

THE ALDE & ORE ASSOCIATION

Your Voice – Your Estuary



Sizewell C: Stage 3 Pre-Application Consultation

Response from the Alde and Ore Association (Registered Charity number 1154583)

The Alde and Ore Association exists to protect for the public benefit the Alde, Ore and Butley rivers and their banks from Shingle Street to their tidal limits together with features of public interest. It has some 2000 members.

The concerns the Association has about the plans for Sizewell C are:-

Consultation Question 1. Sizewell C proposals: overall and Question 2 Main Development Site: Overall.

- i. While there is more information in the Stage 3 documentation about reviews of coastal processes and the likely consequences for the coastline of changes to and installations on the shoreline for Sizewell C, the information is still incomplete. At the higher level no account has yet been taken into account of the impact of the latest assessments of the rise in sea levels and climate change including more frequent and vigorous storms. This needs attention and consultation before the Application for development consent is submitted and it is unacceptable that there is no provision for this in the programme. Sizewell C would be situated on what is a very fragile coastline and more confident predictions are needed that the coastline will not be adversely affected or natural processes hastened.
- ii. The development itself is situated too close to the shore. It is clear from the analysis carried out by Suffolk Coastal Partnership that the sea defence designs are incomplete and that, once properly concluded, are likely, in some conditions, to create a vulnerability to storm damage with wave action directly upon the sea defences. This would be ameliorated by moving the main development inland by at least 30 metres to allow a more resilient sea defence system to be designed with an adequate chance of surviving up to 100 years. The latest predictions for sea level rise – not allowed for in the data supplied with this consultation – make this an urgent need.
- iii. The proposed Sizewell C will be in operation for 60-70 years but the building will remain on the shoreline for many decades if not centuries longer. While the current presentation of material indicates that attention needs to be paid essentially to Sizewell bay, given the permanent physical installation of the station far more needs to be considered about possible future implications of the hard line at Sizewell. The Suffolk coast is a very dynamic one and recent winters have seen large losses of cliff and changes in the beach shape and conformation. It is of great concern how much the coast to the south could be affected in the longer term. For this reason it is essential that there is a

proper and rigorous monitoring programme of the entire coast from north of the site down to Orfordness. This should include funds being available to ensure proper monitoring and that mitigation action can be taken if necessary as well as a clear allocation of responsibilities.

iv. While the Stage 3 documentation makes some assessments of the impact of the installation, including the extended shore protection, the Beach Landing Platform, the Fish Recovery and Return System and the offshore cooling water systems, the work is not complete. There needs to be a very clear account of assessments made and the relative certainty of assumptions made that there will be no impact south of the Ness of Thorpeness. Any impact further south could badly affect the town of Aldeburgh, with a breach to the coastal defences and erosion of the shingle spit that helps form the estuary and the mouth of the river.

v. The Association understands that the proposals consider using aggregate dredged from somewhere in the North Sea. There should be a process to review this to ensure that there is no impact on the Suffolk coast as a result of such dredging operations.

vi. Further,

- a. The completed EIA should be available before the Application for Development consent is submitted.
- b. Plans for ensuring that the Sizewell C work force understand the need to respect the SSSI status and nature reserves which abound in this area and that hunting and fishing without licences, and making fires are not permitted through the Suffolk Coastal area. The Alde and Ore Estuary had a large number of national and international habitat and nature designations. Any leisure use of the area must respect that. The same goes for areas nearer to the north and south of the site.

Consultation questions 6-14: Transport implications.

i. The Suffolk Coast, including the Alde and Ore Estuary, is largely within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. A significant part of the economy is dependent upon tourism. A study of the Alde and Ore area alone indicated an annual spend by visitors of nearly £100 million.

The revised plans have sought to pay more serious attention to improving and ameliorating access routes for the huge amount of goods, materials and people which would be moving around over the years of construction. However, it is suggested that that insufficient account has been taken of the very substantially greater traffic on existing roads for a period of 10 or more years and its impact on the local economy. The traffic projections include over 700 more HGV journeys alone each day (around one a minute over a 13 hour day) and a large increase in other vehicles passing to the site. (It is recognised that the number of vehicle journeys depends on whether the rail or road route is chosen but in any event the change will be huge for the small local roads they

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The Association exists to preserve and protect for the public benefit the Alde, Ore and Butley rivers and their banks from Shingle Street to their tidal limits and such of the land adjoining them or upstream as may be considered to affect them, together with the features of beauty and or historic or public interest in that area.

pass down) It seems that the weight of individual vehicles as well as the sheer volume may be beyond the capacity the roads were built to carry. The region therefore faces possible deterioration of the roads, and the volume and nature of the traffic is likely to seriously discourage tourists and holiday makers who come to enjoy the unique landscape and environment to the detriment of the area.

ii. There should be an infrastructure fund created by the developer to finance the increase in management and maintenance costs suffered by the highway authority as a result of the increased commercial traffic to supply the scheme.

General Note:

1. The Association also endorses the comments made by the Alde and Ore Estuary Partnership.
2. The construction of Sizewell C, even if well managed, is going to cause a huge amount of disruption to the life of both residents and the many visitors on which the area depends. The Alde and Ore Estuary is part of the Suffolk Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The local community is seeking through self-help to ensure that the Estuary, which is central to an area where many people live work and play, is sustained by developing and carrying through a programme to renew the centuries' old river walls for the next few generations. It needs to find some £17million over the next 7 years. The disruption caused to traffic and work during the Sizewell construction may well make that task very much harder.

Alison Andrews, Chairman

Alde and Ore Association

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