Text of Oral Submission Sizewell C Project

John Walton Registration ID 20025979

I have had a career advising some well-known US institutions on investment opportunities. The most important thing I learnt… was not to look back, but to the future.

It is clear to me that Sizewell C does not meet ANY of the criteria to justify investment.

Every policy action NOW has to put the future viability of our planet front and centre.

Recent evidence is causing many scientists to fear an early "tipping point", a global catastrophe.

Sizewell C will take 20 years from the start of construction to pay down its carbon bill, by which time it may already be too late. By contrast, the rapid availability of carbon-friendly renewables makes it obvious that there is NO climate benefit.

Given what we know now, a new siting of a complex nuclear plant in such a location is bizarre.

As a Fellow of UCL, I am aware of the work of Dr Paul Dorfman, who led the European Environment Agency's response to Fukushima. Recent mapping suggests that, even under median estimates, the Sizewell C nuclear island will be almost completely cut off by flood water once per year by 2050. As a boy, I witnessed the destruction caused by the 1953 flood surge, and a repeat is a significant risk.

Nor can one ignore the near 500% increase year on year of cyber- attacks, such as the recent lethal one on the Colonial pipeline in the US.

Sizewell C was envisaged long ago when the cost of alternatives was still high. Large scale wind and solar is now a fraction of the cost of nuclear, even excluding the cost of decommissioning. The economics are clear. New "old" nuclear is a thing of the past.

Recent reports from Government and Parliamentary committees support this. Furthermore, the NAO has said that Hinkley is both risky and expensive, adding

that the cost of decommissioning had risen by £3 billion since 2017; the National Infrastructure Commission reports that renewables offer the least cost for consumers.

Hitachi and Toshiba appear to have pulled the plug, and one suspects that EDF would have done so too if it were not for the 83% State shareholding, and the expectation of a massive UK subsidy. The US version of RAB has involved billions of over-spend, and no new working reactor. For the first time ever, solar and wind make up the major proportion of the world's new power generation.

So, if the project fails to contribute a climate benefit, is built on a vulnerable site, based on old technology, and is hopelessly uneconomic, why is it not buried as a relic of a past industrial era?

Politicians point to employment opportunities, but would the Victorians have talked up employment in canal building once the railway network existed? Better to support opportunities in renewables.

This leaves the argument about grey, windless days. But storage is increasing massively in scale, and will become much cheaper with anticipated breakthroughs in technology. In any case wind is much cheaper, INCLUDING storage. Belgium , which is phasing out nuclear by 2025, is a model.

One cannot be surprised that the relevant department, BEIS, has written to me referring to interest in "new" as opposed to "old" nuclear. If Government WERE to determine that nuclear IS necessary in the energy mix, small modular reactors built, for example, by Rolls Royce in areas selected for "levelling up" might be the answer, not Sizewell C.