

Notes of the SPLG public meeting on Sizewell C

Held at Leiston Community Centre on 23rd September 2015

- 46 present from the following councils/communities: Westleton, Theberton, SCDC, Benhall, Middleton, Yoxford, SCC, Blythburgh, Aldeburgh, Leiston, Southwold, Sibton and EDF Sizewell C.
- Apologies: Dr. Therese Coffey MP, Cllr. Peter Ewart and Cllr. Richard Smith.
- Jon Swallow, Chairman of SPLG welcomed the public to the meeting. Jon provided an update on the aims and work of SPLG-formed in 2009 (not for or against nuclear power) to bring community strength of local Parish & Town Councils, working together, to negotiate with EDFE. SPLG submitted a 19 page response to Stage One consultation. Since then, SPLG have had a series of meetings with EDFE, SCDC, SCC, EA, Planning Inspectorate, Therese Coffey and Hinkley Point.
- Current situation with Sizewell C is that there will be 2 further Consultations. Stage 2 is delayed until financial investment decisions are made between Government, EDFE and Chinese partners. Government have provided a £2bn guarantee if China agrees to invest. The Chinese want to build their nuclear power station at Bradwell.
- Negotiations are proving fragmented for SPLG because all submissions to EDFE are confidential and the Local Authorities are also bound to observe that EDFE requirement. The confidentiality clause makes it difficult for SPLG to give a proper, informed response. Cllr. McGregor (SCC) gave assurances that there were no shady deals with EDFE. The SCC and SCDC are there, in such a situation, to be as helpful as possible and the best interests of local communities.
- SPLG is currently developing a Paper to EDFE on Young People-their personal and social education. The Local Authorities are preparing a submission on Education and Training concerned with apprenticeships and science subjects in school, which SPLG supports. A Personal and Social education submission is perceived as an adjunct to the formal requirements of education and training for work. In the autumn SPLG will send a request to all its members for evidence of need (leisure resources etc) amongst their young people, to be included in the submission.
- On the issue of tourism it was expressed that building Sizewell C would seriously affect the long term viability of the local tourist industry.
- Benhall concerned about building D2 road, which would pass close to the village and Saxmundham from the A12. Benhall consider the route to be expensive and disadvantageous to residents particularly in Benhall Green. Alternative proposals on the B1122 include a by-pass for Middleton Moor and Theberton. When preparing for Sizewell B the SCC came to the conclusion that the impact of D2 was too great. An alternative view was that D2 only affect a couple of houses close to the route, whilst 60 houses would be very close to the B1122. Lorries could save millions in fuel by using D2. SCC are researching alternatives now along the B1122 but EDF would have to pay. SCC are still awaiting EDF figures on traffic flows, sea and rail etc. Yoxford presents a very difficult traffic problem to solve at the junction with A12, B1122 and A1120. SCC states that our cards are limited, that money is tight and

room for manoeuvre is not good. The A12 Four Villages by-pass is considered a national project for finance. Currently, SCC are awaiting figures from EDFE regarding the planned use of roads, rail and sea in the building programme.

- Worker accommodation proposal at Eastbridge would destroy life in the hamlet. The MP is against the accommodation proposal at Eastbridge and has proposed alternative site in the Ipswich area. SPLG want to split accommodation on to several sites scattered around the area and when Sizewell C is complete transfer the accommodation to social housing and /or student learning centres. It is hoped that at Stage 2 consultation EDFE will have changed its position on Eastbridge. SCC stated there was a change in the planning legislation on temporary buildings, which needs to be explored. Where is the National Government? In a special case like Sizewell C worker accommodation it could help alleviate the situation by suspending current planning legislation on social housing. We should make a request of Government, with support from EDFE. Ipswich was suggested as a site for worker accommodation, which would re-generate part of the town. Another site suggested was at the end of Lovers Lane.
- EDFE stated that Stage One consultation was only a broad view in order to develop Stages 2 & 3. The two Stages can now move forward when finance is available through Chinese support. EDFE want to talk to all groups and take their views to headquarters in London. Resources will be made available to Parish & Town Councils to prepare their submission in response to Stages 2 & 3. EDFE stated that the need for confidentiality was the problem of blighting roads and housing if alternatives are openly being considered. EDFE, SCC and SCDC are particularly concerned to support education and training in the area, to enable young people to participate with skills in the building and maintenance of Sizewell C and the nuclear industry in general. EDFE can speak directly to the Planning Inspectorate.
- Finally, the meeting began to move towards the need to prepare alternative positive options for infrastructure and worker accommodation. However, there will not be a public inquiry. The decisions about Sizewell C will be made by the Inspectorate and the Energy Minister. The Government want the nuclear power station in East Suffolk. Therefore, to ensure a proper consultation, DECC and Government representatives should engage regularly with local councils and SPLG.