

Procedural Deadline B Representation of

Minsmere Levels Stakeholders Group (MLSG – IP:20026696)

Minsmere Levels

The Minsmere Levels are marshes starting south east of Reckford Bridge and finishing at the Minsmere Sluice. They drain the area of land either side of the Minsmere River starting at Sibton Lake. Sizewell Marsh drains through the southern Minsmere Levels to Minsmere Sluice and has a significant hydrological influence on the southern levels as a result.

Representation

1. We do wish to speak at the Preliminary Meeting 2 on Wednesday 14th April. Mr. Paul Collins will once again represent our view.
2. MLSG is concerned that the current examination timetable proposals given in Annex D of the Rule 6 letter (PD-011), do not allow sufficient time to consider the impact of a decision to either accept or decline, in part or in whole, the changes proposed by NNB Generation Company (SZC) Ltd (NNB) to the Development Consent Order application for the Sizewell C Project (SZC).
3. Separately, we request that the Examining Authority (ExA) postpone the start of the statutory 6-month examination period to enable proper and full consideration be given to either NNB's original SZC application or the changed, and fully integrated, application to accommodate the following impediments to a complete and properly constituted examination.
 - 3.1 County Council elections and the appointment of a cabinet for Suffolk County Council has been completed, allowing the elected representative and portfolio holders to work with local Parish and Town Councils and non-governmental organisations.
 - 3.2 The ability of Parish and Town Councils to meet virtually after May 7th.
 - 3.3 Whilst Parish Councils will be able to meet indoors as "permitted organised gatherings" from May 14th, some Parish meeting halls will not be open to more than 6 people until after June 12th, significantly compromising their ability to discuss and finalise their written representations, required by Wednesday May 26th. Theberton and Eastbridge Parish Council is one such council faced with this issue.
 - 3.4 Since the two preliminary meetings were held on March 23rd and 24th, the DCO Examination for Scottish Power Wind Farms EA1N and EA2 (SPR) have been extended by 3 months, as notified on April 1st, for completion by July 6th. The new timetable has additional deadlines April 15th, May 6th, June 7th and 28th and July 5th, plus additional dates for hearings May 25th to 28th. Many councils and NGOs who are involved in the SZC application are also involved in this extended SPR examination and their input to SZC will be compromised because of the overlap.
 - 3.5 NNB's three license applications for the operational site will not have been completed during the current examination timetable and will not be available for consideration by the ExA and Interested Parties until after the end of the proposed examination on October 14th.

- 3.6 NNB's nuclear site license application, which was originally projected by the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) to be completed by the end of 2021, will now not be complete until mid-2022, according to ONR feedback given to local NGOs on March 31st. This assessment, including their consideration of the design for the Hard and Soft Coastal Defence, will not be available for either the ExA or the Secretary of State prior to decisions being required through the Planning Act 2008 for National Strategic Infrastructure Projects (NSIP).
4. Whilst the applicant stated in the preliminary meeting that sufficient parameters have been given to allow the assessment of the Hard and Soft Coastal Defence (HCDF and SCDF) within the examination and that the HCDF is predominantly a terrestrial structure, the main "parameter" that is missing and crucial for any assessment is the actual position of the HCDF and SCDF within the existing and post construction coastal dune and beach landscape.
- 4.1 In neither the SZC application nor the requested changes to the SZC application have the exact position of the HCDF slope and toe and SCDF been given, with respect to the existing landscape both north and south of the proposed frontage, sacrificial dune and beach in front of the proposed SZC platform site.
- 4.2 In the requested changes, it is mentioned that the coastal defence toe has moved seaward by 2m and comparisons of illustrative sketches also appear to show the apex of the HCDF to have moved seaward by an unspecified amount. However, the additional height of the HCDF (increased from 10.2m to 12.6m), at a constant slope of 1:3, will add at least 7.2m to the width of the HCDF from apex to the beginning of the toe. Has the apex of the HCDF moved west 5.2m into the platform of the site or is the 2m seaward change an understatement?
- 4.3 It should also be noted that the HCDF toe in the SZC application was unspecified at some indeterminate level higher than +0mOD. Concerns have been expressed throughout all the consultation stages as to the design and location of the HCDF and specifically at consultation 4 by East Suffolk Council, Coastal Partnership East and others as to where precisely the HCDF terminated relative to the existing dunes and beach.
- 4.4 Given the inconsistency between the claimed and calculated increase in width of the HCDF, the lack of specific location and the fact that the applicant now requires a coffer dam to install the HCDF toe and admits that the defence toe for the permanent BLF will be a full 10m further eastward, it is crucial that an accurate plan for the current proposed location as well as the other declared parameters of the HCDF and SCDF are given to the examination for consideration.
- 4.5 These changes indicate that significant works will have to be done on the beach and such workings can also have a significant impact on the way the beach will behave in conjunction with any SCDF post works completion.
- 4.6 It is clear from NNB's statements about modelling of the SCDF for the Marine Technical Forum and their offer to share such modelling with the examination that a proposed plan and location exist for the HCDF and SCDF complex as well as any potential impacts on the size of the platform due to the increase in the HCDF crest and consequential increase in width.
- 4.7 Whilst we understand that continuing discussions between ONR and NNB may result in some adjustments, for those of us who are concerned that the impacts on the geomorphological processes along this eroding coast are fully

understood, we do not believe that the current level of disclosure by NNB is sufficient for the examination to be able to evaluate potential effects of the HCDF and SCDF as the eastward position of the first dramatically affects the potential for mitigation by other.

4.8 We are also concerned that the adaptive design proposed by NNB, stated not to be required until after the end of the operational life of the station (~2094), could well be impractical given the fact that a coffer dam is already required to construct the HCDF toe combined with the impacts of climate change and sea level rise by the end of the century.

4.9 We ask that the ExA request full details of the HCDF and SCDF and plan location to be fully disclosed by NNB prior to the examination's 6 month period starting.

5. We were disappointed that when the subject of parameters and the Rochdale Envelope were discussed in relation to the Planning Inspectorate Guidance, that it was the Applicant who gave their view of the guidance rather than the ExA who are the guiding authority and arbiter of such an approach within the NSIP examination structure and the 2008 Planning Act.
6. We feel that the issues that surfaced in both days of the preliminary meetings were such that the meetings lost context from time to time and that organisations both large and small, as well as individuals, struggled with bandwidth and technology of the virtual hearing.
7. We believe that the examination start should be postponed until such time as all hearings can be opened face-to-face, within Covid-19 guidelines, to enable those whose technical or internet connections are insufficient to properly engage with this process.
8. Whenever the hearings are eventually scheduled, we think there are good reasons to open as many of the events to face-to-face attendees. but also recognize that there are good reasons why it would be advantageous to retain parallel virtual attendance for those who for health, location or other reasons prefer not to attend face-to-face sessions.
9. We request that all hearings where face-to-face can be allowed, given compliance with Covid-19 legislation and restrictions, should be held as hybrid or blended hearings with the ability for virtual attendance and participation.
10. Live streaming of all events should be continued throughout the examination no matter what format is eventually selected.