

BRADWELL B
Community Forum – 2 November 2021
Meeting Note



Attendees:

Althorne Parish Council
Asheldham and Dengie Parish Council
BAN
BANNG
Bradwell-on-Sea Parish Council
Cold Norton Parish Council
East of England Ambulance Service
Essex County Council
Federation of Essex Colleges
Great Baddow Parish Council
Heybridge Parish Council
Maldon District Council
Maldon Community Voluntary Service
Mundon Parish Council
RAF Bradwell Bay Preservation Society
Rettendon Parish Council
South Woodham Ferrers Town Council
Tillingham Village Council
Tolleshunt D’Arcy Parish Council
West Mersea Town Council

Chair – Sandra Fryer

Bradwell B Project Team

Andrew Murdoch, Bradwell B
Neil Burke, Bradwell B
Tim Miller, Bradwell B
Paul Marks, General Nuclear System Limited (GNSL)

Community Forum Secretariat

Michelle St Martin, Bradwell B
Philip White, Bradwell B

South East Local Enterprise Partnership

Louise Aitken, Skills Lead

Item 1: Welcome from the Chair

- The Chair welcomed all attendees to the Community Forum and thanked everyone for their time. The Chair explained her role and set out the proceedings for the meeting.
- The Chair notified attendees that a recording of the meeting will be taken solely to aid the development and accuracy of the meeting notes. This recording will not be circulated to members of the Community Forum and will be deleted once the meeting notes are approved.
- In addition, members are now invited to pre-submit up to two questions ahead of the meeting. A question was pre-submitted by Great Baddow Parish Council and would be addressed in the meeting.
- It was also noted that apologies had been received from
 - Cllr John Carr Brightlingsea Town Council
 - Cllr Mike Mackrory, Chelmsford City Council
 - Cllr Julie Gooding, Rochford District Council
 - Emma Potter, Essex Police
- Apologies were also given from Niall Pettitt from the Environment Agency, who was due to present at the Community Forum. A written update has been added to the end of this document.
- The Chair asked if there were any comments on the notes from the last Community Forum. No comments were received.

Item 2: Feedback from previous Community Forums

Olivia White, Senior Communications Manager, Bradwell B, provided the results from the Community Forum surveys issued after previous Forums.

Item 3: Bradwell B update

Andrew Murdoch, Project Development Director, Bradwell B and Paul Marks, Acting GDA Officer, General Nuclear System Limited, provided an update on the project covering the following items:

- Generic Design Assessment
- Bradwell B:
 - GI appeal
 - Engineering and feasibility
 - Continuing engagement
- Timeline of UK nuclear highlights in 2021, including government policy, key announcements from Hinkley Point C and Sizewell C and Nuclear Industry Association.

Item 4: Questions

CGN UK involvement in UK nuclear

Great Baddow Parish Council provided a written question ahead of the Forum: “The planned Bradwell B reactor is designed and built by the China General Nuclear Power Group who will finance most of the construction cost. Due to the current geopolitical relationship between China and the western world, and the concerns about national security, do you expect the Bradwell B project to continue in its present form?”

BRB team response: CGN and EDF are partners across four joint venture companies. CGN is financing a third of the cost of Hinkley Point C and the companies are also working together developing Sizewell C, Bradwell B and the project to complete the Generic Design Assessment for the UK HPR1000. There is no change in that strategy.

The key objective of the development phase of a project is to secure funding and attract investment to proceed with the project. Sizewell C is making good progress towards a final investment decision. The team has been in discussions with Government since December last year.

In the last couple of weeks, the Government has announced the Regulated Asset Base (RAB) model, which is their proposed new funding model for new nuclear. They also set aside £1.7billion of funding in the recent budget to support nuclear projects such as Sizewell. Government is hoping the RAB model will reduce costs of capital and help projects attract more traditional investors.

CGN and EDF continue to work together in the development phase of Sizewell C to get the project to a successful investment decision.

For Bradwell B there is a longer path to an investment decision. There are a number of different financing models the project could use, which will be explored over time. Bradwell is a designated site for nuclear and the Government has recently reasserted its endorsement of nuclear. The case for Bradwell is strong and we are working diligently to move the project forward through our development phase, which remains funded jointly by CGN and EDF.

BAN commented to clarify that Bradwell is on the Government's list of sites for *potential* new nuclear and in the Government's own assessment, there were several concerns raised about its suitability as a site.

BRB team response: Comment noted.

Other projects

A representative from Rettendon Parish Council asked if the focus for developing a nuclear reactor has now switched from Bradwell to Anglesey.

