



13th September 2021

By email: [sizewellc@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:sizewellc@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

Your Ref: EN010012

Our Ref: 20026265

Dear Sir/Madam

**Application by NNB Generation Company (SZC) Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for The Sizewell C Project**

**Procedural Deadline 7 Late Submission**

Further to our request in our representation at Deadline 7 for a late submission in respect of the Examining Inspector's request for comments on potential impacts on qualifying features at European sites (which was issued following Issue Specific Hearing 10 (ISH10) on Biodiversity and Ecology (Agenda Item 5a)), please find below our comments.

We were unable to meet the deadline of 3<sup>rd</sup> September due to resource issues and hope that the Examining Authority will accept this as a late submission.

Yours faithfully

Nina Crabb

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Regional Planning Adviser (East of England)



## Application by NNB Generation Company (SZC) Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for The Sizewell C Project

### Issue Specific Hearing 10 (ISH10) on Biodiversity and Ecology

Regarding **agenda item 5a of ISH10**, held on 27 August 2021 (*The Applicant's HRA screening assessment – to seek clarification on specific European sites and qualifying features, with views also sought from Natural England and IPs to understand any outstanding differences between the Applicant and Natural England/IPs with regards to the conclusions of no likely significant effects (LSE)*):

At the ISH, the ExA noted that throughout the Examination, there have been a number of representations questioning the conclusions of the Applicant's HRA screening assessment and listed the relevant European sites. The ExA advised that he had produced a table (provided below), listing the relevant European sites, qualifying features and potential impacts under dispute. The ExA requested the Applicant, Natural England, The Environment Agency and other Interested Parties to complete the table, confirming their position. Responses are requested for **Deadline 7** (3 September 2021).

C, internationally important for its vegetated shingle and saline lagoons features. This designation is not mentioned in th

e plan, although the Alde-Ore Estuary Ramsar designation is. At Slaughden the SSSI/SAC shingle features are in Unfavourable Condition due to inappropriate coastal management with loss of vegetated substrate within the unit as a result of anthropogenic activities, including walkers.

European site	Qualifying feature	Potential impact	Applicant/IP current position regarding LSE
Alde-Ore and Butley Estuary SAC	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide	Recreational pressure	No concerns regarding impact to habitat features themselves but could be on wintering bird features they support through recreational disturbance.
	Atlantic salt meadows ( <i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae</i> )	Recreational pressure	Although a sensitive habitat that cannot tolerate heavy footfall, we do not have significant concerns regarding impact to habitat features themselves

			but could be on wintering bird features they support through recreational disturbance.
	All qualifying features	Damage from water use/ abstraction	
Alde-Ore Estuary SPA	Sandwich tern Little tern Lesser black-backed gull	Water quality impacts from drilling mud and bentonite breakout Recreational pressure	Orford Ness supported breeding Little Tern until recent years and Orford Ness continues to support breeding Lesser black-backed gull. Both species are sensitive to recreational disturbance and this is a likely contributing factor for these feature's current unfavourable condition. Any increase in disturbance should be considered to have LSE.
	All qualifying features	Damage from water use/ abstraction	
	Not specified*	Collision risk	
Alde-Ore Estuary Ramsar	Little tern	Water quality impacts from drilling mud and bentonite breakout Recreational pressure	Orford Ness supported breeding Little Tern until recent years. This species is sensitive to recreational disturbance, and this is a contributing factor for the feature's current unfavourable condition. Any increase in disturbance should be considered to have LSE.
	Vegetated Shingle	Recreational Pressure	Ramsar features are often not as clearly defined as SSSI , SAC or SPA features, the Ramsar Information Sheet points to vegetated shingle being part of the qualifying criteria for this site. At the very least, plant species found on vegetated shingle will be part of the 'wetland plant assemblage' mentioned

			on the Ramsar Information Sheet <a href="#">GB862RIS.pdf</a> ( <a href="#">ramsar.org</a> ). Vegetated shingle is a very fragile habitat and extremely sensitive to recreational damage through trampling. Any increase in recreational usage should be considered to have LSE.
	All qualifying features	Damage from water use/ abstraction	
Benacre to Easton Bevants SPA	Bittern	Noise, light and visual disturbance	
	Little tern		
	Marsh harrier		
Humber Estuary SAC	Sea lamprey	Water quality impacts	
	River lamprey	Water quality impacts	
Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SAC	All qualifying features	Damage from water use/ abstraction	
	European dry heaths	Alteration of coastal processes/sediment transport Recreational pressure	Heathland is a fragile habitat and sensitive to recreational damage through trampling and contamination (nutrient enrichment through dog fouling). Any increase in recreational usage should be considered to have LSE. National Trust has flagged concerns regarding this feature and lack of assessment at Dunwich Heath in its previous submissions.
	Annual Vegetated Shingle Perennial Vegetated Shingle	Recreational pressure	Vegetated shingle is a very fragile habitat and extremely sensitive to recreational damage through trampling. Any increase in recreational usage should be considered to have LSE. National Trust has flagged concerns regarding this feature and lack of assessment

			at Dunwich Heath beach in its previous submissions
Minsmere–Walberswick SPA	Little tern	Water quality impacts from drilling mud and bentonite breakout Recreational pressure	The Minsmere to Walberswick frontage supported breeding Little Tern until recent years. This species is sensitive to Recreational disturbance, and this is a likely contributing factor for the feature’s current unfavourable condition. Any increase in disturbance should be considered to have LSE.
	Breeding Nightjar	Recreational pressure	Nightjar are sensitive to recreational disturbance and there supporting habitat vulnerable to damage by fire and trampling. Any increase in recreational usage should be considered to have LSE. National Trust has flagged concerns regarding this feature and lack of assessment at Dunwich Heath in its previous submissions
	All qualifying features	Damage from water use/ abstraction	
	Not specified*	Collision risk	
Minsmere–Walberswick Ramsar	Little tern	Water quality impacts from drilling mud and bentonite breakout Recreational pressure	The Minsmere to Walberswick frontage supported breeding Little Tern until recent years. This species is sensitive to Recreational disturbance, and this is a likely contributing factor for the feature’s current unfavourable condition. Any increase in disturbance should be considered to have LSE.
	All qualifying features	Damage from water use/ abstraction	
Outer Thames Estuary SPA	Little tern	Recreational disturbance	

	Little tern	Water quality impacts from drilling mud and bentonite breakout	
	Common tern		
	Red-throated diver		
	All qualifying features		Habitat loss and fragmentation
	Not specified*	Collision risk	
Orfordness-Shingle Street SAC	Annual Vegetated Shingle Perennial Vegetated Shingle	Recreational pressure	Vegetated shingle is a very fragile habitat and extremely sensitive to recreational damage through trampling. Any increase in recreational usage should be considered to have LSE. National Trust Procedural Deadline 7 Submission Section 3.4 noted absence of consideration of Orfordness-Shingle Street SAC and 3.5 its sensitivity.
Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	Allis shad	Impingement	
Staverton Park and the Thicks, Wantisden SAC	Old acidophilous oak woods with <i>Quercus robur</i> on sandy plains	Airborne pollution	

\* Collision risk to birds due to new pylons and overhead power lines has been raised by NE [RR-0878][REP2-153][REP2-071] in relation to Alde-Ore Estuary SPA, Minsmere-Walberswick SPA and Outer Thames Estuary SPA. However it is not clear for which qualifying feature(s) this concern relates. Please can NE clarify.