. **Volume 2, Chapter 10** of the **ES** provides an assessment of potential transport impacts associated with the Sizewell C Project.

**1.3.17** Within the adopted Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (Ref. 1.7) and the emerging Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (Final draft, 2019 (Ref. 1.8)), which is intended to be adopted by East Suffolk Council (ESC), the site is located within the countryside and is not allocated for a specific use. 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.

**1.3.18** Policy SCLP3.4 of the emerging Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (Final draft, 2019 (Ref. 1.8)), which is intended to be adopted by ESC, 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*” (Ref. 1.8).

## **1.4** The site and surroundings

**1.4.1** The site is approximately 11 ha of predominantly agricultural land, and a section of highway land, located to the south-east of the A12 and A14 junction south-east of Ipswich, and bounded by the A14 to the north, Felixstowe Road to the south and arable land to the east and west (see **Figure 1.1**), and is centred on Ordnance Survey grid reference: TM239406. The site is approximately 40 kilometres (km) to the south-west of the main development site. **Figure 1.2** shows the existing site and its surroundings.

**1.4.2** The site boundary largely follows the existing field boundaries, except the south-western perimeter where it aligns with the southern edge of Felixstowe Road.

**1.4.3** The existing land use on the site is predominantly agricultural but also includes some highway land to the south and west along the Felixstowe Road.

- 1.4.4 The surrounding area is dominated by agricultural fields separated by hedgerows and pockets of woodland, with the closest residential property located approximately 0.35km to the south-east of the site. Seven Hills Crematorium is located further to the west of the site and an intervening area of land, less than 0.2km west of the site, is allocated for a high-quality business park in Policy SCLP12.20A of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Final Draft (January 2019). **Figure 1.2** shows the existing site and its surroundings.
- 1.4.5 The site is relatively open and the topography of the site is generally flat with a very slight slope up from west to east of approximately 1.5m. Visibility of the site from surrounding areas is likely to be limited due to a combination of existing woodland and established hedgerows, as well as the relatively flat landform.
- 1.4.6 No public rights of way (PRoW) are located within the site boundary. There are however a number of PRoW in the vicinity of the site, including:
- Bridleway E-365/021/0 within Levington Common, running parallel with the south-eastern boundary of the site;
  - Bridleways E-365/004/0, E-365/005/0, E-365/007/0, E-365/008/0, E-365/009/0, and E-365/010/0, Footpaths E-365/024/0 and E-365/011/0, and common land at Levington Heath to the south-east of the site; and
  - Footpath E-169/017/0 north of the site and the A14.
- 1.4.7 The site is within Flood Zone 1 and, therefore, has a low risk of flooding from tidal or fluvial sources. Risk associated with groundwater, sewer and reservoir flooding at the site are also considered to be low. The Environment Agency's long-term flood risk mapping shows the majority of the site is also at a very low risk of flooding.
- 1.4.8 There are no statutory designations or listed buildings within or immediately adjacent to the site, and there are no ecologically designated sites within 1km of the site; however, the following designations and features characterise the wider surrounding area:
- The Suffolk Coasts and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is located approximately 500m to the west of the site at its closest point.

- A locally designated landscape covers the valleys of Mill River and Kirton Brook, and their tributaries, to the north-east of the site and is referred to as a Special Landscape Area (SLA). It is approximately 1.2km from the site at its closest point.
- The nearest designated built heritage features include a bowl barrow located just to the east of Levington Lane and a Grade II listed building, known as Decoy Cottage, which is situated approximately 0.9km to the south west of the site.
- The site lies predominantly within the ‘Estate Sandlands’ landscape character type transitioning to ‘Plateau Estate Farmlands’ landscape character type at Felixstowe Road in the south, as identified in the Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment (Ref. 1.9).
- The site and the majority of the surrounding area are situated within National Character Area 82 (NCA82). NCA82 comprises low-lying gently undulating farmland with areas of woodland, heath and forest plantation.

1.4.9 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 (2019) National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.5 Department of Energy and Climate Change. Overarching national policy statement for energy (EN-1). London: HMSO, 2011.
- 1.6 Department of Energy and Climate Change. Overarching national policy statement for nuclear power generation (EN-6). London: HMSO, 2011.
- 1.7 Suffolk Coastal District Council. Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy and Development Management Policies. 2013.
- 1.8 Suffolk Coastal District Council. Suffolk Coastal Local Plan. Final Draft. 2019.
- 1.9 Suffolk County Council. Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment 2008, revised 2011.