



# **SAVE OUR SANDLINGS**

**Offshore Wind Farms  
EAST ANGLIA ONE NORTH PINS Ref: EN010077  
&  
EAST ANGLIA TWO PINS Ref: EN020078**

**Deadline 8 response  
from**

**Save Our Sandlings**

**Issue Specific Hearing 10  
Health & Social Well Being**

The following is our response and comments to Issue Specific Hearing 10

### **Agenda Item 3**

The Stakeholder Manager for the applicant in 32 minutes of wonderful public relations spin in support of the projects, made great claims of community consultation, job creation, a developing supply chain and regeneration of Lowestoft as an energy hub servicing the offshore wind sector. Whilst it cannot be denied some jobs have been created, and the development of a service centre at Lowestoft, the continuation of these are not solely dependent upon either EA1N or EA2 being consented.

Job creation and the service centre occurred as part of the completed EA1 project and as far as the service centre is concerned, will remain for the duration of the EA1 operational life AND other offshore windfarms (OFW) in the Southern North Sea, in much the same way as previous hubs served the Oil and Gas sectors. We acknowledge and understand that labour will be required if EA1N and EA2 are consented and that recruitment will ensue, but is this not the same or similar workforce that was employed on EA1 whose contracts were presumably terminated at the completion of the project? Our contention is these are not specifically NEW jobs but a returning workforce for a new project. The one stable element of 'local' employment is the workforce servicing existing OFW infrastructure. The East of England Energy Group, (EEEGR) alluded to as an independent organisation promoting the benefits of offshore renewable energy. The EEEGR represents more than 200 members across the region, ranging from energy producers to supply chain companies. A co-opted board member is a Project Director with ScottishPower Renewables and the group is partially funded by SPR along other energy related companies. We do not believe EEEGR can be considered an independent organisation; they are and interested lobbying and focal group concerned with the promotion and development of the East of England as an Energy Hub.

The claims that local communities and economy benefit from offshore windfarms is disingenuous as the areas directly impacted, namely Thorpeness, Sizewell, Aldringham, Knodishall and Friston see no benefit or advantage at all. Being a predominantly older and retired population, and the majority of the remaining working age population already in employment, the creation of job opportunities has little or no benefit to these communities. Admittedly, Lowestoft is a deprived area and sorely in need of regeneration following the decline in the offshore oil and gas industries and prior to this, the prized herring fishing fleets. It is grossly unfair that one community gains whilst many others suffer, permanently affecting the quality of life for many.

Claims there is great support for renewable energy were made. We do not dispute this. Save Our Sandlings and the other local campaign groups have always stated support for renewable government energy initiatives and Offshore wind in particular, though we do acknowledge and share the concerns expressed by some statutory bodies about the visual impact windfarm offshore offer when viewed from the shore. Where we strongly object to these applications is the siting and size of the onshore infrastructure; this is too large and completely in the wrong location. Brownfield sites, and areas of less environmentally sensitive or poorer quality land should be the primary focus. A heritage coastline comprising AONB, ESA, SPA, SSSI and

ecologically fragile sandy heathland should **never** have been considered as a suitable location for such massive industrialisation.

The applicant informed the hearing that construction work at any one site is limited and episodic. Whilst this may be true this does not make it any less intrusive whilst it takes place. The land within the work area is not available for public or agricultural use and whilst land will recover over time, scarring will be evident until this has taken place. Whilst some footpaths will again be open for public use, many will not. Since the onset of Covid-19 restrictions very many people walking the footpaths in the area have found a new awareness of the calming influence of nature. The EA1N and EA2 projects, and subsequent follow-on projects by other developers attracted to the substation connection opportunities will have grave consequences not only to our countryside ecology, but to the health and well-being of the many people living and visiting the area. Far from providing a source for escaping the daily pressures of modern life, and concern of Covid-19 pandemic, a visit to the area will only add to visitor stress and anxiety as precious land is lost to development.

