

Issue Specific Hearing 4: Socio-Economic and community issues

These submissions are made by Josie Bassinette on behalf of the Walberswick Parish Council.

Number: 20025708

The following is a summary of oral submissions and other issues of concern being provided in writing.

Socio-Economic Issues

1. **Local Economy Impacts – Businesses, Tourism and Employment:** We would like to associate ourselves with the statements made by many Interested Parties including Stop Sizewell C, TASC, Mr. Collins, Ms Galloway, Ms Fellowes and Mr. Burfield that there is no upside in terms of the local economy or community from Sizewell C.
 - a. **Tourism:** We believe that EDF's assessment and approach fails to understand the nature of Suffolk Coastal's tourism driven economy. The concept that the loss of this core employment and business generating sector through the creation of a "tourism fund" being administered by ESC is not a credible mitigation. We challenge the repeated statements of EDF that the tourism sector and mitigation in Suffolk coastal can follow a similar approach used by EDF at Hinkley Point. The areas are not at all similar. The tourism approach at Hinkley is basically that Somerset remains open for business despite the destructive construction of the nuclear plant and that tourists can avoid the the Hinkley site by going elsewhere. In the case of Sizewell C, the situation is exactly the opposite. The construction of the nuclear reactors and all its associated development is in the midst of and threatens the survival of what attracts visitors to coastal Suffolk. No matter how much is in a fund or how much 'promotion' ESC thinks they can do with it, one cannot entice visitors to return to or come to coastal Suffolk if the things that bring them no longer exists because of the Sizewell build. In this regard, we think it is essential to link the impact on biodiversity and ecology discussed at ISH 7 with tourism because these aspects are at the core of the tourist experience. We draw your attention to the written representation made by the National Trust on the need to move from concentrating on the power station alone as the applicant wishes to do, but to analyse and put greater emphasis on the role the development may have in affecting coastal change on this part of the coast in its entirety, including potential impacts on third parties such as the National Trust Dunwich Heath and the Walberswick SPA. The physical destruction at the site, the loss of access and the character of the AONB, the SSSI, biodiversity, dark skies, clean air, plus the urbanisation related to the ancillary sites and the congestion of our already fragile transport network will be and will remain a deterrent for a generation to come.
 - b. We believe that the failure to understand the tourism industry and the interlinkages with the environment, transport and the freight strategies

mean that the assessments, monitoring and mitigation are inappropriate. We would like to request that there be a separate issue specific hearing on tourism impact.

- c. **Employment and business impacts:** We would like to associate ourselves with the statements made by Mr. Kusak, Ms Galloway and Ms Downes with regard to the current shortage of construction workers and hospitality workers in our area and the negative impacts on local services and employment churn that will occur if the Sizewell project goes ahead. We agree strongly with the statement made by Nick Burfield on the need to legitimately hear from the business community and that an impartial survey that reaches a wider cross-section of local business is essential.
2. **Effect on rail services:** We would like to see evidence to prove EDF's assertion that their rail strategy will not negatively impact on passenger rail services. Evidence would have to be provided not only through agreement with Network Rail, but also with Greater Anglia, the passenger service operator. Already today, late running freight trains are often the cause of delays and cancellations in passenger services on the Ipswich to Lowestoft line. The commitment by EDF that its freight trains will not interfere with Greater Anglia passenger trains waiting for passengers arriving on connecting trains from London and Norwich is simply not believable and requires comprehensive assessment. It is also unrealistic that late running freight trains from/to the main site will not cause delays and cancellations in trains on the East Suffolk line. This will clearly negatively impact local people traveling to work, school, medical care and for tourism purposes. There are no public transport alternatives to the passenger rail in this part of Suffolk. EDF's rail strategy must be challenged until it can provide a legally binding agreement with Greater Anglia as well as Network Rail in the Deed of Obligation on impact, monitoring and mitigation. Failure of the rail strategy, of course, would have significant impact on the road strategy – that is putting hundreds more lorries back on the road every day.

