



The Sizewell C Project

5.1 Consultation Report Second Addendum

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None provided.

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None provided.

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1.1 Between 12 May and 11 June 2021, NNB Generation Company (SZC) Limited ('SZC Co.') carried out non-statutory targeted consultation with a limited number of parties potentially affected by rail noise as identified in further detailed noise assessments.
- 1.1.2 This **Consultation Report Second Addendum** explains how SZC Co. has engaged with the consultees, provides details of the consultation material used, summarises the responses received and details how SZC Co. has had regard to those responses.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1.1 SZC Co. submitted an application to the Planning Inspectorate under the Planning Act 2008 for a Development Consent Order for the Sizewell C Project ('Project') on 27 May 2020 ('Application'). The Application was accepted for examination on 24 June 2020.
- 2.1.2 A **Consultation Report** [APP-068] was submitted as part of the Application to provide details on the pre-application consultation.
- 2.1.3 A **Consultation Report Addendum** [AS-153] was submitted in January 2021 detailing the non-statutory consultation that was carried out in November to December 2020 regarding a number of proposed changes to the Application, which were accepted for examination by the Examining Authority on 21 April 2021.
- 2.1.4 This report comprises a second addendum to the Consultation Report. This **Consultation Report Second Addendum** has been prepared in respect of non-statutory targeted consultation carried out between 12 May and 11 June 2021 with a limited number of parties potentially affected by rail noise.

3 CONSULTATION CONTEXT

- 3.1.1 As part of the Application, an **Environmental Statement** [APP-159 to APP-582] was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in May 2020, which included an assessment of rail noise arising from the transport of construction materials by train on the East Suffolk Line. An **Environmental Statement Addendum** [AS-179 to AS-260] was subsequently submitted in January 2021, which included an updated assessment of rail noise.
- 3.1.2 The rail noise assessment in the May 2020 **Environmental Statement** explained, at paragraph 1.6.6 of Volume 9, Appendix 4B [[APP-546](#)], that:

“In reviewing the potential noise levels we have undertaken research to identify the number of properties which may be impacted: estimated numbers of properties affected are as shown in Table 1.9 below. These numbers will continue to be reviewed including, where relevant, permanent residential caravans and houseboats identified.”

3.1.3 As committed to in the May 2020 **Environmental Statement**, SZC Co. has continued to review the likely rail noise impacts of the Project. In particular, SZC Co. has undertaken a more detailed assessment of the impact of rail noise on the following:

- park homes at Whitearch Park, Benhall; and
- houseboats on the River Deben at Woodbridge and Melton.

3.1.4 Noise assessment and mitigation plans have been produced by SZC Co. to explain the results of the further rail noise assessment and to identify potential mitigation measures in respect of the likely impacts that have been identified. The further assessment identified a limited number of parties who may be affected by potential noise effects from the use of rail infrastructure on houseboats along the River Deben in Woodbridge and Melton and park homes located at Whitearch Park, south of Saxmundham. SZC Co. therefore decided to carry out non-statutory consultation with those parties to offer them the opportunity to comment on the further rail noise assessment and potential mitigation measures.

3.1.5 On 12 May 2021, SZC Co. wrote to the Planning Inspectorate providing its written submissions for Deadline 1 together with SZC Co.’s response to the Rule 17 Letter [\[PD-025\]](#). Within the **Deadline 1 Covering Letter** [\[REP1-001\]](#), SZC Co. made the Examining Authority aware that targeted consultation was to be undertaken between 12 May and 11 June 2021 with those parties potentially affected by rail noise. The **Summary Consultation Documents** (at the end of **Appendix C (houseboats)** and **Appendix D (Whitearch Park)**) were provided to the Planning Inspectorate at Deadline 1 [\[REP1-021\]](#).

4 CONSULTATION PROCESS

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 This section sets out SZC Co.’s approach to the non-statutory targeted consultation. It explains how the consultation was undertaken, giving details of:

- who was consulted and how (**Section 4.2**);
- the consultation material (**Section 4.3**); and
- ways that feedback was received (**Section 4.4**).

4.2 Who was consulted and how?

4.2.1 SZC Co. consulted the parties who were identified through the further rail noise assessment as potentially being affected by rail noise from the use of rail infrastructure on: (i) houseboats along the River Deben in Woodbridge and Melton; and (ii) park homes located at Whitearch Park, south of Saxmundham.

4.2.2 A full list of the consultees is provided in **Appendix A**.

4.2.3 SZC Co. wrote to the consultees, including East Suffolk Council, Suffolk County Council and the relevant Parish Councils¹, on 10 May 2021 telling them about the consultation and how to provide feedback (see **Section 4.4** below). The consultation ran from 12 May 2021 to 11 June 2021 (inclusive), a period in excess of 28 days. **Appendix B** contains sample consultation letters.

