

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [East Anglia ONE North](#); [East Anglia Two](#)  
**Subject:** Supplementary Written Representations: Socio-Economic - Friston PCC  
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As suggested, I attach some further representations of Friston Parochial Church Council in anticipation of ISH 5 re Social and Economic Issues.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours

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Secretary and Treasurer, Friston Parochial Church Council  
Refs: 20023636 & 20023639



**FRISTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**  
**SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN REPRESENTATION FOR**  
**SPR EA1N & EA2 PROJECTS (DEADLINE 4)**  
**SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EFFECTS**  
**PINS REFS: 20023636 & 20023639**



**INTRODUCTION**

This photograph widely published in the media before Christmas (2020) encapsulates all of the concerns and fears of those living on the East Suffolk Coast.

It is a picture of the nuclear power construction site at Hinkley Point on the Somerset Coast.

This is what is coming as Sizewell C if approved.

It is certain that few people actually comprehend the sheer magnitude of the site and all the implications.

**LOCATION**

Hinkley Point is in a remote location on the Somerset Coast.

Sizewell is centrally located on the Coast at the heart of the designated Suffolk Heritage Coast. Immediately to the north is the RSPB Minsmere Bird Reserve and to



the south, the highly popular Beach View Holiday Park. It is surrounded by rural countryside officially designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Special Scientific and Special Interest, close to historic villages and hamlets and accessed via historic highways, lanes and paths reflecting the history and heritage.

### **PROJECT SCALE**

It does not take much to recognise the enormity of the construction works and the logistical challenges. Also, to understand the 7-12 year timescale for massive disruption requiring a workforce of some 7,500-8,000 at its peak.

### **ONSHORE WORKS – EA1N AND EA2**

#### **Impact on Friston**

You would reasonably expect that you would not countenance further large-scale projects to add to the disruption and despoilation. But we are now faced with the Applicant's proposals for three substations at Friston which will be faced with construction works of a similar nature which could extend over seven years. Whilst these will be of a smaller scale to that at Sizewell, they will have a greater proportionate impact on Friston and its community being sited just ten minutes' walk from the social and spiritual hub of the village. Residents will be faced with huge excavations, earthworks, piling, concrete, light pollution and left with a legacy of unsightly industrial ironwork.

#### **Local impacts**

But it is not just Friston which is affected. The onshore cable entry point is adjacent to the historic holiday village of Thorpeness where the coast is considered fragile owing to persistent erosion and subsidence.

A cable corridor is required to link with the substations at Friston. This is in excess of 60 metres wide tracks north to Sizewell impacting on the charitable activities of the Warden's Trust and the Christian conference centre at Sizewell Hall and then the highly popular Beach View Holiday Park. It will then wend its way to Friston close to villages, care homes, a school and taking out either permanently or temporarily 26 Public Rights of Way which are equally accessed by visitors and residents.

It is clear that the impact of the Applicant's proposals is widespread in their disruption and long-term damage.

Added to that there are eight further foreseeable projects which seemingly will wish to connect to Friston with their own additional infrastructures.



## CUMULATIVE IMPACTS ASSESSMENT

These are all NSIPs and it is unacceptable and unrealistic to argue that one should wait and rely on their individual cumulative assessments. Sizewell C is approaching the Planning Inspectorate Examination and if approved there will be some major overlap with the Applicant's in their periods of construction. The Applicant's Cumulative Impact Assessment should be wide-ranging and rigorous in conjunction with the National Grid and Local Authorities who will share responsibility and accountability for execution and delivery.

### SOME KEY ISSUES

This list is not exhaustive, but follows the EN-1 guidelines 5.12.3

- **The creation of jobs and training opportunities.**

The works surrounding the onshore developments are for connection points to the National Grid. They do not imperil the benefits of the offshore developments and associated employment opportunities at Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth.

The damage arising from inappropriate choice of location is borne locally. The Applicant acknowledges that the fulltime equivalent job opportunities during construction are just 167 (and not sourced in the immediate locality) which are insignificant in relation to the potential damage to the visitor economy and attractiveness of the area for new residents and the derived investment. There are no long-term job opportunities once operational.

- **Impact on local services and infrastructure.**

The proposed Sizewell C over its construction period will drive a wedge between the two 'prime' destinations towns of Aldeburgh and Southwold restricting access to many popular historic sites and villages. There are major concerns that the influx of workers associated with Sizewell C will place added strains on the supply of social and health care. The Applicant's proposals will further disrupt local amenities, highways and PROWs.

- **Effects on Tourism**

It is expected that the Suffolk DMO will lead on this.

The report 'Economic Impact of Tourism, East Suffolk 2018 by Destination Research states:

- Total number of trips (day and staying) 12.7m
- Total Tourism Value £671.7m



- Full time equivalent jobs 10,446.

These are considerable figures which reflect the importance of the area in relation to visitor needs. These should not be put at risk by the impacts of the energy projects and could be subject to an independent objective review of the visitor economy.

Comparisons with other sites of connection points within the UK do not reflect the diversity and richness of the recreational and cultural activities for which the area is renowned and a magnet.

