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IP 20023910 (EA1N); IP 20023912 (EA2)

DEADLINE 2: EA1N, EA2 and NATIONAL GRID PROPOSALS Response to the Open Floor Hearings in October and November 2020.

In the Open Floor Hearings, many contributors highlighted the damage that these ill-considered proposals would cause and I reaffirm my objections to the proposals by SPR as described in my Written Representation.

In this response to the OFHs, I just want to make two comments.

Firstly, when I spoke at the OFH on 6th November, I was not the only one who remarked on the absence from the public meetings of anyone from the National Grid. When I had finished, one of the inspectors indicated that NG would indeed be invited to take part in the Issue-Specific hearings. This was good to hear because, as the prime mover in this matter, their contributions are essential. However, I now understand that NG may be minded not to participate in the Issue-Specific hearings.

If so, this is surely as extraordinary as it is unacceptable. I trust that the fact of this lack of co-operation from NG would greatly assist the inspectors in coming to a speedy and satisfactory conclusion to their deliberations.

Secondly, my main aim here is not to re-iterate the points made by many at the OFHs but to focus on the "Elephant in the Room".

When SPR first announced their proposals for EA1N/EA2, the construction of Sizewell C nuclear power station had been discussed for years but it was unclear whether it would actually go ahead. However, the government has recently indicated its support and it now seems very probable that Sizewell C will indeed be built, subject of course to planning consent.

The likely construction of Sizewell C casts the EA1N/EA2 and the other NG proposals (Reference 1) in a new light. This small area of Suffolk will become a huge construction site if all these projects are allowed to proceed. The cumulative effects of the other infrastructure projects from NG/SPR and others in addition to Sizewell C will be simply overwhelming.

If I may suggest a parallel with the jury system: where a trial has been particularly long or harrowing, at the end of the trial the judge may tell the jurors that they are excused further jury service for a period of time, or indeed for life.

The construction of Sizewell C will indeed be long and harrowing for everyone in East Suffolk. I suggest that a moratorium would be appropriate on any other major infrastructure construction until Sizewell C is completed.

This would cover the area most affected by Sizewell C, bounded approximately by the coast to the East, the A12 to the West, Walberswick to the North and Snape to the South.

This would evidently preclude the ambitions of NG and SPR for Sizewell and Friston.

(If NG insist that a grid connection via Sizewell is essential, and if they can do this on the coast at Sizewell, that would at least lessen the environmental and human impact with no substation at Friston and therefore no connection corridor. However, a grid connection outside the area would still be preferable.)

The country needs a connection to the grid somewhere but it does not have to be at Sizewell or Friston. NG and SPR have the whole East Anglian coastline from Cromer to London in which to find a location where they can bring the wind power ashore in a way that does not adversely affect the environment or the people who live in the area, perhaps at Bradwell, as proposed by our MP Dr Coffey, or via a new offshore ring main.

This is not mere Nimby-ism. Sizewell C will be one of the three largest construction projects in the UK (the others being Hinkley Point C and HS2). Sizewell C will affect everyone in East Suffolk so we will be "doing our bit". We need little imagination to see what Sizewell C will entail as we have the example of Hinkley C, already under construction.

Here in East Suffolk, it seems that we are almost certainly going to have to endure the construction of Sizewell C. Please don't make this infinitely worse by allowing NG and SPR to inflict their proposals on us as well.

When I was a boy and complained that something "wasn't fair", my mother told me that life wasn't fair and I had to get used to it. However, these proposals by SPR and NG (including the likely consequent follow-ons from NG) are not just unfair. In both their number and their scope they are oppressive.

I very much hope that you will reject them.

Reference 1: Written Representations For SPR EA1N and EA2 Projects (Deadline 1), Interested Party: Friston Parochial Church Council, The Church Of St. Mary The Virgin, Friston. Pins Refs: 20023636 & 20023639.