

Views sought on Sizewell C nuclear power environmental permits

The Environment Agency has begun a 12-week public consultation on 3 environmental permits for the operation of the proposed Sizewell C nuclear power station.

It is seeking feedback from the community and all stakeholders between 4 July to 25 September 2022.

NNB Generation Company (Sizewell C) wants to build a new nuclear power station next to Sizewell B in Suffolk. It applied for the 3 environmental permits in May 2020, and the Environment Agency consulted on those applications from 6 July 2020 to 2 October 2020.

Each permit is an important regulatory permission that the company requires for the operation of the power station. They cover controls the company needs to put in place to ensure high standards of environmental protection during commissioning, operation and decommissioning.

If granted, the permits would allow Sizewell C to:

- dispose of and discharge radioactive waste (radioactive substances activity permit),
- operate standby power supply systems using diesel generators (combustion activity permit), and,
- discharge cooling water and liquid effluent into the North Sea (water discharge activity permit).

Public drop-ins will be held, as part of the consultation, where people can meet an Environment Agency specialist. They can discuss the proposed decision documents, draft permits and supporting assessments.

The Environment Agency's Sizewell C project manager, Simon Barlow, said:

Our proposed decision is that we should issue the permits for the 3 operational activities, subject to the consultation process. These draft permits represent over 10 years of pre-application discussions with EDF SZC Co.

We've set out our reasoning in the documents and supporting assessments.

The company has applied for these permits many years ahead of the station operating. If we grant these permits early in the project, it will help us to positively influence the design, procurement, and commissioning of the power station, whilst also ensuring that the environment and wildlife is protected.

We want our decisions to be better-informed through consultation and want to hear people's views on our proposed decisions.

If you have any relevant information that you feel we have missed, you can provide your comments, which we will carefully consider, before we make our final decision in early 2023.

The draft permits, proposed decision documents and other supporting documents can be read online where you can also respond to the consultation:

If you would like to sign up for Environment Agency e-bulletins about the work and regulation of the Sizewell C project, contact:

SizewellCNNB@environment-agency.gov.uk

Ends

Notes for Editors

About us

The Environment Agency is the independent environmental regulator for the nuclear industry in England. We make sure that nuclear power stations meet high standards of environmental protection.

The Environment Agency regulates specific environmental matters at nuclear sites in England by issuing environmental permits. These permits cover site preparation, construction, operation and decommissioning.

Any company that wants to operate a nuclear power station must show that it can build, commission, operate and decommission it safely and securely, whilst protecting the environment and managing radioactive waste.

We also work closely with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR), which regulates the safety and security aspects of the Sizewell nuclear sites.

As well as regulating the proposed site, through these environmental permits, the Environment Agency also provides advice and information to the Planning Inspectorate, including the protection of water quality and ecology, and flood and coastal risk management.

This consultation and what happens next

The Environment Agency has consulted on and assessed the applications, and its proposed decision is to issue the permits subject to the limits and conditions specified. The conclusions of our other assessments, for example, Radiological Impact Assessment, Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA), Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW), Water Framework Directive) also support this view.

We have assessed the risks to designated habitats and species and consider that the proposed activities will not have an adverse effect on European sites, or damage Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Our consultation does not relate to the UK EPR™ design. It is not about the need for nuclear power, UK energy policy, the siting of nuclear power stations, nor the safety and security of the design.

During and after the 12 weeks, Environment Agency experts will consider comments and further feedback before making any final decisions.

[Online consultation website](#)

Talk to our staff at events:

- Thursday 14 July, 2pm-7.30pm, Saxmundham Market Hall, High Street, IP17 1AF
- Friday 15 July, 2pm-7.30pm, Aldeburgh Parish Church, Church Hall, Victoria Road, IP15 5DU
- Saturday 16 July, 9am-1.30pm, Leiston Community Centre, King George's Avenue, IP16 4JX

Assessing new nuclear power station designs

We have previously worked with the Office for Nuclear Regulation to carry out generic-design assessment on the design proposed for Sizewell C, known as EDF-Areva's UK EPR™.

That assessment process ended in December 2012 and the Environment Agency and ONR concluded that the reactor design is 'acceptable.' This means that people and the environment will be properly protected if this reactor design is constructed and operated in the UK.

This design is currently under construction at Hinkley Point C in Somerset.

For further information about our role in nuclear new build, visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sizewell-nuclear-regulation>