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3. **Housing and Accommodation strategy:** As with the serious shortfalls of ignoring the 'early years' in the transport and freight management strategies, the housing and accommodation strategy similarly ignores 'early years' impact. For example, in the first 3 years, there could be up to 3000 workers who will need to use local accommodation because no campus and no caravan park will be available. It is simply impossible for the local area to absorb even a fraction of this total using available accommodation. Rural Suffolk is in no way comparable with Hinkley Point and any attempt to house these workers locally will fail. Those that may be able to find accommodation will only be able to do so by squeezing out locals especially in the extraordinarily thin rental market. A search on the housing website Right Move finds that in a 30 mile radius of Sizewell, going north to Norwich and south towards Colchester, there are less than 450 rental properties. Within 15 miles, there are only 23. Even if Sizewell workers took all available rental accommodation, it would not be nearly enough. The other alternative is that these workers would need to fill

not only every single rental accommodation, but would all available tourist accommodation which, in this area, are private, self-catering homes and small B&Bs. If this was to be the case, then the impact on the tourist industry in the area would be to collapse it entirely. These figures demonstrate the impossibility of EDF's housing and accommodation strategy in the early years. We would also like to associate ourselves with the statements made by Mr. Collins and Ms Fellowes on this subject.

4. As for the later years, we remain opposed to the Eastbridge campus and share the concerns of nearly every Interested Party of the extreme risk of the local community being overwhelmed by the choice of location and the absence of appropriate mitigation of the accommodation campus. We believe that EDF has not appropriately considered alternatives nor fully taken the risks and impacts into account. In this, I would like to support the statement made by Ms Downes on the contradictory rationales offered by the Applicant in ignoring the need to provide an accommodation site with suitable leisure, hospitality and retail activities for its thousands of mostly young, male workers. We heard the applicant argue that the concerns of the police, ambulance, firefighters, health officials and every speaker for the local community are not justified because the workforce will be staying-in, going straight to bed at the end of their shifts and not engaging with the local community. We heard that they would not be driving on local roads nor adding to congestion, nor creating a risk of anti-social behaviour despite the tremendous difference in the work force and the local community demographics. And then we find that the applicant similarly believes that this same workforce, that is not going to venture out into the local community, also doesn't need anything other than a football pitch to keep the workers happy and entertained during their off hours. The applicant argues that Hinkley Point provides relevant experience on impacts and risks. Yet the communities around Hinkley and Sizewell could not be more different. Hinkley has easy rail links (11 minutes away). Hinkley is nearby to existing built-up urban areas. Ipswich is the closest urban area to Sizewell. There are no nearby transport links. This is yet more evidence that this project, in its current location, is infeasible.
5. **Health and Safety:** We support the statement made by Mr. Collins on the acute safety and health risks associated with this development. The main site, the accommodation campus and the ancillary developments are all being put into the midst of small communities where safety and well-being comes from people knowing one another, where neighbours and village organisations look out for each other and where vulnerable, aged members of the community feel safe on the street and in their homes. None of the streets are lit in this area. These aspects of small communities will be lost with the influx of this huge workforce. We share the deep concerns expressed by the police, fire services and blue light services in this regard. In addition, we believe that there will be multiple health impacts on the local community including stress related to over development, noise, light and vibration pollution. A large portion of the population are seniors. For very many of them, they will never see the end of the construction in their lifetimes.

6. **Monitoring and Mitigation measures:** We strongly support the statement made by the police on the inappropriateness of the monitoring and governance structures associated with the proposed Social and Safety Group. The governance issues are very similar to the concerns related to the proposed TRG. EDF will be able to prevent a quorum simply by its non-attendance. The structure has no ability to take binding decisions much less enforce action. Meaningful representation from the local communities is absent. The costs of the additional policing and handling potential anti-social behaviour is not properly modelled and therefore is not mitigated. There is a high risk of the local taxpayer having to pick up the costs of the additional policing and other services associated with the development given EDF's under-estimation of impact. There needs to be a wholesale review of the community impacts including the accommodation site location, the health and safety aspects, the risk of anti-social behaviour, the lack of leisure and other facilities for workers and the costs of ensuring health and safety. Accepting the aspirations offered by EDF are not appropriate and all agreements must be included in the Deed of Obligation.