

MIDDLETON-CUM-FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Mrs Sharon Smith
Parish Clerk



Registration Identification Number: 20025892

Team West 1
The Planning Inspectorate
Temple Quay House
3rd Floor
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

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Dear Sirs

Response to the ExA re: Preliminary Meeting Part 1

1. Timing

The overriding issue raised by the majority of attendees was the need to delay the start of the Examination process beyond the currently scheduled date of April 14th.

- We must have time to consider the ramifications of the decision by PINS on the 17 changes to the DCO proposed by EDF before the examination period clock starts running. This decision ought to have been made and advised before Part 1.
- The various technical issues that arose during both days of Part 1 (video freezing, sound echoes, flickering screen, livestream unreliable, etc.) make it imperative to hold an open floor hearing, which would assist in catering for the sheer numbers of people wishing to participate and facilitate the proper examination of maps, diagrams etc.
- Suffolk County Council elections will mean there will be no cabinet appointments, and thus a Sizewell C Lead, in place until the end of May.
- As it stands at present, it is unlikely that EA will be in a position to publish their report on the project until the very end of the examination period, giving little or no time for other interested parties to peruse it. This is far from ideal. But even worse is the almost certainty that the examination process will have concluded before ONR reach a decision on whether or not to issue a licence for SZC. This is quite unacceptable.

2. Mitigation

From the input by various parties during Part 1, and the response by the counsel representing the applicant, it is clear that there are a multitude of issues, including many that are unresolved at this

time, that will give rise to the need for mitigation. In these instances, such mitigation has to be appropriate and open-ended, not subject to a set limit. Ideally, these issues should be fully resolved, or at least mitigated, before construction is allowed to commence (for example new road and rail links).

Having said that, however, it has become increasingly obvious that there are several issues for which no mitigation is practical – the loss of amenities, the drastic scarring of the environment with resultant damage to tourism, flora and fauna and the profound effect of pollution, noise, vibration, travelling delays and safety concerns upon the health and wellbeing of the local population.

3. Principal Issues and the need for Item Specific Issues

Where does one start? While the 20 Principal Issues detailed in Annexe C of the Rule 6 Letter are important and capture a wide range of the matters involved, each heading is of itself too far-ranging to cater for some of the most critical aspects. During the course of both days of Part 1, I listed no fewer than 23 well-presented requests for additional Item Specific Issues to be considered.

These included:

- The requirement for more detailed consideration of all aspects of the transport methodology;
- The effects of global warming;
- EDF's lack of engagement;
- The worry that the proposed EPR reactors are out of date technology and unproven in the West;
- Grave concerns from the Emergency Services (especially Police and Ambulance Service);
- The effects of Boom & Bust upon property prices and insurance concerns arising from terrorism;
- Water management, flood risks, coastal erosion and the beach landing facility (BLF) capability;
- The full understanding of the threat to Minsmere, the AONB and the SSSI;
- The fear of the applicant being unable to complete the project, given their precarious financial position and their unwillingness to accept the risk of the project on their own balance sheet.

But undoubtedly by far the most important issue to examine is Policy & Need. Regardless of whether there is still a requirement for a further nuclear plant after Hinkley Point (currently in increasing doubt), the choice of Sizewell as a "potential site" (as defined within NPS's EN-1 and EN-6) should be re-examined.

The Planning Inspectorate's advice to the SOS on the Wylfa nuclear project on Anglesey was to not go ahead, citing damage to wildlife, air quality, design, tourism and socio-economic concerns. Sizewell will amplify all of these negative aspects – in fact in several areas it is even more sensitive, given the uniqueness and current fragility of, and inability to forecast the future situation of, our coastline in East Suffolk.

4. Overall Impression of Part 1

In addition to the comments already made about the technical quality of the Teams Meeting, there was a degree of divergence evident in the patience exercised by the ExA inspectors from one stage to another, and noticeably one day to the next. This was not helped by the apparent lack of will to keep to the Agenda, making it difficult at times to follow. And the occasional interruptions to speakers, while they were making valid points, was mostly unnecessary.

There were several instances where the applicant's counsel Hereward Philpott appeared to be quite overtly steering the view that the ExA inspectors should be taking in the next stage of the process,

such as the observation that only the Principal Issues should be considered. Was this a crude hint that none of the 'tricky' Specific Issues should be allowed?

The ExA inspectors allowed the applicant's counsel to explain what the Rochdale Envelope was – quite inappropriately and incorrectly as it happens. This device is supposed to provide an instrument for allowing a range of values or parameters for a particular issue, where defined figures are not yet available. It is not a hiding place for aspects that EDF have not yet begun to resolve or in some cases ever likely to, for example, the greater part of the work necessary for evaluating the coastal defences, the BLF, water issues and the use of rail.

This last subject was left hanging farcically after Part 1, where the applicant stated that they are in regular contact with Network Rail and foresee no problem with 4 trains per 24 hours (later, at peak, possibly 5) whilst two speakers, who both professed knowledge of these matters, said this could not be done due to lack of line capacity and impact on passenger services. If this is so, and with doubts about the capacity and continuous availability of the BLF, will this mean untold numbers of additional road vehicles?

From Middleton's viewpoint, this is a horrifying vision, as especially in the early years of construction, the use of the existing B1122 road will allow all this traffic to thunder past dwellings that are within 2 metres of the road edge. This may be reduced by the use of the SLR, but its presently proposed route is vehemently challenged by ourselves and many other interested parties, who insist that proper evaluation is undertaken of the more southerly route known as D2 or W.

EDF have dismissed this without adequate explanation. It is the solution favoured by SCC (who may not adopt the EDF-proposed SLR) providing a shorter travelling distance for the HGVs with corresponding less pollution, it is further from residences, does not annexe so much viable farmland and important side roads and offers a lasting legacy for Leiston Town.

Yours faithfully

Sharon Smith
Clerk to Middleton cum Fordley Parish Council