

ALDRINGHAM-CUM-THORPE PARISH COUNCIL

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Scottish Power Renewables EA2 and EA1N
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11th April 2018

Dear Sirs,

EA1N and EA2 Offshore Wind Farms – Stage One Statutory Consultation

In light of the additional information available, including that provided at the EA2 and EA1N Public Information Days, we would like to update our consideration on the projects provided in our original letter of the 17th December 2017

Due to National Grid line availability at this point on the coast, the communities around Sizewell have suffered a great deal of disruption and distress over the years from a number of Power Generation Projects, including two Nuclear Power Stations and the Greater Gabbard and Galloper wind farms. There appears to be no respite in the disruption to our communities and damage to our landscape with the prospect of East Anglia ONE North, East Anglia TWO Offshore Wind Farms, Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station and now we hear that the National Grid project Nautilus is also proposing to bring cables ashore at Sizewell which will also require two substations and a connection point to the Grid System.

Local communities feel that they have done enough to support national infrastructure projects. East Anglia ONE North and East Anglia TWO Offshore Wind Farms, and now the National Grid Nautilus Project will result in our local community facing ongoing disruption for many years to come.

As the two SPR Anglia wind farm projects and the National Grid Nautilus project are planned to be completed within the same timescales, and EDF construction of Sizewell C could also commence within their construction period, there should be a holistic approach which considers the requirements and impacts of all three projects and how these can best be collectively mitigated. Failure to consider the combined impacts could result in uncontrolled and disastrous consequences for the local communities

If there are no viable alternatives and the cables have to come ashore at Sizewell then the three supporting substations for the East Anglia Wind Farms, and the three required for the Nautilus Project should be sited as close as possible to the existing energy infrastructure at Sizewell, preferably adjacent to the existing Greater Gabbard and Galloper installations north of the Sizewell Gap road, and only spilling on to land south of the road into the northern sections of zone 2 and into zone 3 (identified by SPR) if absolutely necessary. It is essential that disruption and disturbance to local residents of the area, including those at Ivy Cottages and Halfway Cottages is kept to an absolute minimum.

Although this will mean the facilities will be sited within the Suffolk Coast AONB, the presence of Sizewell A and Sizewell B Nuclear Power Stations together with The Greater Gabbard and Galloper Wind Farms have already created a significant energy hub within the AONB and there reappears to be no compelling argument to now restrict development of this hub and despoil a greater area of the Suffolk coast. At this point on the coast the AONB is at its narrowest, and includes a substantial amount of low grade agricultural land. It is our belief that the low grade agricultural land, and not the SSSI or the heathland, should be used for the siting of these substations and to accommodate the cable routes.

Because of the sensitive nature of this coast, significant mitigations should be applied to all of the onshore works and facilities. These mitigations should include minimising the height of any installations, adopting appropriate colour schemes, providing adequate screening and noise reduction measures as well as reducing the building footprints to an absolute minimum. Once these substations have been completed the areas within the compounds should be maintained in such a way as to encourage biodiversity and as far as possible provide a positive contribution to the long term viability to the AONB.

Any land taken for the laying of the onshore cables should also be restricted to agricultural land. This land should be purchased by SPR and following the works, gifted to the community for rewilding, giving long term benefit, and an overall improvement to the AONB, going some way to mitigate the presence of the substations within our beautiful and precious landscape.

Further consideration on the Proposed seven option zones identified by SPR:

The use of zone 1 and the southern section of zone 2 would proliferate the unacceptable southern spread of the energy infrastructure and have significant impact on the coastal margin.

As in the narrative above, the northern section of zone 2 and part zone 3 are the most appropriate for use, they are of low grade agricultural land and the nearest to what can be considered the Sizewell Energy Hub. This would minimise the spread of the increasing requirement for unsightly and intrusive works. However, the sites should only be used as a last resort if land to the north of the Sizewell Gap road cannot accommodate all the infrastructure required.

The use of the western section of zone 3 and zone 4 would proliferate the unacceptable south westerly spread of the energy infrastructure having significant impact on the AONB and the river Hundred SLA, and also increasing the impact on dwellings and the residents in the locality.

The use of zones 5,6 and 7 although some distance from the coastal AONB, would necessitate the unacceptable creation of a whole new energy hub in an open area of quality agricultural countryside that is largely unspoiled and very visible from the surrounding areas. It would also introduce a much longer cable route crossing the river hundred SLA and three main roads as well as being extremely disruptive to many residents and dwellings.

Yours Sincerely

Eric Atkinson
Chairman

Copy to:

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