

**By on-line submission to PINS**

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**Application by NNB Generation Company (SZC) Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for The Sizewell C Project**

Further to my contribution to the Open Floor Hearings (OFHs) I wish to make the following observations:

- The number, range and diversity of those speaking against the proposed development of Sizewell C gave a very realistic illustration of the strength and scale of local and expert opposition that exists to the project;
- Businesses, communities, environmental experts and individuals alike were united in their agreement that the project should not proceed;
- EDF made no attempt whatsoever to engage positively in the OFHs and such conduct has reinforced their reputation locally as an organisation that is either unwilling or unable to start or sustain a reasonable dialogue with affected parties: EDF has treated local people with extreme contempt;
- On that basis EDF has clearly failed to meet the requirement, voiced by Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng, that for the project to be approved EDF must win the support of the local community;
- It was clear from the OFHs that local people and a range of technical experts are strongly opposed to EDF's plans with regard to, amongst other things: the inadequate and unrealistic transport strategy; levels of HGV traffic; sea defences; flooding and drainage; environmental and community impacts; materials; and economics;
- The OFHs have reinforced the reasons for my original objections to EDF's proposals, which I have previously submitted to both EDF and PINS;
- To reprise and to confirm the detail of my continuing objections they are that were it to proceed the project would:
  - Desecrate the Suffolk Coast and physically divide the remainder of the AONB;
  - Have a hugely negative impact on internationally-protected habitats including RSPB Minsmere (designated SSSI, SPA, SAC, Ramsar), the Sizewell Belts and Dunwich Heath;
  - Cause immense harm to significant populations of rare birds, animals and plants (for example marsh harrier, bittern, bearded tit, otter);
  - Drastically reduce our natural capital;

- Permanently damage Suffolk's very significant and thriving tourism sector;
- Hollow out and destroy, for limited and short term benefits, any local businesses unable to pay competitive wages;
- Reduce and deflect other business stability and investment otherwise attracted to remain or locate in the area for the high quality of life;
- Completely overload the A12 and the local road system with catastrophic environmental, social and economic consequences;
- Position new nuclear operational capacity and the long-term storage of waste on an unstable and insecure site;
- Divert public and private investment to support a technology and industry that is failing elsewhere and is in decline;
- Fail to deliver significantly on local jobs, despite EDF's claims;
- Undermine the Government's policies to level up the UK economy; and
- Almost certainly rely on financial support from Government, or the introduction of a Regulated Asset Base funding model, in straightened economic times: a "nuclear tax" on bills that would be disproportionately felt by those on low incomes which Minister Kwarteng has said could not bypass the government's balance sheet and would be looked at or scored as government debt.

In addition to these observations I also want to endorse the OFH and Written Submissions of Stop Sizewell C, TASC, RSPB, SWT and Suffolk Coastal FoE.

I also wish to register my interest in speaking at any issue-specific hearing (s) relating to socio-economic issues.

Finally I copy below the personal contribution I made to the OFHs.

***This special place: Suffolk***

Last week I chanced upon an elderly lady, along with her daughter and granddaughter, at RSPB Minsmere where I am a volunteer guide. They were looking for 'grandad's tree' and it soon became apparent that they were trying to relocate the spot where, a couple of years previously, they had scattered grandad's ashes.

We spoke for a little while about the man, his wish for his last resting place to be Minsmere and the family's feelings about the importance of choosing somewhere so unique and special for remembrance. I understood those feelings well enough because my late wife's ashes are also scattered at Minsmere in a spot that was special to her and remains so to me and to our children.

But beyond such intense personal connections to the place, how do we attribute a value to Minsmere and the wider AONB?

I have been a regular visitor at Minsmere for around 45 years; it was the most special of places during my 30 year marriage and my children spent large chunks of their young lives there; they still visit whenever possible.

But over that same period I enjoyed a 40 year career, in Suffolk, in economic development with a clear focus on securing investment for business growth, employment creation and skills development. I worked for many years for the county council and the chamber of commerce, amongst others.

Alongside a love for the environment and wild places I therefore have a long-standing professional, and pragmatic, commitment to achieving a strong and sustainable economy that works for local businesses and individuals alike.

During my professional life I met and got to know a lot of local businesses, from all sectors and of all sizes. I came to understand very well the challenges that they face and the energy and investment that it takes for them to thrive. Businesses of course are owned, managed and staffed by individuals with their own values and interests and their own reasons for doing what they do and doing it where they do it. It became obvious to me that there is an overwhelming sense in the Suffolk business community of what a special place Suffolk is, with a wonderful and tranquil landscape underpinning an excellent quality of life. That is especially true in and close to the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. This sense of Suffolk as a special place to start up or run a business underpins its entrepreneurial character and gives it deep roots.

This perception has been strongly reinforced since I began volunteering at RSPB Minsmere. As a regular guide over the past ten years I have met countless local business people in 'relaxation mode'. I have come to appreciate the value that they place on being able to balance their entrepreneurial drive and the demands of running their businesses with the need for a special place for rest, recuperation and good old-fashioned pleasure in wild places. These are *the same people* already driving what is a very diverse and successful local economy with good prospects for growth, low levels of unemployment and they are already having to wrestle with labour and skills shortages. Nonetheless the importance of the Suffolk environment – this special place - both roots businesses in the county and attracts them to it whether to establish a business or take up employment.

An unhelpful belief is that the only businesses likely to be adversely affected by the proposed Sizewell C project are those in the tourism and leisure sectors. Certainly those sectors, which are critical to the Suffolk economy, would be very negatively affected by Sizewell C should it go ahead but the impact on the wider business community would also be harshly felt. The proposed project would erode the characteristics and quality that make Suffolk special and would weaken business confidence in Suffolk as an attractive place to remain or in which to locate.

My own convictions are reinforced by the Suffolk local authority-led and New Anglia LEP-endorsed [Invest in Suffolk initiative](#) which through Suffolk Chamber of Commerce hosts 100 prominent business ambassadors. Invest in Suffolk tells potential investors that "Suffolk is one of the most beautiful *and unspoilt* areas in the UK"...with..."a fantastic quality of life".

Likewise the New Anglia LEP [Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy](#) acknowledges that: “the *natural landscape* plays a unique role in creating the ‘*sense of place*’ that makes the area a great place to live, work, learn, invest and do business in...”.

The County Council's [Suffolk Growth Strategy](#) similarly promotes the: “excellent quality of life that people can enjoy in Suffolk...*an attractive place for people to live and work*...our longstanding commitment to become the UK’s “greenest county”.

EDF has failed to take into account, as required by National Policy Statement EN-6, the potential negative impacts on local business retention and future investment by the proposed ruination of this special place. The volume and value of the economic and employment gains created through the proposed project would be more than offset by the very real losses resulting from irreparable disturbance and damage to our environment.

The SZC proposals that would desecrate the area as a special place for joy and remembrance would be equally disastrous for the economy and employment in Suffolk.

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