4.3 Consultation material

4.3.1 The consultation material comprised:

- Houseboats on the River Deben at Woodbridge and Melton
 - Sizewell C Noise Assessment and Mitigation Plan – Houseboats (**Appendix C**)
 - Sizewell C Targeted Consultation Summary Document – Houseboats (**Appendix C**)
- Park homes at Whitearch Park, Benhall
 - Sizewell C Noise Assessment and Mitigation Plan – Whitearch Park (**Appendix D**)
 - Sizewell C Targeted Consultation Summary Document – Whitearch Park (**Appendix D**)

¹ Woodbridge Town Council, Melton Parish Council, Benhall & Sternfield Parish Council.

4.4 Ways that feedback was received

4.4.1 To optimise the response rate from consultees, those consulted were able to respond to the consultation in a variety of ways, including by:

- emailing comments to info@sizewellc.co.uk;
- posting comments to the free post address (FREEPOST SZC CONSULTATION); and
- for people who were shielding and unable to use the above methods, calling Freephone 0800 197 6102 (09:00 – 17:00 Monday to Friday) to arrange for their response to be collected.

5 FEEDBACK RECEIVED AND HOW SZC CO. HAD REGARD TO IT

5.1 Analysis of the responses to the consultation

5.1.1 This section provides an overview of the responses received as a result of consultation.

5.1.2 A total of 13 responses were received by SZC Co. **Appendix E** contains copies of all redacted responses.

5.1.3 **Table 4.1** shows the number of responses received via each of the possible methods of providing feedback:

Table 4.1: Response received by method

Response Type	Count
Email	10
Post	3 ²
Collection	0
Total Responses	13

5.2 How SZC Co. has had regard to feedback

5.2.1 Having reviewed the feedback received, SZC Co. has been able to group the comments raised by the consultees into key themes and provide a relevant response to each theme. This is set out in **Table 4.2** below.

² All three responses containing the same comments were also sent via email.

Table 4.2: Consultation feedback and SZC Co. response

Consultee response	SZC Co. response
Query whether the noise impacts will be mitigated and if a barrier is proposed, will this be screened.	The noise barriers were an option which SZC Co. wished to consult upon to determine the views of affected people. The request for screening is noted and should an acoustic barrier be pursued the need for visual screening will be assessed.
The homes built by Tingdene Ltd. are built to a sound insulation standard. The homes do not rest on the 'skirt', they are supported on multiple steel 'tripods'. As a result, they are prone to vibrate.	As stated in 1.3.14 of the Noise Assessment and Mitigation Plan – Whitearch Park (Appendix D), the park homes are considered to be too far from the railway line to be significantly adversely affected by vibration. Nonetheless, SZC Co. will consider the issue raised further and follow up as appropriate.
Request for fewer trains due to noise disturbances. Suggestion that train movements should be scheduled to take into account most people's deepest sleep periods.	Fewer and shorter trains would affect the capacity of the rail freight provision and would affect SZC Co.'s ability to deliver the Freight Management Strategy [AS-280] . The train paths are not fixed and will ultimately be scheduled to make best use of the available capacity of the line. Permission to use the railway line is secured through Freight Track Access Contracts, but there is limited ability to choose the timing of train operations. Night-time operations are necessary due to the absence of pathing capacity in the day and the scheduling of night-time trains will be a function of the capacity available within the network timetable.
Suggestion that sound and vibration measuring equipment is placed beneath/in homes at no charge to enable accurate measurements to be assessed.	At this stage no further measurements are proposed to capture baseline conditions. The amount of noise generated by a train is known, so the assessment of potential effects can be undertaken without the need to collect additional baseline train information. The assessment of predominantly night-time railway noise is based on criteria that do not rely on baseline levels, instead providing an indication of effect based on absolute values.
Request to re-examine noise and vibration issues to see whether greater mitigation should be provided. That review should also extend to the measurements of railway noise and vibration used to assess the impact on houseboats.	The detail and quality of the noise assessments is being closely reviewed by the District Council and their specialist consultants and examined through the DCO application. The assessment is being re-examined in that way, although SZC Co. believes it to be robust and based on measured baseline data, including noise measurements of comparable trains, which were gathered in a series of specifically-commissioned tests in August 2020.

