



## Meeting note

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| <b>File reference</b>     | EN010012   |
| <b>Status</b>             | <b>FINAL</b>   |
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| <b>Date</b>               | 15 May 2013  |
| <b>Meeting with</b>       | EDF Energy; Suffolk District Council (SDC) and Suffolk Coastal District Council (SCDC)   |
| <b>Venue</b>              | EDF Energy's office, The Qube, London (Blackthorn, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor)  |
| <b>Attendees</b>          | Katherine Chapman – Planning Inspectorate<br>Jeffrey Penfold – Planning Inspectorate<br>John Pitchford – Suffolk County Council<br>Bob Chamberlain – Suffolk Coastal District Council<br>Richard Mayson – EDF Energy<br>Tim Norwood – EDF Energy<br>Stephen Walls – EDF Energy<br>Carly Vince – EDF Energy |
| <b>Meeting objectives</b> | Sizewell C Tripartite Meeting – to discuss progress to date of the Sizewell C New Nuclear Power Station (SZC)  |
| <b>Circulation</b>        | Meeting attendees.   |

### Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

Attention is drawn to The Planning Inspectorate – Major Applications and Plans Directorate's openness policy and commitment to publishing any advice under s51 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA 2008) on the Inspectorate's website.

### Update from EDF Energy:

#### Contract for Differences

The developer gave an update on negotiations concerning Contract for Differences (CfD) – a key part of the Government's Electricity Market Reform (EMR) programme, which aims to secure the significant investment required to replace the generating capacity closing this decade and deliver a secure, low-carbon electricity system.

The CfD is a long-term, private law contract that pays the generator the difference between an estimate of the market price for electricity (the 'reference price') and an estimate of the long-term price needed to bring forward investment in a given technology (the 'strike price').

Negotiations are progressing between the developer and Government with regard to CfD and strike prices; the developer remains optimistic that based on progress to date, an agreement can be expected.

Notwithstanding the efforts to settle negotiations, the developer confirmed that planning work related to both Hinkley Point C (HPC) and SZC continues.

### **Learning from Hinkley and other examinations**

The Inspectorate highlighted how it is currently looking at previous and extant examination timetables in an attempt to minimise procedural decisions issued for future projects. The Inspectorate anticipates as experience grows that it will increasingly be able to act pro-actively with developers at the acceptance stage in advising them of what to expect and that such an initiative will aid the project planning of SZC.

SCC expressed concern about allocating resources for the project and costs incurred given how new the PA2008 consenting regime is. The Council made clear that it has a limited flexibility and capacity in its work programme for 2013 and that any work sought by EDF in response to its revised delays in work programme need to be communicated as soon as possible to ensure that work can be delivered.

The developer anticipates engaging early-on with relevant stakeholders and statutory parties to ensure that any preliminary work in reaching agreements / common ground can be in place from the outset of the examination process.

The Inspectorate welcomed such an approach and highlighted the benefits of early-engagement with statutory parties. The Inspectorate confirmed the importance of submitting an application that allows for a robust examination and referred to recent projects which have been withdrawn/refused to proceed to examination.

### **Environmental Information**

The developer confirmed that environmental baseline data and surveys are anticipated to be undertaken in 2013 – and design work continues closely between both the planning and engineering teams. Assessments will then be developed in the following year, 2014, along with Stage 2 of formal pre-application consultation.

### **Stage 1 Consultation:**

The developer gave an overview of Stage 1 of its statutory pre-application consultation held from 21 November 2012 to 6 February 2013.

The Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) was published on 8 November 2012. Changes were made to both event timings and the area of consultation activity in-light of responses from local authorities.

A variety of events were held which included meetings, exhibitions, drop-in sessions, media engagement and council presentations.

Over 100 events were held, with over 4, 000 local people directly engaged with the exercises. The developer confirmed that Stage 1 and future stages of consultation will be assessed against the SoCC.

In response to the Stage 1 Consultation, a total of 1, 298 responses were received - almost double that received for HPC.

The next step for Stage 1 Consultation is the narrowing down of options consulted upon. It is anticipated that this will be in place later this year.

EDF affirmed that it cannot prejudice any comments which may be submitted during consultation until the application has been formally submitted to the Inspectorate. SCC confirmed that all events conducted by the developer were well attended.

### **Land acquisition**

When discussing any potential to use powers of compulsory acquisition for SZC, it was made clear that all land acquisition deals are being sought in parallel as much as possible. The Inspectorate welcomed this approach.

### **Work programme**

EDF Energy is in the process of agreeing a work schedule with relevant local authorities. This will principally be a series of technical workshops that are anticipated to commence in June 2013. This is to assist the pre-application and examination.

### **Update from local authorities**

Local authorities will need to facilitate discussions with politicians with regard to work programmes that the developer will undertake in 2013. The differing working methodologies would mean that some administrative support and funding will be required. How this is to be found and funded is a concern.

Local authorities are still attempting to agree resources with EDF whilst approaching consultants for assistance needed in certain areas including transport and coastal processes. This work is essential if the local authorities are to be in position to challenge assessments and assumptions made by EDF which require technical input.

The local authorities are aware of the scale of development posed by SZC and the impact that this may have on coastal areas. It was felt that the developer's consultation was helpful, however, areas remain where further detail was required.

The general consensus of local authorities was that the indicative programme was modest and that the Inspectorate should acknowledge this. The local authorities stated that a large amount of work is required before Stage 2 Consultation commences with workshops possibly being re-scheduled. Discussions with the public between stages were also seen to be helpful.

### **Update from Planning Inspectorate – Advice Notes and lessons learnt from other projects:**

The Inspectorate highlighted recent internal structural changes including the establishment of the Technical Services Directorate which includes the Environmental Services and Legal teams. No implications on current work streams are expected.

An introduction was given to the newly formed Consents Service Unit (CSU). The purpose of the Consents Service Unit is to deliver a more efficient and effective non-planning consents process for NSIPs in England (including off-shore projects within English waters). The CSU is independent of the Major Applications and Plans Directorate and does not publish s51 advice or notes of meetings on the Planning Portal.

An update on recent projects decided by Secretaries of State was given, along with updates in practice. Relevant representations will now be published following the receipt of s58 certificates and s59 Notices of the PA 2008. In addition to this, examination timetables are now becoming more standardised through lessons learned on previous NSIP applications, which have completed their examinations.

Guidance recently published by the Department for Communities and Local Government on the examination stage and associated development was referred to with key changes highlighted.

**Specific decisions / follow up required**

Next tripartite meeting is anticipated for October 2013.