

Justin and Emma Dowley Written Submission to PINS for Deadline 8 on 24.9.21

Interested Parties refs - SIZE-AFP123, SIZE-AAFP119, SIZE-AFP124 and SIZE-AAFP120

This submission supplements earlier submissions made to PINS for previous deadlines. We stand by those earlier submissions, but would like to add some further comments in light of recent Issue Specific Hearings, in particular those concerning noise and air quality as well as landscape and historic heritage.

Noise

The Community Impact Report of the DCO refers to “Significant Adverse Effects” of noise in relation to various dwellings in Theberton (see pages 150-160) both in relation to Construction Activities and the Operation of the SLR/entrance roundabout. In the subsequent Relevant Representations Report by the Applicant (page 176) this has been reduced to “Minor” without any justification for such downgrading.

At some considerable expense to ourselves, we commissioned a reputable firm of noise specialists, Create Consulting, to undertake noise surveys on our property, Theberton House estate. We did this because the Applicant’s attention to potential noise pollution arising from the proposed construction of SZC and its operational life appeared to be very limited. This was confirmed by Create, whose submission we would draw your attention to and would like to endorse.

Theberton House, Potters Farm and Eastbridge Farmhouse (all on our land) will be affected by noise arising from the proposed SLR, running along the west side of our land, the entrance roundabout to the south and the lorry park, workers’ campus and borrow pits along the east side. We have tried to engage with the Applicant about our concerns, but to date have met with minimal response and, in particular, have not been told of any possible noise mitigation measures. They finally came to visit our property to walk round it on 3rd September 2021, and whilst the Applicant’s group included a landscape representative, they were unable or unwilling to include someone who deals with the noise aspects of the project despite our enquiries on this subject over a considerable period of time. We had thought that the meeting on 3rd September 2021 was to discuss detailed views on mitigation, but the Applicant wasn’t even able to supply maps on a scale sufficient for us to understand what needs mitigating. We had been expecting some response by Deadline 7 on noise mitigation, but are now told that the Applicant will submit proposals at Deadline 8, which gives us very little time to consider any proposals before the DCO process ends or provide a cogent response.

Landscape and Heritage Assets

With regard to landscape proposals, we have still not been provided with any idea about when these might be available and again we have grave concerns about the amount of time available for us to respond.

As recently as 20th September 2021 the Applicant’s agents, Dalcour Maclaren, sent us a new set of maps concerning the order limits for the SLR on our western boundary. We have made it clear for some considerable time that the SLR appears to run straight over a listed original gate to our house, yet this most recent set of maps does not include the gate or any reference to it, so we must still conclude that this gate is likely to be destroyed.

General

We are still concerned about the Applicant's willingness to engage with us. We were told in July 2021 that EDF would like, as a matter of urgency, to commission an impact assessment on our estate, but we still do not have a date for this. We have tried to set out how devastating SZC would be for us, consequently, if they do not trust our view on this, an impact assessment by an outsider would seem to be reasonably essential in designing suitable mitigation measures.

On the question of engagement, as on many other issues, we are getting tired of hearing EDF's Counsel preface most of his statements to the Examining Authority with the words "It is my understanding....." No doubt he has not been well briefed but too often his understanding is incomplete or inaccurate. Having to repeat over and over again the statements we have now been making for some 9 years concerning the impact of the proposed project on our estate, business and home is, we say, a form of corporate bullying by EDF.

As recently as today, our MP, Dr Therese Coffey, has forwarded to us a reply she received from EDF's Ian Cuncliffe (he means Cunliffe) in which he states "Dalcour Maclaren also met with Mr and Mrs Dowley on 3rd September, and at this meeting the basis of an alternative proposal was discussed in relation to acquisition of the land required to construct the project". This statement is untrue – we had hoped that such a discussion might have taken place, but Dalcour Maclaren said at the meeting that they were not in a position to make any further suggestions. Indeed, the whole purpose of the meeting was to enable Dalcour Maclaren to look at our estate on the ground for the first time.

As a general matter, we are told by our adviser, Mr Mike Horton of Savills, that in his more than 30 years of experience of this sort of project and transaction, the lack of engagement with us shown so far by EDF is unprecedented.

Justin and Emma Dowley

