

**From:** Dominic Woodfield <[dominicwoodfield@bioscanuk.com](mailto:dominicwoodfield@bioscanuk.com)>  
**Sent:** 24 September 2020 14:54  
**To:** Richard Bull <[Richard.Bull@sizewellc.com](mailto:Richard.Bull@sizewellc.com)>  
**Cc:** Tom McGarry <[Tom.McGarry@sizewellc.com](mailto:Tom.McGarry@sizewellc.com)>; Carly Vince <[Carly.Vince@sizewellc.com](mailto:Carly.Vince@sizewellc.com)>; SizewellC <[sizewellc@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:sizewellc@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Re: PINS ref EN010012 - Sizewell C - Biodiversity Net Gain calculations

Dear Richard cc PINS

You will recall our recent correspondence on this. Back in July I requested from Richard Bull a functional copy of the completed metric that EDFE are relying upon in support of their claims of achieving Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as an outcome of the Sizewell C project. These claims have continued to be advanced both in the media and in material submitted for examination as part of the DCO process.

Instead of providing this single Excel file, Richard advised on 10 September that instead, EDFE are commissioning an internal review of whether the metric has been applied correctly and whether the net gain claims can be duly evidenced, and he stated that EDFE would provide the output from that review to the examination in due course.

In response, I explained again why this was not satisfactory for the purposes of transparency and accountability in terms of the public's right to access to evidence, and nor was it satisfactory in terms of the impact this approach would likely have on the examination process. The request was and is to view the calculations for the purposes of understanding how the output has been arrived at, not for EDFE to commission and submit a whole raft of additional extraneous information to the examination about it. I have received no answer and time is now marching on.

**PINS has not commented on the matter or on these exchanges of correspondence but via this e-mail I ask them to do so now.**

Whether the Sizewell C has a net positive or net negative impact on biodiversity assets is clearly a relevant and important material consideration in the decision on whether a DCO for this project should be made. The examining authority's deliberations on this will be hindered., and the panel unsighted, unless the evidence base from which EDFE are making the claim that net gain will be the outcome is offered up for the appropriate scrutiny. If this has to happen during the examination, it will use up time and resources in a manner that will compromise the smooth and timely running of the process, and in a manner that will unfairly disadvantage legitimately interested parties. In response to this EDFE have suggested that it is possible for interested parties to conduct a forensic exercise of paper-chasing, deduction and back-calculation in order to understand the basis of the net gain claims. It is not. Due to the way EDFE have presented the information and due to the way in which they have consolidated and simplified inputs to the metric, this cannot be done. This may suit the project proponents but it is not in the interests of the transparent and even-handed running of the examination. The identification, discussion and debate over any margins of difference between what EDFE have actually done and what they can best be deduced to have done would be poised to use up a large amount of examination time.

This is unnecessary and wholly avoidable if EDFE simply provides the information which has been asked for, in the interests of due transparency. This will allow any areas of difference to be properly identified and narrowed, saving on examination time and efficiency and the resources of all parties, including PINS. EDFE's reluctance to provide this information does not suggest that they are in a

position of confidence about its robustness. That has to be a matter of concern and relevance to the examining panel.

Best regards

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## COVID-19

We do not have any cases of infection, suspected or otherwise, but in an effort to keep things that way staff are working from home as first priority and therefore clients are asked to make contact via e-mail or mobile. In accordance with the latest Government advice we will be using remote alternatives to attendance at and travel to meetings except where there is a proven necessity. We will also be following the latest CIEEM advice in respect of fieldwork. The current unprecedented situation is likely to exert a degree of drag on our productivity and we ask our clients to be patient and tolerant where this occurs. As a priority, we will use all best endeavours to ensure critical field seasons and licensing windows are not missed.

On Thu, 10 Sep 2020 at 16:23, Dominic Woodfield <[dominicwoodfield@bioscanuk.com](mailto:dominicwoodfield@bioscanuk.com)> wrote:

Dear Richard

Thank you for your reply and your apologies for the delay in sending it.

We acknowledge that you have commissioned a further BNG calculation and review exercise and that it is your expectation that this should provide further confidence in the outputs relied upon in the submitted material. I note that you say that results from this further commission will be made available via the examination process. We note that you still do not appear to be prepared to provide a functional copy of the submitted calculation for our review.

Your suggestion that it is open for any party to undertake an independent calculation from first principles is misplaced. While it is possible for us to attempt calculation of an output figure from first principles (and indeed we have already attempted to do so), it is not possible to relate that to the outputs in the submission material for the reasons I have explained. There is therefore no reliable means for us to explore why our calculator outputs from this exercise are different even when we have adopted as much of the detail as we can from the submission material. We are interested in exploring these differences and the reasons for them as part of our review. One reason is that disparate habitat polygons have been grouped into cumulative input figures with the same condition and strategic multipliers - it is not possible to tease these lumped figures apart by back calculation.

In short, it is not possible to see how your calculator outputs have been arrived at from the submission material. This obscures a full understanding of the process that has been gone through and does not facilitate the process of narrowing down where there may be differences of opinion as opposed to (for example) simple numerical errors - both of which could explain the difference in outputs that we have arrived at using the submitted data.

I therefore repeat the point that without a functional copy of the completed metric a significant amount of examination time is likely to be required to get to the bottom of how EDFE have arrived at their calculations and whether errors material to the decision making process are implicated. Adding in a further calculation undertaken by a third party commissioned by yourselves is likely to further complicate the matter and result in even more examination time being required.

