

## EDF Sizewell C Stage 1 Consultation

### A response from the East Anglian branch of *Railfuture* - January 2013

*As Britain's only national independent organisation campaigning for passengers and freight Railfuture responds to all significant national and regional consultations. This is the Railfuture East Anglia response to the EDF Sizewell C consultation and potential implications on the local passenger and freight rail network.*

#### 1. *The need for improved infrastructure to support additional passenger and freight services*

*Railfuture* East Anglia fully supports the proposals in the consultation document to promote and encourage the use of both passenger and freight transport for the construction of Sizewell C. This is a large project for the county of Suffolk. We would welcome an indication of timescales for the project when further dates of development are known.

#### 2. *Impact and potential growth for passenger train services*

1. There are currently between 15 and 17 trains Monday to Saturday and 8 trains on Sundays between Ipswich and Lowestoft with ten interim stops on the East Suffolk Line in both directions. Principal interim stations served are Woodbridge, Saxmundham, Halesworth and Beccles. The journey time is around 1 hour 20 minutes. At Ipswich there are connections with London (Liverpool Street) and the South, Cambridge, Peterborough for the Midlands, Northern England and Scotland. At Lowestoft there is a frequent train service to Norwich and connections serving the same destinations. (See comments in Section 7 regarding wider developments in the rail network).

2. The line is not electrified and currently operated by Greater Anglia – Abellio and already has limitations on a carrying capacity with some trains limited to a single car DMU. The figures quoted in the consultation document make no allowance for general organic growth of passengers on the line, not related to Sizewell C, between now and dates of construction. Following the introduction of the Beccles loop and the hourly train service in December 2012, patronage is expected to grow for the rest of this decade.

3. The current Greater Anglia franchise is still, in theory, due to expire in July 2014, with a new longer term, possibly 15 year, to follow. However, with recent setbacks relating to a major rail franchise within the Department of Transport, it is likely this date will be postponed. At the time of writing (mid Jan 2013) the Brown Review on the future of rail franchising has just been released. The implications for Train Operating Companies are unknown at the moment.

4. The HLOS ( Rail Industry High Level Output Statement) applied to the new franchise will be important to cater for the appropriate passenger rolling stock on the East Suffolk Line (ESL) to accommodate additional growth in patronage. Currently in January 2013 the older units in the current DMU fleet are almost 25 years old and most are non Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant, although one Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) has been converted as part of an upgrade programme. However, this could change if DMUs are re-allocated to another franchise in future years. The deadline for all rolling stock to be DDA compliant is 2020.

4. At peak construction, 100 workers per day would travel by train on the ESL. This appears low, compared to the estimated peak number of workers of 5,600 noted in the document, but this is due at the moment to the limited hourly service and slow journey time. (See comment in Section 6 regarding Track Capacity). The figure will reduce to

a total of 900 workers when the site becomes operational. A temporary accommodation campus is planned to enable 2000-3000 workers to close to the site.

### **3. *Impact and potential growth for freight train services***

1. With freight, the bulk material tonnage – combined inbound and outbound is estimated at circa 12 million tonnes during construction across the main site and ancillary developments. Both sea and rail will have significant roles in the delivery of construction to the site. A temporary jetty is planned to be built for sea transport.

2. The proposals for rail freight and the operating of 4-5 trains per day seem reasonable with some night services and the building of an extension into the construction site. There are three options to consider, each has 'for and against'. We would be interested to learn the flow of these trains regarding origin and departure. i.e. will they need to use the congested GEML and Ipswich yard or cross country? See below comment 6 regarding the Ipswich Chord.

3. There is an acceptance that the existing rail infrastructure i.e. Leiston railhead, Saxmundham to Leiston branch and the current ESL network could not handle the proposed increased activity. We support the proposal to extend the Saxmundham-Leiston branch line into the construction site.

4. Railfuture does not have preference on the choice of the three potential routes. After construction is complete the existing line should be protected and retained to allow the re-instate a permanent local passenger between Saxmundham and Leiston. An increase in the local population for those working at the site and leisure activities would make this proposal sustainable.

5. It is unclear from the document how many additional trains there will be post construction for the spent fuel for re-processing. When will there be a decrease in the current number of trains from Sizewell A & B sites?

