

Consultation with WPC on possible changes at B1125/B1387 intersection to deal with Sizewell C traffic safety and traffic impacts

If Sizewell C is approved, many of the roads on which we travel will become seriously congested and far more dangerous than they are today. This will be particularly true in the first several years if EDF is allowed to start construction without putting in place the road traffic mitigation measures promised as part of the development. It is a legal requirement for developers to put mitigation in place PRIOR to construction start. However, EDF is arguing that they should not be held to this standard in relation to Sizewell C. If the Secretary of State approves the project, he may allow EDF to have its way which will make the situation all the worse for the local communities.

As an outcome of this situation, it is expected that the B1125 from Blythburgh will be used as a major route for the thousands of workers and the thousands of light vans that will be coming from the north to reach Sizewell. It may also become the rat run for non-Sizewell traffic trying to escape the A12 for the duration of the construction. The B1122, which is at the southern end of the B1125, will be the main route for all Sizewell traffic, including many thousands of HGVs travelling both ways, everyday, until a link road with the A12 is built slightly farther south.

Walberswick Parish Council is represented on the B1125 Working Group which is one of the many working groups established under the Deed of Obligation between Sizewell C and Suffolk County and East Suffolk District Councils. Cllr Bassinette has been attending meetings and site visits along with Westleton and Blythburgh Parish Council representatives to seek ways to help mitigate the traffic and safety issues specifically on the B1125.

At this point, there are a number of traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures proposed through Westleton village. At the northern end at Blythburgh and particularly at the junction of the B1125 with the B1387, it is proposed that the only meaningful step that can be taken is to close the northern end of the B1125 (just north of the Water tower junction) to through traffic. This will stop cars and vans travelling to Sizewell (or indeed to places south on the B1125) from using the B1125 through Blythburgh as a shortcut. They may still come on the B1125 from the B1387 turn at the A12, but they will not be speeding across the Water Tower junction in their thousands. It will mean that the exit from the Walberswick Road (B1387) will no longer be a 5 way turn, but rather a 2-way turn with traffic only turning south or proceeding straight up the B1387 to the A12. Bicycles and pedestrians will be able to go north to Blythburgh. Cars that accidentally come down through Blythburgh will have an area where they can u-turn.

If this concept is broadly acceptable, engineers will make detailed designs that will be shared with the Working Group and which Councillor Bassinette will bring to the Council for consideration. The current agenda item is intended only to ask the Council's view of the overall concept and whether it would be acceptable given the extraordinary circumstances associated with the 12-20 year construction of Sizewell C. Although many people find the intersection with the B1125/B1387 dangerous now, and Blythburgh has long sought some means for controlling the traffic through its village, this investment in the change of road would only happen if Sizewell C goes forward.