

WESTLETON PARISH COUNCIL

Westleton is a village roughly 7 miles by road north of Sizewell. It is a small village surrounded by Areas of Natural Beauty (AONB), the Minsmere RSPB reserve and the Dunwich Heath. The B1125 runs north/south through the village connecting the B1122 in the South at Middleton and the A12 at Blythburgh in the north.

The new proposals made by EDF do not change the WPC's view expressed in our September PINs submission - WPC continues to strongly oppose the construction of a new nuclear power station at Sizewell because:

- the proposed changes to reduce HGV transport will have no impact on the most immediate concern to the residents of Westleton which is that the construction will be the cause of a significant increase in traffic on the B1125 through the village; as HGV traffic is not anticipated through the village, the projected volume of traffic (up to 45% increase) through the village will still occur
- the construction of Sizewell C will be the cause of significant environmental damage to an Area of Natural Beauty on a beautiful and changing coastline and consequently will significantly reduce the appeal of the area to tourists and so damage one of the largest providers of employment and business of the area; at the same time, the influx of thousands of workers will place undue pressures on local services, housing and quality of living for residents.

Specifically:

- Road transport: even with the suggested reductions in HGV traffic, the traffic volumes will remain very high on the region's roads and so the congestion, pollution and road safety concerns remain. WPC reiterates that if the project goes ahead, the 2-village bypass, the proposed link road and associated transport infrastructure must be completed and ready for use at the start of the construction of the power station.
- Rail transport: the proposals will result in increased night-time rail transport which will further impact upon residents of the towns along the route. EDF has recognised as much saying that the rail transport will present 'a major adverse effect' both in terms of noise and potentially damaging vibration for residents along the rail line.
- Sea transport: the proposals will require significantly more infrastructure on the vulnerable and changing coastline which will increase the possibility of detrimental effects on the eco-structure of the whole Suffolk coastline.
- Social and economic impacts: the proposals will not change the fact that an additional 6,000 workers will be brought in from outside of the area. These workers will not only impact on the balance of the local economy as over 700 workers are likely to be displaced from existing businesses, but the influx of 3000 workers living in the accommodation campus and caravan site, alongside those renting locally, will create significant social pressures on the local area: notably pressures on policing, health services and local housing provision.

In conclusion, the proposals are a zero-sum-game: to reduce the HGV traffic, the coastline will experience even greater damage because of the measures needed to bring material in by sea, and residents along the train line will suffer more. Meanwhile, Westleton will still suffer a significant increase of traffic through the village. And finally, this new consultation further damages EDF's credibility: it is clear from the presentation of the proposals that EDF is unsure of the viability of these proposed changes, while they also beg the question as to why EDF could not have made these proposals in its PINs submission a few months ago.

Ian Haines
Clerk to Westleton Parish Council
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