

Jackum Brown Ref: 20026229 31/05/21

Summary of submission for Deadline 2

Overview

**Yoxford, A1120/A12 traffic and the East Suffolk Local Plan
Grade 11 Listed Methodist Chapel, Yoxford High Street**

The text of my oral submission is within the body of the written submission below:

Overview

First and foremost, I have to say that I totally oppose and object in the strongest possible terms to the proposed building of SZC and all building and infrastructure works that are included in EDF's DCO document. Sizewell is quite obviously the wrong place for any large infrastructure project to be built, especially a potentially lethal one, for many reasons:

1. Because the 3.2 GW energy that it may or may not ever generate can be produced faster, be safer and cost far less money by using a combination of alternative technologies and battery storage.
2. Because the coast is fast eroding, and SZC will exacerbate flooding and erosion to the north and south, putting more people's homes and businesses at risk.
3. Because the sea will always win, regardless of the height of the surrounding walls and no amount of reinforced concrete will prevent that. The sea is rising faster than forecast, the Poles are melting at an unprecedented rate, and this adds to extreme weather events, storm surges, higher waves, etc.
4. Because the ramifications of storing lethal radioactive waste on the shore here for over 100 years and possibly much longer, with the sea coming in, does not bear thinking about.
5. Because we will not only lose a large part of our supposedly protected AONB, but we will lose the whole of East Suffolk, which in a very few years will be transformed from a rural to an industrialised area. Our history and heritage will be lost to a French company, billions of euros in debt, that has no sense of or feeling for it, yet they propose to trash it along with our lives for energy we do not need. It is shameful that such an idea in this era of climate emergency, environmental protection and net gain is even talked about.

Yoxford, A1120/A12 traffic, and the East Suffolk Local Plan

I live in Yoxford and want to draw your attention to the impending disaster that is going to take place on the roads round here.

The distance between the A12/A1094 junction at Friday Street and the A12/A144 Halesworth junction is 11.5 miles. Everyone who uses it is aware that the A12/ A1094 Friday Street junction is awkward and dangerous and will welcome changes to it if it is made easier and safer. However, this is just the first of 4 major roadworks: there will also be the new

roundabout and Sizewell Link road at Kelsale, the Yoxford Roundabout, the Darsham Park and Ride roundabout, and 2 lesser plans for roadworks at Saxmundham and the A144 Halesworth turn off. I feel that EDF's plans fail to take account of the Council's Suffolk Coastal Local Plan which includes yet more road improvement plans, with at least one new road to join the proposed new Garden Neighbourhood area south of Saxmundham to the A12. 800 new houses are planned there, 50 p.a. to be built going up to 150 p.a. in the mid-2020s and this is not the only area of Saxmundham where new housing is planned. These housing projects, Sizewell C, and the works at Friston planned by Scottish Power will all be running simultaneously, as will the other new builds planned for the area.

Just to the south of Darsham station, east of the A12, a development of 120 houses/blocks of flats is planned, with access from Westleton Road, and to the station. To the north, an 82-bedroom hotel, with car parking and associated works is planned beside Darsham Service Station with eco lodges behind it. This is directly opposite the proposed Northern Park and Ride. North of The Street, Darsham a development of 26 dwellings is planned, with access, car parking and open space and two tourism developments: the redevelopment of High Lodge Golf Course to provide 170 cabins, 3 tree houses and associated buildings, with new access to the A12, situated north of The Street, Darsham, additional glamping pods and pitches at Mill Hill Farm, Westleton Road, and additional pitches at Hill Farm, Lymbals Lane. North and west of The Street is the A144 turn off to Halesworth. This junction will be subject to improvement works to allow for the anticipated much larger volume of traffic that will be turning into and out of the A12.

The cumulative effect of this huge amount of building and roadworks with all the extra HGVs and other vehicles in this relatively short distance of the A12, plus the vast quantity of traffic that SZC and Friston will add, will render the road extremely difficult for anyone to use, and local people will find themselves unable and unwilling to do so. Those living west of the A12 who normally shop and use other facilities such as surgeries, schools, dentists and so on in Saxmundham and Leiston will no longer do so, putting a strain on the facilities offered by towns such as Framlingham and Halesworth. This is detrimental and unfair to the locality and its residents. It will also add hugely to the difficulties that the Blue Light Services are facing.