What price can be put on a view over open countryside? There are many television programs about relocating to country living and among the top unique selling points for house buyers are peace and quiet, countryside views and fresh air. We are reminded that location is king and vitally important. This is the reason so many residents live here, either from birth or as a conscious decision to relocate from an urban environment. The rural idyll will soon be a distant memory if these projects are allowed to proceed.

The consultation and engagement process by the applicant was detailed to the meeting in depth and whilst the applicant may consider they did a good job, they did not really address many of the real concerns voiced by residents and dissenting voices. Even now, there are many in local communities who are not fully aware of the implications to the environment and nature. In some cases, engagement with communities was too late, or not at all. Again, it is worth stating that over 50% of the local community is over 65, and many 80 plus. Most do not have a technical background and have great difficulty interpreting and understanding some of the data and technical documentation and cannot comprehend the scale of construction and operation of these projects. Even those of us who consider ourselves to have a technical grasp struggle with some of the obscure terminology and need to resort to research and technical databases for further understanding.

The applicant stated an average of 5 complaints per week to the helpline during construction of EA1; we do not consider this a measure of success, unless of course a much higher value was anticipated. As we have not seen the actual figures, we cannot fully assess whether this is the average over the entire project timeline and greater numbers of complaints were received in the early months of the project, with numbers ramping down as the the project proceeded. Or if 5 complaints were received each and every week. If the latter then clearly lessons had not have been learned to address complainants concerns.

We welcome an appointed project liaison officer but they will only have value if they are able to address and reduce the likely sources of complaint within a timely manner. If these projects are consented we would expect to have very regular meetings with project personnel, discussing likely impacts in advance so residents can be prepared and make any necessary

preparations in advance. This is similar to the Sizewell Residents Group being consulted by Sizewell A & B operators when noisy or dusty work is to take place, or any others matters that may cause concern or alarm.

#### Agenda Item 4

##### Health issues for residents along Sizewell Gap Road and Sizewell Hall Road.

There is a potential for the following areas of concern to negatively impact the health and well-being of residents local to Sizewell Gap Road and Sizewell Hall Road due to their proximity to the project activity areas:

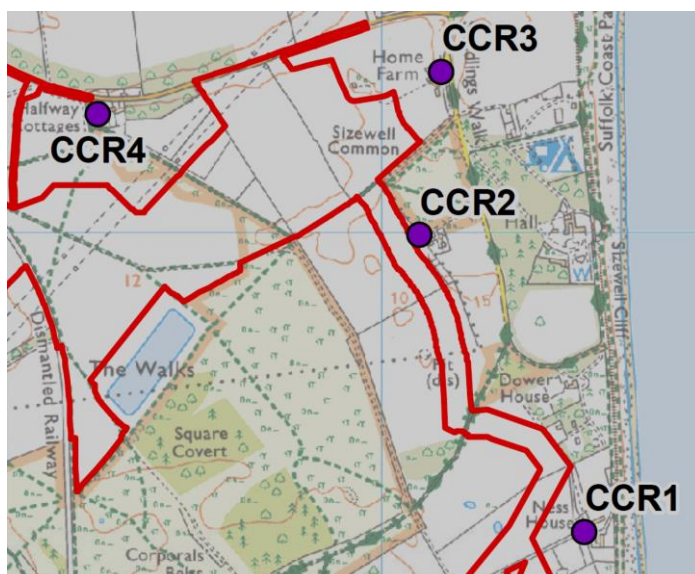
- ◆ Air Quality
- ◆ Noise
- ◆ Vibration.
- ◆ Light Pollution

##### Air Quality

The B1122 – Lovers Lane – Sizewell Gap Road has been identified as the primary route for works related HGV traffic and will carry the majority of site traffic volume

