

Interested party i.d. no. 20025570

SZC Co's Response to the Secretary of State's Request for Further Information dated 18 March 2022: Appendix 4 – Email from Network Rail to SZC Co. in relation to the Darsham Level Crossing dated 30th March 2022

Dear Sir

I refer to the above e-mail regarding Darsham Level Crossing. Network Rail's response to SZC Co. raises a number of issues:

1. The funding split between Network Rail and Sizewell C suggests that Network Rail consider that the current situation at the crossing is border line safe (their own assessment shows a collective risk score of 2 on a scale of 1 to 11 where 1 represents the highest risk), and that a safety upgrade from Automatic Half Barrier to Full Barrier protection is required. This being the case it is clear that even marginal increase in traffic levels will present a substantial risk of "blocking back" over the crossing, leading to road vehicles potentially being struck by a train. The Northern Park and Ride and the increased traffic levels created, particularly at shift change times, is the "straw that breaks the camel's back".
2. The reference to carrying out the upgrade works in control period 7 means that the works will be carried out sometime between 2024 and 2029. There is no commitment on the part of Network Rail to carrying out the work before SZC Co. bring the Northern Park and Ride into use.
3. SZC Co. envisages that abnormal road loads from the north will travel via the A12 and cross Darsham level crossing. There is a potential risk of such loads "grounding" on the crossing.

Given the above issues it is incumbent on the Planning Inspectorate, should they agree to the construction of Sizewell C power station, to insist that SZC Co. meet the following conditions:

1. The Northern Park and Ride shall not be brought into use until the Darsham level crossing upgrade has been commissioned.
2. Abnormal road loads shall not be permitted to use the level crossing during normal railway operating times until such time that the crossing upgrade has been commissioned.

To do otherwise produces a serious risk of collision at the crossing, with potential injury/death to road users, rail passengers and staff. I trust that you will give this the serious consideration that it deserves.

Yours faithfully

Clive Lovelock