

Sizewell C Development Consent Order ('DCO') Application
Woodbridge Town Council (IP20025891) – Deadline 3 Submission
Comments on Deadline 2 Examining Authority's written questions,
from Suffolk County Council, East Suffolk Council, and Network Rail -
Summary

A. Freight Management Strategy ('FMS')

1. WTC is gravely concerned that approval of the DCO submission, if given under current timescales, would proceed without the impact of the use of the East Suffolk Line through Woodbridge being fully understood as to timetabling, safety and impact mitigation, both on the operational railway and residents along the line. NWR will be unable, during the Examination, to decide on the operational aspects (see NV.1.90).
2. WTC contends the Applicant has demonstrated, by its failure to provide details to NWR as well as other IPs, that it has advanced its DCO Application too early, in trying to achieve a particular start date for financial reasons. The FMS is insufficiently developed. See SCC answers to AL.1.10, AQ.1.67, HW.1.28, SE.1.42, NV.1.19 and NWR answer to NV.1.13.
3. NWR's response to SE.1.43 shows that the Applicant is considering what can be done by its preferred start date, rather than giving an acceptable outcome to people living along the transport routes. Daytime rail freight is incorrectly dismissed as "infeasible."
4. WTC is gravely concerned that the Applicant is trying to say whatever is necessary to get a positive decision on the DCO - in the expectation that once the build is started, they will be allowed to use whatever means are expedient to finish, without regard to planning issues.
5. Switching freight from HGV by day to rail by night won't give relief to Woodbridge (situated between the A12 and the East Suffolk Line).
6. Freight trains stopped in Woodbridge station in either direction will block heavily-used crossings.
7. So freight trains must not start to run until resilience and safety is provided via dualling the line.

8. It's unacceptable to push this freight back onto the roads.
9. SCC (HW.1.28) mentions the impact of daytime trains on the A1152 crossing at Melton, which is a key bottleneck. Operating freight trains through Melton at peak road traffic hours would cause gridlock to reach Woodbridge. Careful timetabling and dualling would be required to minimise daytime A1152 crossing operations.

B. Night-time train noise

10. WTC contends that the Applicant is under-playing the adverse impact of night-time train noise on people living near the track.
11. Responses from SCC, ESC and NWR to many NV questions show that the Applicant's assumptions are questionable, and that its proposals are insufficient to minimise and mitigate the noise and resulting health impacts experienced by Woodbridge residents. The Applicant is still working on its noise limitation strategy.
12. SCC supports a night-time quiet period (NV.1.26), but it's unclear how this would work.

C. Issues with using the A12 for road freight

13. ESC's (CU.1.18) mentions that improvements to the A12 will take several years. If construction starts before the improvements are finished, the congestion and adverse impact to the local economy will be enormous. Unmanageable amounts of traffic would be displaced onto the B1438. Improvements to the A12 near Woodbridge are needed in preparation for Sizewell traffic, not reactively after problems have started. The Applicant should contribute to the funding of these improvements.
14. SCC disagrees (HW.1.0) with the Applicant that impact on quality of life, health and wellbeing are insignificant.
15. WTC would like to see more investigation into ensuring vehicles use the roads as agreed (TT.1.25) and preventing rat-running (TT.1.87) than SCC's responses mentioned.

16. WTC concurs with SCC (TT.1.85) that the applicant's figures of only a few extra seconds delay don't seem credible.

End