Due importance should be given to Britten-Pears Arts and the Snape Maltings as an internationally recognised centre of arts and music with its related outreach activities and proximity to Aldeburgh.

The catchment area for visitors extends to the Home Counties and Midlands.

- **The impact of a changing influx of workers.**

This is of importance when assessing the impacts of Sizewell C and whatever might be the demands of other energy projects in the future. How will this affect the social fabric? This should be an issue of major strategic concern to the Local Authorities (see below).

- **Cumulative effects.**

The effects of Sizewell are transformative because of its scale and magnitude. The Applicant's development extends the geographical reach. The various impacts can be assessed jointly since their timing is almost contemporaneous. That does become more difficult however looking longer term at other energy projects which seem destined for the area, never mind Friston.

- **Existing socio-economic conditions in the area.**

- These have been covered in SASES written representations on Socio-Economic and Tourism. Overall, the East Suffolk economy is marked by low levels of unemployment and enjoys good well-spread economic growth arising from key areas, not least digital technology based around Adastral Park at Martlesham; a major container port at Felixstowe; healthy tourism built around the characteristics of the Suffolk Heritage Coast which also attracts new residents and inward investment. That is reflected in real estate investment. Even so, there are pockets of deprivation and inequality which are worrying bearing in mind that access to the expanses of the countryside and seaside in this area should benefit good health and wellbeing.



- **Linking to other impacts.**

This is a most important issue since it is almost dictated by the energy projects and these being NSIPs the local authorities are hamstrung in developing a strategic plan or vision for their area.

## **DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC PLAN – WHAT IS THE VISION?**

Planning seems to have become a rather mechanistic process to tick all the right boxes subject to approval by the Planning Inspectorate with particular emphasis on meeting housing targets. Overall East Suffolk seems to have performed well with its balanced economy and involvement in sectors that are seen as offering long term growth. Energy is just one component and whilst renewables might be ‘flavour of the month’ the life cycle of opportunities in the industry might be limited (cf North Sea oil industry) Their own local cost of damage to the on-shore environment, quality of life and meeting the social needs of visitors and residents need to be weighed.

Energy supply is a strategic government concern and not a sector to be left for the market to decide. The current policy is outdated being some ten years old and seemingly does not encourage co-operation and co-ordination to effect improvements in technology and economies of scale. The potential for environmental damage of a project-by-project approach is clearly demonstrated by the despoilation in Norfolk and Suffolk and has been acknowledged by the establishment of the BEIS Review.

Furthermore, it fails to acknowledge growing concerns for the environment for preserving green spaces and to develop a policy for care and wellbeing. References include:

- National Planning Policy Framework – February 2019
- ‘A Green Future: Our 25-year plan to improve the environment’ – UK Government, January 2018.
- ‘The state of the environment: Health, people and the environment’ – Environment Agency, September 2020.
- Research which is ongoing by the ‘think-tank’ Onward.

There is an emerging debate about developing a national identity and devolving more decision-making powers to local councils.

We list below a number of relevant aspects and impacts relative to the local economy:



- How to preserve the characteristic of the Heritage coast area which have survived for centuries – a rural / seaside area offering peace and tranquillity; inspiration for artists, writers and composers; a diverse cultural life and recreational facilities. These are what drive people to escape the strictures of the working environment and urbanisation. Most apparent following the Covid-19 pandemic.
- An ageing population arising from retirees to the area but who remain active to pursue and protect their environment for future generations and care for others through voluntary work. Especially evidenced in the contributions to the Examination Open Floor Hearings.
- Preserving opportunities for young people and the disadvantaged to reduce inequalities. Such opportunities exist locally through the arts and service and retail sectors, especially hospitality. They are also accessible since skill levels are easily assumed. The challenge then is to make available affordable housing.

Saxmundham benefits from a rather limited rail service but which provides access to Ipswich, its university and employment opportunities in digital technologies and business support.

- In the face of sprawling energy projects and the influx of a workforce, how to maintain the appeal of key destinations as Aldeburgh and Southwold which face accommodation constraints.
- In turn how to improve the towns of Leiston (more dependent on Sizewell) and Saxmundham which serve the wider area. The Local Plan notes that both are 'struggling'. Despite the affluence and visitor appeal of the surrounding area Saxmundham town centre has not developed and is limited in the range and quality of the 'product', notwithstanding that it has expanded the number of homes in recent years.

The town is subject to a commercial development, the South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood comprising landscaped areas; 800 new homes; new school. That investment alone is some £200m+ based on average house price of £250,000. On top there are plans to expand beyond the west side of the A12 to include a services centre and employment area to take advantage of Sizewell C and expansion of housing investment. The challenge then is how to address the heart of the town so that it does not become an outpost.



- In sum the area is not short of investment and further opportunities and the return on the energy projects (Sizewell C excluded) are modest in comparison if not actually detrimental. Also, given the increase in urbanisation creeping up from London and Essex and locally, where does everybody go for 'fun' – East Suffolk seems the destination of choice given the number of day visitors!