The A1120 junction with the A12 is an obvious and problematic one, something EDF do not appear to have factored into their proposals. The A1120 will be the main artery for traffic to/from the SZC site after the A12. It will carry hundreds, possibly thousands, of extra vehicle movements per day with LGVs, smaller lorries and vans and cars from the west and north as well as workers living in villages and towns within a 90-minute journey to/from SZC. This range encompasses Stowmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Newmarket, Ely, Thetford and Diss, as well as everywhere in between. Larger vehicles are likely to travel this way from the Midlands and the North East. Only HGVs bound for the SZC site are forbidden to use this road, already much used by HGVs generally, but every other type of vehicle is allowed and the numbers will increase hugely. All this traffic will slowly inch onto the A12, almost immediately joining the lead onto the major new roundabout at the junction with the B1121. The congestion that will occur during the construction of the roundabout will be enormous.

Yoxford is the frontline village in this scenario. The High Street is quite narrow at the A12 end. We suffer traffic jams here on every sunny, warm weekend, every Bank Holiday and every weekend and weekday too from April to mid-October. It is not surprising to have to wait for 5/6 minutes now to get onto the A12, so with the expected numbers of extra vehicles, we can anticipate traffic to be backed up through the village much, if not all, of the time. I notice that for the early years, the highest amount of projected HGV movements will be from the spring to the end of July. This coincides neatly with much of the tourism to the area and is the time of year when people have their windows open and spend time in their gardens. The houses here are mainly built directly to the pavement and the majority of residents do not have garages and have to park on the High Street itself – on both sides, as does everyone visiting the village, for whatever reason. Part of the High Street has no pavement on the south side, and another part, closer to the A12 on the north side has an extremely narrow one, where two people cannot pass without stepping into the road. There have been several near misses already. There is a Primary School with a small front garden that has recently had an influx of children from three other local Primary Schools that have been closed. The children play outside, and whenever the weather allows; the classroom windows are opened. These children will be at risk from the amount of emissions arising from endless slow moving traffic. All the residents of Yoxford will be similarly affected, not just when they go out and about in the village but when they are inside their homes or in their gardens. It will be difficult to cross the High Street and for those residents living on the east side of the A12, it will be extremely difficult to access the High Street and all its amenities: the school, the surgery, the church, the village hall, the post office, the shops, pubs, café, and restaurants. It astonishes me that no mitigation has been proposed: no traffic lights, no safe crossing point, just no thought for local people's lives at all.

There are 3 other roads in the Yoxford that will be negatively affected: two are no through roads, but residents still have to be able to get in and out of them onto the High Street through the village. The third is the Old High Road, which runs from the High Street up the side of the church and down to join the A12. This road is already used as a shortcut. However, there is a garage at the High Street end, and there are always several cars parked opposite it, as the road bends. This too is an accident waiting to happen.

Grade 11 Listed Methodist Chapel, Yoxford High Street

I own a Grade 11 Listed Methodist Chapel in Yoxford High Street, in the Conservation Area. [REDACTED] for 25 years, and indeed was brought up in a village about 7 miles away. During this period, traffic has increased dramatically on the A1120. Yoxford has grown in size, with many new houses built, and many families have more than one car per household. Some years ago, the A1120 became a designated Tourist Route, running from the A14 near Stowmarket to end here in Yoxford. This has added greatly to traffic use, and today, as several large local estates have been turned into upmarket tourist accommodation, traffic grows year on year. To this add farm vehicles, some of which are gigantic, visitors coming to music festivals such as Latitude and Maui Wauai, as well as the internationally known Snape Maltings concert hall, plus all the normal tourism to the AONB, our well-known coastal towns and villages, the coast itself and RSPB Minsmere, and it adds up to plenty of traffic already. The Inspectors could easily have missed this point if they visited Yoxford on a chilly winter day in the middle of Covid lockdown.