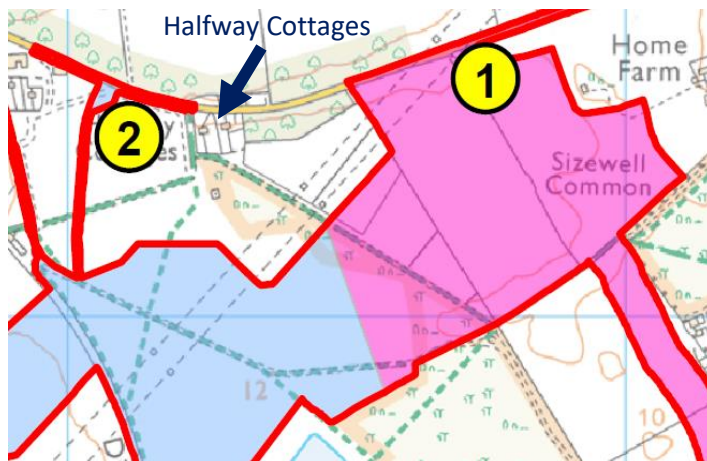
This is of great concern to residents of the 6 properties with frontage on Sizewell Gap Road (SGR), identified as onshore cable route receptor **CCR4**, identified in document 6.2.25.2 *Environmental Statement - Figure 25.2 - Noise Monitoring Survey Locations*, and a number of properties along Sizewell Hall Road (SHR) identified as **CCR1, CCR2 and CCR3**.

Sizewell Gap Road is the primary route for HGV traffic serving land areas 6, 8, 9, 11, and 12 via Haul Road 1 (HR1) and land areas 13 to 19, via Haul Road 2 (HR2).



Excerpt from 6.2.25.2 EA2 ES Figure 25.2 Noise Monitoring Survey Locations

(HR1) access point 1 and (HR2) access point 2 straddle noise receptor site CCR4. HR1 travels in a SSE direction 400 metres to the East of CCR4 and HR2 runs in a SSW direction 250 metres to the West of CCR4. The cable trench corridor is 300 metres to the South of CCR4 (See map below).



Excerpt from 6.2.26.2 ES Figure 26.2  
Access Locations and Associated  
Onshore Infrastructure

As a result of this unfortunate and unique position in relation to the project activities, the residents CCR4 will be completely surrounded; this oasis of calm will be lost for the duration of the projects. Consequently, properties at CCR4 will always be directly downwind of project traffic and non road-going mobile machinery, (HGV and NRMM) pollutants from whichever direction the wind is blowing compromising air quality.

Residents along SHR will also be affected by airborne pollution when the wind is from any Westerly direction, which is the predominant situation.

There are a number of retired residents in this locality, some with chronic respiratory disorders and they are deeply concerned these works in proximity to their homes will compromise their health further. There are also additional residential visitors and day-trippers walking the footpaths that will be affected.

In reference to the applicants *REP3-058 Construction in Proximity to Properties* document, it states in paragraph 14 use of 'noise / dust barrier / acoustic screens' will be used at selected locations as mitigation. Whilst it is not stated which locations these control we trust these barriers will be able to reduce airborne pollutants, PM5, PM10, NOx and CO. Whilst 75% of HGV will comply with Euro 6 regulations, this still leaves 25% that are not compliant, as well as other LGV and periodic Non-HGV delivery vehicles.

Even though work may be episodic in nature there will be a number of days when risks of exposure to airborne pollution will be high. One of the benefits of living in this area is the clean fresh air and low risk of pollution.

Enjoyment of gardens and properties will be severely restricted to those days when no work is taking place i.e., Sunday, a non-working day.

Another factor affecting the health of the local community is disturbance of the sandy soil. This can lead to particulate becoming airborne in even in moderate winds. Very fine sand

particles are a predominant feature in the Sandlings, being remarkably susceptible to creating dust storms or sand storms when freshly disturbed by passing vehicular traffic or agricultural working. It is important that spoil from trenching operations is adequately protected and

### **Noise**

In addition to air pollution, noise will also be a factor with HGV traffic arriving and leaving site, and moving materials along the work areas. Residents are concerned about the nuisance caused by discordant and competing reversing sounders of Non Road-Going Mobile Machinery (NRMM) and other plant and equipment operating intermittently from each other, at different cycle rates, frequencies and amplitudes. Intermittent noise is far more noticeable and intrusive than continuous sounds. This is in addition to engine and mechanical operational noise. This subject is covered in more detail in the Save Our Sandlings Deadline 8 response to Issue Specific Hearing 12, "Noise".

