

Report Title:	Submission by the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership about the Sizewell C application
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CONTEXT

1. The Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership is the statutory partnership in Suffolk charged with ensuring the cross-agency protection of children and adults at risk in the county. Risks to vulnerable people start pre-birth and continue to an individual's dying days. Whilst most risks arise within the family or with close partners, there are many risks outside in the community which cause damage to people. Sexual exploitation and county lines are two examples of what has become known as contextual safeguarding. This means that extra risks can arise from changes to the environment such as an increase in the supply of illicit drugs in a particular part of the county.
2. The Sizewell C application contains some definable risks to vulnerable people in the local area which in our view have not had sufficient coverage in any of the EDF documentation. For example, there are no risk assessments about the impact of the development on vulnerable groups – older people and people with mental health problems are just two. Women who may be sexually exploited, including teenage girls, are another.

IMPACT OF THE SIZEWELL WORKFORCE

1. There are unknown risks from the new workforce. They will not be DBS checked which would be a basic safeguard for the local population.
2. It is likely that online prostitution and brothels in privately rented flats and houses will become a new local business throughout the construction period. This has happened in most similar developments internationally. In the process, especially in the deprived parts of the sub-region, some girls and young women will be placed at risk as a consequence. Vulnerable young men and women do often seek relationships with people they don't know and are therefore vulnerable to being exploited by older men. EDF have not considered these very real risks and issues adequately. There is no strategy put forward about how these risks will be mitigated.
3. The likely recession following the pandemic increases this risk factor. Pop-up brothels were common in Leiston during the Sizewell B construction and today's equivalent businesses are more diverse, increasingly online and know exactly how to reach and influence the workforce, especially the captive workforce in the planned Campus.
4. In terms of demand and supply, County Lines drug dealing (the illicit transfer of drugs from one area to another) follows the money. Whilst at the moment county lines are more numerous in Ipswich and the West of Suffolk, especially towards Cambridgeshire, there is potential for a County Lines East to develop, given the likely high disposable income of the Sizewell workforce. There is no assessment on record of this significant risk.

5. Some older people living alone in the vicinity are already worried, especially single older women. The area at present is quiet and peaceful, but the construction will transform the area into a noisy, busy and probably chaotic local environment. The fear of crime, exploitation and limits to the quality of life of older people needs to be understood far better than it has been to date.
6. There are no positive statements about efforts to secure work for people with mental health problems or a degree of disability. It is as if they do not exist and are 'hidden in plain sight'.
7. None of the risks in 3,4,5 and 6 have been impact assessed and risk assessed, which is a major failure in governance by EDF.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE IMPACTS

1. Demand on already stretched health services is another likely adverse impact, especially use of paramedics and A and E and access to call outs for emergency vehicles.
2. EDF has failed to demonstrate how it will improve well-being for the accelerating number of older people in the vicinity of Sizewell C. The only mention of concern is the high ambient noise level projected for the Old Abbey Care Home in Leiston. The projected level at different times during the construction could be alarming for vulnerable older people, some of whom will have dementia and who will not understand what is happening.
3. The degradation of the environment, including ambient noise, a higher transient population and the increase in a range of activity including heavy traffic, will have an impact on the anxiety level for individuals and for communities. This impact has not been taken into account.
4. We have seen no impact or equity assessments for specific health conditions adversely affected by dust and noise pollution e.g., COPD and asthma.
5. GP's in the area have limited capacity on their lists and there are no plans as far as we can see to increase capacity. For a community over-represented by older people, this is equivalent to building a new housing estate for young families without considering how many new school places will be needed.
6. Many vulnerable people in the local area depend on carers to support them with daily tasks. Those carers are often busy with little allowance for travel time before they have to get to their next visit. We fear that carer's travel time will be considerably extended by much higher volumes of traffic and by the risk of gridlocked roads and that this may further reduce the amount of time they are able to spend with vulnerable people, for whom their visit by a carer can be a lifeline.
7. In 28.6.103, EDF says 'overall the impact on health and well-being would be low: We strongly challenge this statement as it is based upon negligible relevant evidence and testimony.
8. There are specific safeguarding concerns in the north of Suffolk relating to the high number and level of individuals with a learning disability within the community. This group require an impact assessment particularly about any heightened risk of exclusion or discrimination they could face.
9. The legacy of Sizewell B remains tangible in our health informatics. It is a significantly deprived population with higher levels of childhood obesity, tooth decay and smoking. There is little social mobility and the community remains isolated by poor road links and the inadequate transport infrastructure. Plans for Sizewell C should identify a better legacy than the 35 years which to date has followed the construction of |Sizewell B.

PROPOSAL

EDF should commit to a 'risk summit' to consider these issues in depth with a view to then preparing the requisite suite of risk and impact assessments outlined.

As things stand, the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership cannot support EDF's proposals.

*Anthony Douglas CBE
Chair of the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership
29th September 2020*