

THE ALDEBURGH SOCIETY

Registered Charity Number 262239 www.aldeburghsociety.org.uk
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SIZEWELL C - APPLICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT CONSENT

The Aldeburgh Society is the civic society for the historic coastal town and cultural centre of Aldeburgh. The objects of the Society are to encourage public interest in and care for the character of the town and its surroundings, and the preservation, development and improvement of general public amenity in the area.

The Society opposes the application by EDF for Development Consent for the construction of two new nuclear reactors at Sizewell. It is gravely concerned that this application is having to be examined alongside the application by Scottish Power Renewables (SPR) for the development of two offshore windfarms and their onshore infrastructure, which would seriously impact the same geographical area of Suffolk.

The Society is not opposed to nuclear power, and it supports the Government's net zero target for energy production. However, it views with great concern the damage to the Suffolk Heritage Coast, including the important nationally and internationally protected sites RSPB Minsmere Nature Reserve and Dunwich Heath, which the construction of this very large industrial project would entail. If there were no existing nuclear power station on this coast, the proposal to develop one here would be unthinkable in today's heightened awareness of environmental issues.

We are greatly concerned that very large volumes of construction materials required for a project of this size would have to be delivered over a rural roads system, causing environmental damage, noise and disruption to the whole area. More environmentally friendly options for delivery of materials by rail or sea appear to have only a very limited role. The simultaneous application by SPR, involving further major pressures on the same local infrastructure, makes a coherent integrated approach to both development proposals indispensable.

The Society is not persuaded by the claims made by EDF regarding the employment and associated benefits which the construction process and the operation of the power station might bring. It also questions the validity of the series of pledges towards the local community suggested by EDF. There still remain doubts about the design of the proposed reactors, none of which has as yet operated successfully elsewhere in Europe. The projected storage of radioactive waste for 140 years on an eroding coastline, however well monitored, also gives us major cause for concern.

The construction project would inevitably have a seriously damaging effect upon the tourism business and the cultural offerings for which Aldeburgh is renowned and upon which its local economy is largely based. The Society has concluded that the damage to the fragile East Suffolk coastal area – its environment, economy and society - which the project would wreak is too high a price to pay for electricity, which should be generated increasingly by renewable technologies, supported by improved storage capacities and possibly smaller-scale nuclear projects.

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