### **Vibration**

It is anticipated an increase in vibrations will be noticed during cable trenching operations. Several properties adjacent to land areas 6 to 15 were built during the 19<sup>th</sup> century as properties for the Sizewell estate with foundations appropriate to the period. Residents are concerned settlement may occur as a result of vibrations in proximity to properties.

### **Light Pollution**

As access points to haul roads will be gated during non-working periods security lighting at these locations during the night, there will introduce generator noise affecting all properties in the vicinity. In addition, a Construction Consolidation Site (CCS) will be established at Land area No. 11 (HR1) which will require 24 hr light, power and security measures, with the associated generator noise and additional vehicular movements. We seek reassurance there will be no workforce presence at the CCS outside normal working hours.

There is no doubt the emergence of these projects, the uncertainty of the ultimate location, and final decision to site the substation at Friston has been a factor in the rise in stress and anxiety caused to local residents. Whilst the decision to site the substation away from the Sizewell area and Broom Covert is a welcome decision from a Sizewell perspective, the cable landfall at Thorpeness and Friston development is a great cause for concern among all local residents. The surfacing of further projects wishing to connect to the Friston substation only adds to the threat of further disturbance and loss of land. As has been stated many times during the examination, the area has a predominantly older population, many in the twilight of their years and the prospect of spending their final years surrounded by construction traffic, with all the inconvenience this entails, has only led to an increase in despondency, hopelessness and depression.

As outlined in *8.12 EA2 Outline Operations and Maintenance Plan Rev 04 Section 2. Paragraph 31* a Stakeholder Communications Plan is to be developed. We welcome this pledge as important to address our genuine concerns and other emerging issues throughout the project and look forward to regular dialogue with the appointed Community Liaison Officer.

**Final Comments.**

We know we are privileged to live in an area surrounded by nature, to be conscious of the changing patterns of the environment through the seasons; the first spring flowers, the first leaves on the trees, the return of migrating birds, the transition through the seasons, the first heady scent of gorse, the heather flowering on the heath, the rare sight of deer on the fields, spotting the occasional badger, stoat and weasel, watching buzzard and red kite soaring and hearing the woodpecker drumming. Country folk know where and when to be to capture these sights, sounds and smells of the unspoiled countryside. This is what gives pleasure to the day, nature relentlessly changing through the year, from day to night, and yet still surprising as new delights unknown emerge.

It is a proven fact that being outdoors increases serotonin and dopamine neurotransmitters in the body. Serotonin is responsible for functions such as memory, sleep, behaviour, and appetite. Dopamine affects movement, emotional response, and the ability to feel pleasure. Both are important to our sense of well-being.

Since the Covid pandemic more and more people have found solace and a sense of calm walking the footpaths and field boundaries, immersing themselves in nature's bounty. Nature gives this all for free and just asks for our respect in return.

Many of these pleasures will be lost and/or compromised during the construction of landfall, cable trenches and the substation; migratory and transit routes will be bisected or cut off restricting the passage of mammals; delicate birdsong will be overwhelmed and lost in the increased background sound of construction and increased motorised traffic. The scent of flowers will be overpowered by the smell of engine exhaust. The destruction of areas of sensitive heathland and hedgerow will become no go areas not only for people but the wildlife that lives, hunts and breeds there.

We appreciate these simple natural pleasures can be hard for some town and city dwellers to understand, whose senses become blunted by the proximity of an urban environment built from concrete and brick. Many first-time visitors find the large open areas, huge skies and comparative silence unsettling at first, but soon come to appreciate the calming and destressing value of rural pace. We cannot stress strongly enough the despair and anguish to regular visitors and local residents resulting from these projects of considerable magnitude in the sensitive East Suffolk landscape. The loss of amenity during construction and subsequent blight to this valuable visual resource by the huge substation complex in an undeveloped rural location will not provide any positive health benefits and a reduction in social well-being. The threat of additional follow-on projects connecting to the grid at Friston will be forever present if these applications are consented.

We urge the Examining panel to reject the onshore elements of these DCO applications until more suitable alternative environmentally solutions are available.