On the other hand if we are provided with a copy of the completed metric, we will rapidly (and in advance of the 'busy' end of the examination) be able to particularise where the significant discrepancies lie, and narrow down the matters requiring further discussion and exploration as part of the examination process. This will also, of course, help narrow the scope of the work you are asking this other organisation to do, reducing costs to EDFE.

I therefore ask you again for a functional copy of the completed metric in the interests of transparency, accountability and the smooth running of the examination.

Best regards

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On Thu, 10 Sep 2020 at 15:11, Richard Bull <[Richard.Bull@sizewellc.com](mailto:Richard.Bull@sizewellc.com)> wrote:

Dear Dominic,

Apologies for the delayed response.

We recognise the importance of the Biodiversity Net Gain assessment and the results determined by it. In order to ensure that the results are as robust as possible, we have commissioned another organisation to undertake a second assessment from first principles. Once that assessment is complete, an exercise will be undertaken to evaluate whether there are any differences between the two outputs. All of the final material will be made available via the examination, including the matrices and this should provide further confidence in the outputs generated.

Any party is of course welcome to undertake an assessment from first principles and this is possible using the ecological baseline provided in the application, the landscape masterplans for the application and wider EDF Energy estate. This approach enables anyone to generate the relevant polygons required to measure the biodiversity units for both the baseline and end states. This would be the most robust way of verifying (or otherwise), the results obtained to date.

Kind regards

Richard

**Richard Bull**

DCO Programme Manager

Sizewell C Nuclear Development

**From:** Dominic Woodfield <[dominicwoodfield@bioscanuk.com](mailto:dominicwoodfield@bioscanuk.com)>

**Sent:** 09 September 2020 15:21

**To:** [richard.bull@edf-energy.com](mailto:richard.bull@edf-energy.com); [sizewellc@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:sizewellc@planninginspectorate.gov.uk); [UKenquiries@arcadis.com](mailto:UKenquiries@arcadis.com); [tom.macgarry@edf-energy.com](mailto:tom.macgarry@edf-energy.com)

**Subject:** Re: PINS ref EN010012 - Sizewell C

Dear Mr Bull

I have still had no response to the query set out below, first sent on 21 June and followed up on 28 July.

Meantime I am aware that EDFE continue to claim that the Sizewell C project will deliver biodiversity net gain and indeed are using this in promotional publicity.

There can be no dispute that this claim requires to be tested, rather than taken at face value, during the course of the examination. In order for that to happen, there needs to be transparency around the processes EDFE have used in populating and using the Defra metric, in order that these can be checked for accuracy. If we are prevented from doing this in advance of the examination, it is likely to take up a significant amount of examination time to get to the bottom of how EDFE have arrived at their calculations and whether they are justified.

Being disadvantaged by the lack of response to this request to date, we have attempted to work around it by back-calculating the metric using the material in the submitted ES for the project. This process has revealed some startling discrepancies that already bring into serious question the veracity of the claims of net gain. However, because of the way the information is presented in the BNG report and ES, it is not possible to check everything fully. For example disparate land parcels

assigned the same habitat type, condition and strategic location have been lumped together, preventing the accuracy of these attributions from being independently checked.

In view of the fact that there appear to be **very significant problems with the accuracy of the net gain calculations**, I am sure that PINS will agree that it is in the interests of the smooth and transparent running of the Examination for a functional copy of the metric calculation to be provided to us so that we can narrow and particularise the grounds that require examination time. I am sure that PINS would further agree that it is far from satisfactory for an interested party to be denied the ability to review and check the workings of quantitative outputs that are being relied upon to make claims of policy compliance, and also being used in promotional and publicity material.

Please could you respond as a matter of some urgency?

Best regards

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On Tue, 28 Jul 2020 at 15:41, Dominic Woodfield <[dominicwoodfield@bioscanuk.com](mailto:dominicwoodfield@bioscanuk.com)> wrote:

Dear Mr Bull

Are you able to advise when you may be able to respond to my request below?

Best regards

---

Dominic Woodfield CEcol CEnv MCIEEM

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On Tue, 21 Jul 2020 at 13:04, Dominic Woodfield <[dominicwoodfield@bioscanuk.com](mailto:dominicwoodfield@bioscanuk.com)> wrote:

Dear Mr Bull

### **DCO Application by NNB Nuclear Generation (SZC) Limited The Sizewell C Project**

Bioscan have been appointed by Friends of the Earth (Suffolk Coastal) (FOESC) to review aspects of the environmental information submitted to the Secretary of State via PINS pursuant to the above application, in order to inform their representations to the forthcoming examination. We understand that FOESC have already registered as an interested party.

Our particular focus of interest is assisting FOESC with assessing the performance of the proposals against relevant policy and statutory provisions to avoid net loss and/or secure net gain of biodiversity, both those incumbent and those emerging, and how this has been conveyed to the SoS and Examining Panel via the use of metrics.

We have read the applicant's report at ES Chapter 14 Appendix 14E (Biodiversity Net Gain Report) and we note that this utilises the Defra metric version 2.0. However it is not readily possible for interested parties, particularly members of the public, to assess the accuracy of the input and output parameters used in the metric. The report does not assist in making the deductions and suppositions that have been relied upon transparent.

In the interests of due transparency and indeed the smooth running of the Examination, we would therefore like to request that EDFE provide to us a working Excel version of the metric, as would have been used by their consultants Arcadis, to inform their BNG report, and indeed around which its conclusions are evidently based.

This will allow us, on behalf of our clients, to check the input and output parameters and narrow any matters requiring further discussion or representations to the panel.

Please could this Excel document be provided to us as soon as possible?

Best regards

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