

Saxmundham Town Council

Committee Meeting	Town Council
Meeting Date	10 July 2023
Item Number	13
Report Title	Energy Projects
Report Author	Sharon Smith

National Grid – Sea Link

Residents in Beech Road received a letter, questionnaire and a map showing a shaded area to land to the right of Beech Road from TerraQuest on behalf of National Grid. TerraQuest have been commissioned to research land ownership and any rights over the shaded area which may be affected by the Sea Link project. Identifying those with ownership and rights will enable TerraQuest to keep them informed of project updates, ensure they fully understand any impacts, and they are involved in any required statutory processes. TerraQuest state that a request for information at this stage of the project does not mean that it will necessarily form part of the route or have planned infrastructure. National Grid have been asked to provide a copy of the letter, questionnaire and map to the Council which will be circulated when received.

EDF – Sizewell C

Town Council Meeting

Community Relations Manager, Zoe Botten, and her colleague Richard Knight, will attend the Town Council meeting on 9th October 2023 to provide updates regarding the schedule of works and to answer any questions.

Railway Plans

Community Relations Manager, Michelle Emmerson-Grey, provided the following information:

- Operational trains will not begin running until approximately 18-24 months from the commencement of the project, in approximately 2025/2026.
- This provides EDF adequate time to ensure suitable noise mitigation measures are in place for residents and they will be in touch with the owners of those properties once the assessments are concluded.
- In the early years of the project, when the Sizewell Branch Line is in use to pass through Leiston, there will not be any night-time trains.
- To minimise any disturbance to residents, in the early years of the project, they will construct a dedicated Green Rail Route to divert rail deliveries directly from the Sizewell Branch Line to the Sizewell C site. New level crossings will be constructed at Buckleswood Road and at the B122/Abbey Road junction.
- The Green Rail Route will operate throughout the construction programme. When no longer needed, it will be removed, the land reinstated to agricultural use, and the temporary level crossings reinstated to highway.
- [The Rail Noise Mitigation Plan](#) contains details of a number of preventative measures that will be put in place for the delivery of the project, which include ensuring the condition of the current rail route – with the use of under-ballast mats, continuously-welded rail, utilising a specific class 66 locomotive and the implementation of a speed limit of 10mph.
- The engineering works to upgrade the East Suffolk Line to prevent noise have commenced and they are already receiving positive feedback from residents who have noted a great reduction of noise on the line. As part of the modelling, trial trains will be running along the line to facilitate noise monitoring studies and they will inform us of the timings of any upcoming trial train runs.
- Refreshed noise assessments are currently being undertaken to identify which properties are eligible for the noise mitigation scheme, which provides for glazing and/or ventilation for habitable rooms on any qualifying

facades. In addition, they are continuing to work with East Suffolk Council and Network Rail on potentially suitable locations for acoustic barriers.

Judicial Review

On 22nd June 2023, the High Court announced that the judicial review brought by Together Against Sizewell C (TASC) had been rejected as being 'totally without merit'. TASC had launched the review over the environmental impact of the project, particularly the disposal of nuclear waste and the provision of a water supply to the station. TASC are considering whether to appeal against the verdict.

Environment Agency Permits

Further to a question raised at the last meeting, it is confirmed that the three permits issued by the Environment Agency to dispose and discharge radioactive waste, to operate standby power supply systems using diesel generators and to discharge returned abstracted seawater and other liquid trade effluents to the Greater Sizewell Bay are in addition to those already granted to Sizewell B.

Scottish Power Renewables – East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two

Archaeology Compound

A planning application has been submitted to the District Council for permission to create a temporary compound at the Harrow Lane Airstrip in Leiston parish to serve the onshore archaeological mitigation works for the project. The site is approximately 0.47 hectares in area, located 4km east of Saxmundham, accessed directly from Harrow Lane, and has the necessary hardstanding. The site is 3km north of the substation at Friston and close to area where the archaeological mitigation works are proposed. The compound is required for 2.5 years to provide car parking for 48 vehicles for 70 staff who will be bussed to and from the archaeology site. The compound will also provide office space, cabins for the storage of finds, welfare facilities and storage of plant for the duration of the works.

Transport Strategy

The route for the passenger vehicles and HGV traffic avoids passenger vehicles travelling through Saxmundham. Peak demand for HGV movements, up to 12 per week, is likely to be during the mobilisation/de-mobilisation of the compound. Outside of these times, HGV trips are unlikely to be no more than 2 per day. Passenger vehicles and HGVs will travel to the site by exiting the A12 at Dorley's Corner and then onto Clayhills Road, Hawthorn Road and Harrow Lane. Occasional access to Saxmundham town centre may be required for food shopping and pick up of staff by an 8-12 seater minibus from Saxmundham station. Travelling to site via train to Saxmundham will be encouraged.

Recommendation

It is not recommended that the Council submits a response to the planning application as it is not a statutory consultee and the impact to Saxmundham from passenger vehicles and HGVs will be minimal. However, it is proposed that information is sought regarding the proposed pick-up and drop-off site for the staff minibus and whether this may offer an opportunity to lease a space in the Town House car park for the duration of the project.

Town Council

Website

A new page for energy projects has been created on the Council website: <https://www.saxmundham.org/energy-projects/>. It is a central repository for information on all the energy projects proposed in the area including a link to the Sizewell C Works Tracker, links to the County and District Council's information on NSIPs, and the Town Council's position on Sizewell C and responses to public consultations.

Staff Pension Scheme

The government's workplace pension scheme has ruled out investing in nuclear projects such as Sizewell C. The National Employment Savings Trust (Nest) does not intend to revise its policy on nuclear infrastructure investments. Nest has about £27 billion in assets under management and 11.7 million members, including the Town Council staff.