



The Planning Act 2008

Sizewell C (SZC)

Planning Inspectorate Reference: *EN010012*

Deadline 2 – 2 June 2021

Councillor Craig Rivett, Deputy Leader and Cabinet
Member for Economic Development

Written submission of oral case,
Open Floor Hearing 10am 18 May 2021

East Suffolk Council: 20026200

My name is Councillor Craig Rivett, I am speaking today as the Deputy Leader of East Suffolk Council and the Cabinet member for Economic Development. I am the lead Councillor for the authority on all major energy projects.

I would like to thank the Examining Authority for the opportunity to speak and for the opportunity provided to local residents to express their views. The comments of the Examining Authority during the Preliminary Meeting have been noted and therefore I will try and be as concise as possible.

East Suffolk Council recognises the role new nuclear can play in helping the UK to achieve a carbon neutral economy by 2050. We support this ambition and the benefits that this can bring to East Suffolk.

East Suffolk Council has long supported the principle of a new nuclear power station at Sizewell, and the existing power stations on the east Suffolk coast – Sizewell A (decommissioning stage) and Sizewell B (operational). We recognise that as well as being an important contributor to the national energy strategy, Sizewell C has the potential to bring additional benefits to east Suffolk regarding jobs, skills and potential legacy benefits in these areas and others by encouraging appropriate mitigation in relation to the project.

This Council takes a neutral approach to the Sizewell C proposal, neither fully supportive nor against the proposals. There are too many outstanding issues at this stage to enable us to commit further. By highlighting these issues, we aim for the Applicant to seek to address them, if possible, through the remainder of the DCO process.

However, there are specific areas that this Council has a statutory role in ensuring are appropriately addressed during the DCO process and we are working with local councillors, our communities, other statutory and non-statutory colleagues and the Applicant to ensure all aspects of the project are being appropriately addressed in the DCO.

Noise is a key area of the DCO that ESC is examining. There is potential for significant adverse impacts from noise predicted to noise sensitive receptors from various elements of the proposals. It is likely that a project of this scale and magnitude will have noise impacts that will not be able to be reasonably addressed, to manage these as best we can and recognising that there is aspiration to remove HGVs from the highways resulting in proposed greater use of overnight rail freight and a second beach landing facility. To mitigate the increase in noise, particularly for residents close to the East Suffolk Line and Leiston Branch Line, a rail noise mitigation strategy will be required that appropriately mitigates the identified noise problem. A separate Noise Mitigation Strategy will be required in relation to construction noise to ensure that residents are appropriately protected. These Strategies have yet to be agreed with East Suffolk Council and are still under discussion with the Applicant.

The **Landscape and Visual Impact** of the project is a key area for assessment. The proposal will have a lasting impact on the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which needs to be fully assessed and mitigated for. However, it is acknowledged that the impacts will not be able to be fully mitigated and therefore the Applicant will have to agree to a an appropriate package of compensation. That compensation package will not fully

compensate for the harm in particular to the AONB but will enable the Council with other partners to develop proposals in the vicinity that will help compensate for the project at Sizewell during construction and for the future

From an **ecology** perspective there are many important ecological features in the vicinity of the project which the environmental statement concludes that after mitigation there will still be minor adverse impacts in some areas it is likely that there will be major impacts. The proposal includes mitigation embedded into the project as well as off-site proposals this Council is carefully assessing these mitigation measures as it is likely we will consider further mitigating and enhancement measures will be required.

There are many **communities** living within close proximity to the main development site and associated development sites across East Suffolk. There are other communities who will be impacted by the Sizewell C proposal by virtue of sharing and using the same highway network, recreational facilities and tourist facilities. We are working with affected town and parish councils and have represented their opinions and views of the project within our submitted local impact report, we continue to call on those affected towns and parishes to contact us direct to enable us to represent their views and opinions further. We have focused our attention on hosting town and parish councils but welcome contact from any town and parish who consider their community will be affected by the project. Community safety is a key issue across the construction of the project with the influx of workers expected to the local area and we are working closely with colleagues and Suffolk Police and the County Council to fully understand the potential impacts on the mitigation that may be required.

As **coastal protection authority** we are vigorously assessing the submission with regards to marine related proposals including two beach landing facilities and the hard and soft coastal defences proposed as part of the project. We are awaiting further detailed information from the Applicant to enable this assessment to proceed.

Two beach landing facilities and overnight rail freight are key components put forward by the Applicant aimed at reducing the number of HGVs on the road network. East Suffolk Council supports the aspiration and need to reduce the number of additional HGVs on the road network, but this must be done in a manner that does not transfer harm onto residents adjacent the railway through unacceptable noise and vibration, balanced approach is required and that means an appropriate noise mitigation strategy for residents provided by the Applicant and agreed by ESC.

The Council would have preferred earlier, pre-DCO proposals, that included the legacy potential of a passing loop on the East Suffolk railway line at Wickham Market which would have allowed day-time trains, but we accept that the time for delivering that is not available to the project.

In addition, the Applicant is proposing a two-village bypass and a Sizewell link road, both new stretches of highway are proposed to minimise impacts on the A12 and the B1122 respectively, ESC supports both new road proposals. Associated Developments including two park and rides, a rail route from the Sizewell branch line to the construction site and a freight

management facility are proposed by the Applicant and supported by this Council subject to appropriate design detailing including landscaping and lighting.

Other areas the Council takes the lead on include **air quality, contaminated land, heritage, lighting, housing, and cumulative impacts with other projects**. Further detail is included in our Local Impact Report submitted at Deadline 1.

However, I wanted to end by covering **economic development and tourism**, key areas that ESC leads on that will be impacted by the proposal but with appropriate mitigation in place have the potential to benefit from the project during construction and operation also.

The project may lead to a different form of tourism to that we are used to but may also adversely impact existing tourist destinations. We are in discussion with the Applicant along with other key parties such as the County Council and Suffolk Coastal Destination Management Organisation to ensure an appropriately sized Tourism Fund is provided by the Applicant to mitigate the adverse impacts arising from the project.

Additionally, we are working closely with the County Council on an appropriate set of mitigating and enhancing measures in relation to skills and education improvements resulting from the area including training packages.

Finally, from an **economic development** perspective, the opportunities for local businesses to enter and benefit from the Sizewell C supply chain are available, we are working closely with the Applicant, in ensuring we can maximise the number of businesses able to enter the supply chain. We are seeking to expand existing offerings in the area that will benefit from the Sizewell C project including the potential link with other large-scale projects in the vicinity such as flood barrier construction, major road building and offshore windfarm proposals. We continue to work with partners including the New Anglia LEP, the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce and the County Council to maximise opportunities. We also work with the Applicant to ensure our companies and businesses are in prime position to access the forecasted £100m a year Gross Value-Added uplift during construction of the Sizewell C project.

In conclusion, I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak on behalf of East Suffolk Council and I confirm that our position of neutrality is as stated in our relevant representation, we have expanded on the impacts of the project in the submitted Local Impact Report and we continue to work with other statutory bodies and the Applicant.

Our role in this Examination is to raise our concerns where we have them, and support where we can, with the Examining authority and to seek to protect the interests of the local communities and the wider East Suffolk area, rather than to determine the application. We recognise that the Secretary of State is the decision-maker.

If consent is granted, we want to ensure there are sufficient commitments secured within the Development Consent Order, to ensure the Applicant strives to reduce the impacts of the project post consent through design refinement works for associated development, the main development site and operational development.

We will continue to work with the Applicant in order to secure appropriate mitigation in relation to the impacts of the projects, whilst recognising in some circumstances this may not be possible, and therefore appropriate compensation is being sought.