

Christine Bryant, a resident of Middleton  
My online presentation in written form:

I'd like to start by saying that many people I know think this proposal is a "done deal" and that no amount of objections can now stop it.

There appears to be an assumption among some of our elected representatives that, in principle, new Nuclear reactors at Sizewell are acceptable, if not desirable, and that all that needs to be done is to tweak a few of the conditions in the proposal.

However, being an optimist, I still hope that concrete objections will be listened to and so I've chosen to illustrate one of the **many** reasons why I object to the proposal.

When I first visited my parents-in-law's house in Middleton in the 1970's, the village was a quiet backwater in a peaceful part of Suffolk. When I came to live here I realised what a successful EDF application would mean and have closely followed the application ever since. Nothing that EDF has said to-date has alleviated my worries.

In recent times all the local villages and small towns along the East Coast have been subject to continuing expansion of housing, apparently deliberately building in the places bordering the A12. Saxmundham for example, has doubled in population since 2010 and awaits the building of a further 800 houses! There is no comparison with the population and conditions that existed when Sizewell B was built and, by all accounts it was bad enough then.

Therefore, there is vastly increased population, most with cars, as in the more remote villages like Middleton there is no public transport.

When I first went to an EDF Roadshow, I asked the senior representative why the Sizewell site had originally been chosen, given its unstable coastline etc. His answer was that a surveyor had seen the field where the Nuclear Power plant now stands and thought it looked as good a place as any; the implication being that it was a nice, quiet spot.

My second question was that, given how busy the A12 is now, how would it cope with increased traffic from Sizewell, particularly in already difficult areas like Martlesham? His condescending reply was that I was unduly negative and didn't realise how quiet the Suffolk roads are compared with other areas! In any case, he said, their calculations forecast only a 10% increase in traffic at Martlesham, which is insignificant!

This represents the typically cavalier attitude that EDF seems to have to potential problems for Suffolk residents and visitors. In their view, problems raised are classed as “insignificant” or, if they’re “significant”, then they are generally beyond their control. Their idea of insignificant feels very different to those caught up in the bottlenecks at the Martlesham roundabout!!

My personal experience:

Pre-Pandemic, I travelled regularly by car to Margaretting in Essex from Woodbridge or, more recently, Middleton. I usually travelled outside the rush hour on a Wednesday. This is a 60-75-mile journey on the A12.

If there was not a breakdown or an accident I counted myself lucky and I always had to allow an extra 30-40 minutes per hour’s journey. If I was really unlucky (frequently) and the incident was on one of the single carriageway sections, I could wait ages before being able to move, as there was no way of clearing the site.

I’ve had to sit for hours near the Orwell Bridge when there are high winds or incidents, before being re-routed through Ipswich centre or elsewhere. These were quite regular events, especially in bad weather. I imagine the A14 is similar for traffic volume.

EDF does not seem to recognise the effect of such events on the whole region that they say their vehicles will be travelling through.

It is easier for them to concentrate on local roads where they can be asked to mitigate problems caused by their vehicles. Any EDF traffic management schemes will not touch the normal private vehicle incidents on roads beyond their purlieu. Also, I’m not convinced they know what they’re talking about when they say that if any of their lorries break down on local roads they’ll cope with the effects by re-routing or delaying the rest of the fleet. In any case, the volume of traffic increase caused by SZC construction will just add to the problems outside the Leiston -Ipswich area, but for up to 12 years! Even more insulting to locals is the idea that none of EDF’s “mitigation measures” for the little Suffolk roads will happen during the euphemistically named “Early Years”!

As Mr Hatt and others have said in their presentations, you cannot compare the Hinkley approaches with Sizewell, where Hinkley has the M5 about 8 miles away and our nearest motorway is 70 miles away. Moreover, in some places the A12 is more like a B road and not capable of taking the huge volume of heavy construction vehicles.

I have tried to find an indication of where the 6.6 million tonnes of construction materials brought by road will come from. (Impossible to find).

The most plausible suggestion is that it will be sourced from the South West , as is Hinkley. If so, there is no alternative to using the A12 from the M25 to Suffolk. However, even if that is not the source, the current state of A12 traffic will affect the SZC routes.

This is hardly a minor issue. Fuel consumption and emissions, noise and fumes, vibration and further destruction of road edges and hedging to that which already occurs, will blight the lives of everyone living near and/or using the local roads and the A12.

I have read statements purporting that the main condition for accepting EDF's proposal is if the benefits for East Suffolk outweigh the disadvantages. If EDF thinks that a few hundred (dubious) short-term, local jobs and some extra recreational facilities at Leiston go anywhere near compensating for the loss of our way of life, they need to be made to think again.

For this reason and for the many others cited by our local community I oppose the construction of Sizewell C and, to be honest, cannot understand why it is even being considered.