Consultee response	SZC Co. response
Mitigation measures would need to form part of the final DCO whether or not dual-tracking or a passing loop is provided. The proposal to further amend the “Noise Mitigation Scheme” is supported to make specific provision for a more flexible application of mitigation for houseboats in Melton.	<p>Neither dualling the East Suffolk line nor providing a passing loop form part of the Sizewell C proposals; neither could be delivered within a timeframe that would assist the construction of the Project.</p> <p>The mitigation proposed in the Rail Noise Mitigation Strategy [APP-258] and the Noise Mitigation Scheme [REP2-034] are proposed to be fully secured in the DCO.</p>
Test trains and vibrations were heard around October / November 2020 at around 3-3:30am and it lasted several days. Request made for this information to be forwarded to SZC Co. and its consultants.	<p>SZC Co. undertook lineside noise monitoring for much of 2020, and the monitoring records for October/November 2020 have been reviewed.</p> <p>While the monitoring records do not tell us what the train was, a train was identified as running at night during that period.</p> <p>The trains were not associated with the Sizewell C Project, as the test trains that SZC Co. commissioned for a series of noise and vibration measurements to obtain further data on train source levels, were run in August 2020 and did not run at night.</p> <p>From SZC Co.’s experience of the East Suffolk line, it is likely to have been a leaf blower train, which, as the name suggests, blows leaves off the track.</p> <p>The leaf blower trains are not associated with the Project, but are used by Network Rail to maintain good services, normally during the autumn.</p> <p>Depending on available timetable slots and locomotive availability, they can run at any time of the day or night. They typically run up or down the East Suffolk line during the night, and SZC Co.’s monitoring results suggest that they ran generally between 01:00 and 04:00 hours in October and November 2020.</p> <p>An example of a leaf blower train can be found here: https://www.networkrail.co.uk/running-the-railway/looking-after-the-railway/delays-explained/leaves/</p>
Concern raised about the noise the trains will cause to people and the structure of their homes.	The purpose of the consultation was to seek the views of people that may be affected by railway noise along the East Suffolk line, both on the potential for an effect, and to gauge views on potential mitigation measures. The concerns raised are noted and we are putting forward mitigation proposals.
Request that technicalities of noise levels and proposed reductions should be explained in	The consultation included both a technical assessment and a more straight-forward

Consultee response	SZC Co. response
layman's terms. Further information is requested on the effect of the proposed barrier on the noise reduction and how this barrier will have any positive effect on vibration.	<p>explanation of both the potential effects and the potential solutions. Further explanation can be provided if required, via the SZC Co. office in Leiston.</p> <p>Should a barrier be installed to mitigate railway noise, it is not expected to have any effect on railway vibration.</p>
Query whether there is a second option if the proposed barrier is inadequate.	Both Noise Assessment and Mitigation Plans (Appendix C (housboats) and Appendix D (Whitearch Park)) include mitigation options (such as slowing the trains or installing secondary glazing) other than potential barriers.
Strong support for the construction of an Acoustic Barrier and request that this is erected before the trains start running rather than as an afterthought.	<p>Should a barrier be installed to mitigate railway noise, the intention would be for it to be in place prior to the use of the East Suffolk line by Project trains.</p> <p>The support for an acoustic barrier is noted. As set out in the each of the Noise Assessment and Mitigation Plans (Appendix C (housboats) and Appendix D (Whitearch Park)), the viability of acoustic barriers is subject to further topographical and ground conditions surveys, as well as agreement with Network Rail. A barrier would require planning permission. SZC Co. will fully explore the potential for a barrier. In any event, each of the Noise Assessment and Mitigation Plans show that mitigating noise effects does not depend on the provision of barriers.</p>
Concern raised regarding the mental and health impacts of noise and vibration.	<p>This is understood. The assessment criteria adopted for the assessment of railway noise and vibration relate to effects on people in a variety of settings, such as potential for disturbing sleep, causing annoyance, interference with speech, or perception of vibration.</p> <p>The criteria are designed to take account of health impacts.</p>
<p>Concern raised about the duration of the noise impacts which will cause disrupted sleep. Concerns also raised about the impact on wildlife.</p> <p>Request to reduce the amount of trains that will pass Whitearch by night and ensure that adequate sound reflectors are put in place.</p>	<p>The concerns raised are noted and understood. Night-time operations are necessary due to the absence of rail capacity in the daytime and the scheduling of night-time trains will be a function of the capacity available within the network timetable.</p> <p>Planning policy encourages the use of rail rather than road for the transport of materials subject to being able to provide suitable mitigation and SZC Co. believes that it must use the capacity available in the rail network if it can but we are</p>

Consultee response	SZC Co. response
	<p>concerned to make sure effective mitigation is available.</p> <p>The request regarding acoustic barriers is noted. See above comments in this table for the position in respect of acoustic barriers.</p>
Support shown for the proposed acoustic barrier. Suggestion that the second track is reinstated to enable all trains to run through the day.	<p>The support for an acoustic barrier is noted. See above comments in this table for the position in respect of acoustic barriers.</p> <p>Dualling the East Suffolk line is not part of SZC Co.'s proposals, as it could not be delivered within a timeframe that would assist the construction of the Project.</p>
Clarification sought on whether houseboats in Melton and Woodbridge have been consulted.	Houseboat owners in Melton and Woodbridge have been consulted.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1.1 SZC Co. has reviewed and considered all consultation responses as explained in detail within the issues tables at **Table 4.2**.
- 6.1.2 The consultation process has been effective and productive. SZC Co. is very grateful to all parties who have responded to the consultation or engaged with the evolving development of the Project. SZC Co. will continue to work with respondents to provide responses to queries.
- 6.1.3 While the **Noise Mitigation Scheme** [\[REP2-034\]](#) and **Rail Noise Mitigation Strategy** [\[AS-258\]](#) will reduce noise as required by and in accordance with policy, SZC Co. is also working with Network Rail to explore the potential for installing acoustic barriers or noise screens between the railway line and some houseboats and the park homes at Whitearch Park. SZC Co. will continue to develop the detail of the mitigation proposals, informed by the issues raised in this consultation.