

Sizewell C

Alison Andrews contribution to Oral Floor Hearing *including additional notes in italics.*

I am a permanent resident of Aldeburgh.

For a number of years, I accepted that Sizewell C would come to the area and my efforts in relation to participating in consultations focussed on identifying how the most injurious impacts of the project might be mitigated. For example, *a project of this size will swamp the area for example the proposed residential blocks near Eastbridge would house almost more people than the census population of Aldeburgh, but some mitigation might have been building heritage housing.*

As time has gone on it has become increasingly apparent that the project is growing in size and will take longer than originally foreseen, and despite efforts to reduce traffic impact the volume, *but which the Applicant has said will be less than the latest increased projects in volume,* is such that the local area with its rural infrastructure will simply not cope.

Looking back at comments submitted in earlier consultations, containing views and local understanding shared by many others, very little account has been taken of local insights. I have reluctantly concluded we should be grateful that Sizewell B 's life can be extended by 20 years but so much has changed and is known in terms of size of the project, technology, the environment, coastal erosion and climate change that the site originally identified as a possibility decades ago is no longer fit for purpose.

Here is not the place to argue that the national energy policy needs coherence, that from all we can understand there is no surety that once built this power station will produce power, that it will not be completed probably until some years after the real national deficit in energy has passed. So, I will focus on a few things-

Has there been a genuine consultation with the public, meriting the new streamlined 6-month examination process of what should be reasonably defined plans for the DCO? As I see it, no. Mostly recently, the hurried consultation at the end of 2020 at best indicated the plans may change, that *the impact on the coast had not been assessed but nevertheless was said, without any evidence, to be considered to be slight.* What was presented were not clear plans but options that themselves has several variations such as the beach landing facilities. In the end, despite attending a workshop on the coastal changes with local experts who had the same difficulties, it was only possible to respond that it was not possible to comment constructively as too much was unknown or undefined. On the changed rail plans, comments made by others at the OFH showed by careful examination showed that these were barely thought through in terms of logistics and the same applied to seeking ways to mitigate traffic.

Is this fragile and dynamic coastline an adequate basis for two nuclear plants where the security of the material it contains is paramount? There might seem to be a logic in putting SZC with SZA and SZB next to already installed powerlines (*although it now seems that that power line capacity will have to be increased as well*), but SZC 's two plants are to be squeezed into the space left northwards of SZA and SZB, *but unlike having a foundation based on crag outcrops which benefits A and B,,* SZC 's foundations need to be built by excavating out huge volumes of underlying material and encroaching on the marsh/wet grassland which is the essence of the Minsmere reserve. *The*

complications of this compressed site, for the hydrology of the Minsmere Levels as well as the construction itself, must be huge, as it involves taking out land to below sea level and building a deep curtain wall. There are complications too for the safety of this low site close to the edge of a rising sea with coastline made of a soft easily erodable material.

Spoil heaps: In short and medium term, these excavations will necessitate the spoil heaps of over 30 metres which will be standing high above the surrounding land for miles around and inland. If anyone has stood near a sandy or open soil area in this part of the world in a high wind, these 'mountainous', relative to the low lying countryside got miles around, spoil heaps of loose soil can only lead to massive earth blow across the countryside with consequences for pollution. Is anything proposed to prevent that? *Can the Sandlings be restored by massive landscaping of these spoil heaps of very mixed soil and ground content when the essence of their unique characteristics lies in their sandy geology?*

There is the real concern that the local infrastructure simply is not up to bearing 10 -12 years of intense and heavy traffic. Serious investment is needed in better roads that would be wider with good foundations and good camber. **Example:** Only yesterday, I was driving along the A1094 from Aldeburgh in a thunderstorm and in 4 miles had to pass through 3 large lagoons of trapped rainwater lying across the road, that is on an A road not one of our many narrow country lanes, having to slow down and even so a car coming the other way with a few others following it did not slow and the splash meant I could see nothing through my windscreen hoping going straight slowly would keep me safe. *What would it be like with a flow of HGVs as is proposed?* At Stratford St Andrew, on the A12 going through a village, nitrogen oxide levels already exceed annual mean Air Quality Objectives - and that is with the current level of traffic. *These two simple examples, and others can quote many more, illustrate the many local concerns that the existing road network is a highly limited infrastructure and yet it is proposed to use it for the timely and efficient delivery for the largest building site in Europe.*

Further, there will be a negative impact on the local economy and daily life *because of the imposed addition of a massive increase in traffic onto the limited infrastructure with very little investment to improve adequacy, despite what might be in the self-interest of the project to be able to function efficiently.*

- Local life will be affected- both getting to our shopping towns like Leiston, Saxmundham and Woodbridge, or going further afield via the A 12.
- This is an area with a well above average older population: there are many carers, often visiting people in their homes 2 or 3 times a day so with traffic congestion vital services will be delayed.
- Ambulances will struggle to get through- it is a one hour and twenty minute return journey on a good day now to the nearest hospital at Ipswich, so if traffic gets snarled up locally or on the A12 with an overloaded road system, delays in getting someone to hospital will be a serious problem.
- Also, being a rural area, children have to travel on long bus journeys to the secondary schools through the roads in the country behind Sizewell and inevitably that normal traffic will clash with construction traffic. If the project were only 6 months in length that would be one thing, but to last for 10-12 years is a blight on the entire school life of many children.

A proper solution would be proper investment in roads but that does not seem to be in any plans.

Light pollution will last for some 80 years but may be longer. One the great features of this AONB are the clear skies and dark nights valuable to humans and wildlife alike. ***That will be lost for the lives of most people alive now.***

Destruction of the environment, and access to the countryside and peace and quiet. The whole of this area is much enjoyed by local walkers and the many visitors, a lot of whom return year after year. The huge level of works traffic will deter many walkers. The impact on the Minsmere site of the noise, pollution and excavations going on alongside it appears to be not understood.

To summarise, there must be other sites where the coast is less fragile, and less risky in terms of building a plant where safety failure from the underlying geomorphology is not a risk, where climate change and coastal risk can be effectively understood, and where there are proper access roads, real trunk roads or stronger railways not something which barely escaped the Beeching axe. Can despoiling a unique area of outstanding natural beauty which cannot be recovered be justified against the many uncertainties surrounding this project. Can a project that still has a huge number of uncertainties about how it will actually be built or produce energy be given permission? On top of all that, for everyone trying to carry on normal life in the area it will be like living in a building site with no prospect of respite for 12 or more years and the main local industry tourism is likely to be blighted and so blight the local economy.

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