6. Ipswich Chord – This due to open in 2014 and potentially will give more capacity on the network, especially in the area between Ipswich and Westerfield, although its initial impact may be difficult to assess. The volume of container trains and, therefore, the utilisation of the Chord will depend on the future of Port of Felixstowe as it competes for business with London Gateway, due to open in October 2013. However, as above, this location could be ideal for Sizewell trains both during and post construction traffic.

### **4. *Implications with Local Bus services with the Rail Network***

1. Referring to the table in the document there is one omission. From December 2012 an additional commercial bus service 164 operated by Anglia Buses was introduced between Ipswich and Saxmundham with a few ad hoc journeys linking Leiston. The area is currently has intense competition between First and Anglian Buses, now owned by the 'Go Ahead' Group. While it is impossible to forecast the state of the local bus industry within the next five to ten years, it will more than likely still remain strong competition for the local rail service.

2. Two temporary Park and Ride facilities for staff are planned, also between Saxmundham and Darsham rail stations. In addition there will services linking from Ipswich and Lowestoft. We are unsure whether these be 'closed contracts', only available to Sizewell workers only or integrated with local bus registered services as a transport hub and therefore positive impact on the wider commercial and sponsored network. This should be part of an integrated public transport solution or an alternative and competing with the local train service.

## 5. *Station Buildings & Platforms*

1. To encourage site workers to use the rail service as part of their journey, improvements at local stations are desirable and should be funded as part of the development.
2. Ticket machines should be installed at most of stations en route. However with the development of modern technology including tablets, smart phones, 'apps' and Oyster style travel cards the use of ticketless and cashless journeys ticket machines may not be required in the years ahead. All stations used for the site must have clear local information, maps and signage inside the station buildings for connections, public transport services to the construction site and other local places of interest. This would be relevant for visitors and leisure time. Good station lighting is essential.
3. Where appropriate CCTV, customer information screens with real-time public transport information and intercoms to a local communications centre for the TOC should be available for local transport updates. Again developments in modern technology may render this item un-necessary.
4. Stations should have as shelters on platforms for protection from the weather.
5. There should be provision for cycle storage facilities. Access for pedestrians / cyclists only, must be developed with as many secure access routes as practicable to the stations.

## 6. *Track capacity including provision of passing loops*

1. The line is only double track on parts of the line. However, the introduction of the Beccles loop in December 2012 has allowed increased flexibility of trains on the line including an hourly service between Ipswich and Lowestoft.
2. Despite these enhancements, because of the number of public crossings and track condition, the average line speed is relatively slow. Network Rail has indicated their intention to increase line speeds by removing any many crossings as possible and renewing the track.
3. We support the proposal for a permanent passing loop at Wickham Market, near the village of Campsea Ashe. However there is no mention of returning the southbound platform to use which would assume the loop would only be for freight traffic leaving passenger trains restricted to the single platform. Although an additional platform would add to the costs (*see comments Section 7.4 re: S.106 funding*) it would improve the robustness of a timetable, minimising any delays which will come under additional pressure for available train paths.
4. An alternative and possibly cheaper option would be to site the loop close to but beyond the station / platform area
5. However we consider there as an alternative case for the extension of the double track section or dynamic (long) loop from Saxmundham or Ufford to Campsea Ashe. This may be cheaper than re-doubling Campsea Ashe to Woodbridge.

## 7. *Developments in the wider rail network*

1. There are proposals for a planned development around the North West area of Ipswich of up to 3,000 dwellings, plus schools and other amenities over a 20 year period, with the first phase due to be started in early 2014. These

are planned to use Westerfield as the local rail station thus making an ideal commuter area including northbound journeys towards Lowestoft.

2. With possible electrification from 2019 onwards could there be the demand for through trains from London and Cambridge with a bay platform at a new station location on the opposite side of the existing level crossing? This would add to passenger growth at Westerfield and the need to restore stops at the station by trains to Lowestoft.

3. With major rail enhancement schemes of Crossrail to be completed by 2019 this will create additional demand and faster public transport links to connect to the larger rail network in London and the South.

4. S106 funding – There was no reference in the document regarding S106 funding. Is there any and what will be the impact that will provide broader benefits to the transport network and the local community as a long term legacy?

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29 January 2013**

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