I fear for the integrity of my Chapel. The large rose window at the front, and the 10 windows down the sides are all original, leaded stained glass. They are fragile, and very unlike today's tight fitting, double glazed windows. There is no doubt in my mind that they will be damaged by all the noxious emissions from the endless stream of vehicles that will be constantly directly outside, all of 9 feet from the frontage. These fumes, so deeply damaging to health, will inevitably get inside the building. The Chapel is built of Suffolk White bricks. These too will suffer degradation - how long will they stay pale, I wonder? However, the problem is not just noxious fumes, it is also vibration and, obviously, noise. Vibrations will exacerbate the ingress of emissions as the glass, within its leaded lights, is shaken and loosened day after day, and the noise will be constant, even at night. It is my duty to care for this building, but obviously this is completely impossible given these circumstances. In the last couple of years, the small copse that formed a barrier in front of Cockfield Hall, by the A12, has been felled and traffic noise at the rear of the Chapel has noticeably increased.

I am full of deep regret and anger that I am therefore being forced to sell up and move from a place I love and had hoped to die in. I am using a local estate agent who told me that in his view, Yoxford was the village that would be most severely impacted because of the A12/A1122 junction. He pointed out to me that, currently, it is already difficult to find houses to buy in the area, and extremely difficult to find places for rent. When I jokingly said perhaps, I could store my furniture and rent a static caravan while I look for somewhere suitable, he told me in that case I would be his fourth client to do have to do just that.

Leaving and returning to Yoxford, just to go shopping in Saxmundham or Halesworth, or to catch a train at Darsham station, is going to become a time consuming and stressful business. Locals will of course avoid the A12 whenever possible. Saxmundham's supermarkets and shops will no longer be of any use, nor will Leiston's, so we'll try to stay to the west of the A12 as much as possible. Most people will head for Halesworth – but sadly this too will be so much more difficult as the SZC workers will quickly find the various tiny back lanes which will enable them to cut off the A1120/A12 junction and reach the Northern Park and Ride from the west. I can guarantee there will be accidents on these roads, many of which are not wide enough for two cars to pass. Thus, the residents of Yoxford will effectively be kettled in their own village – is this fair and democratic? The Blue Light services have already raised concerns regarding access, and there is no doubt that local residents will die unnecessarily as a direct result of EDF's proposed build. Paramedics and ambulances will just not be able to reach people in time – I had to make a 999 call at 5.30am three summers ago and it took 50 minutes for the ambulance to arrive even then. Fire crews and the Police will be similarly affected. Sizewell workers will have a helicopter to whisk them off to hospital, but local people will have even less chance of getting there in a timely manner than they do now.

I find it utterly extraordinary that EDF are not only proposing to transform this rural backwater into a monstrous industrialised and urbanised shambles with lethal radioactive waste left on our crumbling shore, but also that they and our governing authorities appear content to accept the inevitable excess of unnecessary deaths in an area well known for having an older demographic, which already suffers from slow access to Blue Light services and whose nearest hospitals are some 30 plus miles away. This is absolutely shocking.

I bitterly regret that the footpaths, forests, heaths, and shore that I have known virtually all my life will no longer be there to enjoy. I habitually walk-through different areas of our AONB, but neither I nor anyone else will want to go anywhere near there anymore. The views will be ruined, the noise will be hideous and the light and noise at night does not bear thinking about. SZC will be heard and seen and possibly smelled from miles around, and we who live here just have to say farewell to peaceful walks filled with birdsong and the sound of the sea meeting the shore as well as our dark skies at night. In other words, we have to say farewell to our daily lives and to the all the reasons we chose to live here in the first place. What a shocking legacy we are proposing to pass on to our children, grandchildren, and the generations yet unborn.

I want to endorse the submissions from TASC, Stop Sizewell C, Friends of the Earth, the RSPB and everyone else who is speaking against this utterly ruinous project, and to ask the Inspectors to support the environment, Government's green agenda and the quality of life for as yet unborn generations by turning down this project.