BRB team response: Nuclear projects are developer led in the UK. Government is focused on a number of different solution for decarbonising electricity, including large and small nuclear. For Wylfa, there are a number of options, but at the moment, we are not aware that any of these options have any meaningful funding. Wylfa is a designated site under Government national policy, as is Bradwell.

France& UK relationship

A representative from Rettendon Parish Council asked if the current situation between UK and France could lead to EDF pulling out of the project.

BRB team response: EDF is significantly invested in nuclear projects in the UK. EDF is committed in the long term to energy generation in UK, which will not alter from short term geo-politics.

Fusion

Heybridge Parish Council asked about a recent article in the Maldon & Burnham Standard referring to Fission versus Fusion.

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BRB team response: There is a process being run by the UK Atomic Energy Authority to select sites for Fusion. Earlier this year, the UK Atomic Energy Authority identified 15 sites, which were under consideration as part of the site selection process. Bradwell was nominated by a local developer, not ourselves, as one of these 15 sites. The UK Atomic Energy Authority has recently shortlisted five sites, which did not include the Bradwell site.

An officer from Essex County Council and BANNG confirmed Bradwell has been discounted for an experimental Fusion technology site.

Project timings

A Representative from East of England Ambulance Service Trust asked for an update on the timeline for the Bradwell B project.

BRB team response: We have never stated a specific timeline for the project, as projects like Bradwell B are complex and the programme often has to respond to events. The timeline has been affected by the delay to the ground investigation works. We had originally intended doing the work in 2020, but the decision was refused by Maldon District Council and is currently going through a planning appeal¹. We will take stock when the appeal decision comes in and act accordingly to plan future work.

Blackwater Estuary oyster research

A representative from BANNG asked about the Essex University research project into the impacts of Bradwell B on the Blackwater Estuary.

BRB team response: The experimental research activities have now been completed by Essex University, who are now writing up their findings into either one or two papers. This is an academic piece of work and we expect the papers would be released into the public domain. As the Bradwell B project funded the work, we will be able to review the finding ahead of public release. As yet, we are not aware of the timings for the drafting and release of those papers.

There will not be information withheld by the project. We engaged with Essex University to have an independent view on the potential implications of thermal discharge on the oyster bed community. When we first commissioned this work our proposals showed significant thermal load in the Blackwater Estuary. Since then our proposals have changed considerably and we are now proposing hybrid cooling, with a much lower thermal load. Despite this change to our proposals, we decided to continue the research as it had started. The research will provide information on the oyster community, but the research into the impact on the oyster beds is no longer as relevant as when we started the work.

Item 5: Break

Item 6: Socio-economic benefits

Neil Burke, Senior Planning Consents & Permits Manager, Bradwell B, provided a presentation about socio-economics including:

¹ After meeting note: On 5 November the Planning Inspectorate announced its decision to allow the Bradwell B planning appeal and grant planning permission

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- an overview of what is meant by socio-economics for infrastructure projects
- how socio-economics impacts and benefits are measured
- the commitments made by Bradwell B so far in terms of jobs

Louise Aitken from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership then provided a presentation on the skills work undertaken by the organisation. She explained how SELEP is working with projects across the region to understand the skills needs of the region.

Item 7: Questions

Engagement with Network Rail

A representative from Althorne Parish Council asked what engagement has taken place with Network Rail and how the use of the existing or extended rail network has been considered by the project.

BRB project response: We have looked at the use of rail in our initial proposals presented at the Stage 1 consultation. We have spoken to Network Rail about the options for routes to site. Network Rail has constraints on their network, which we are aware of, for example, we know Shenfield is a pinch-point. We could deal with any of these constraints but that in turn would have other impacts, which we would have to assess. At this stage no decisions have been made.

There is also a possibility for bringing materials for the project by sea and then using rail to take these to site. We have explored this option with freight specialist consultants and Network Rail. In our Stage 1 consultation, we included about 50% of freight coming into site by sea. Whether rail is or is not part of the mix is not something we have reached a decision on yet and will be developed as part of our Transport Strategy and part of future consultations.

Network Rail has a duty to consult us as a potential customer of their network and they will help us to look at the potential options for the project as our proposals develop.

Managing impact on communities

A representative from BAN asked how would the project mitigate the impacts of a near 700% population increase on a rural village, with relative high employment, and high levels of older residents (many living within 800 meters from the actual planned reactors), and most of whom live in the area due to its remote and quiet location.

BRB project response: Our job is to go through a thorough and robust impact assessment and mitigate for these impacts. At peak, we will have about 9,100 workers working on site. We expect about a third of those to be recruited locally and the balance to be travelling to work. We propose up to 4500 beds at onsite worker accommodation.

Concerning those living closest to the site, we will assess all impacts including dust, noise and vibrations. These assessments will be reviewed by regulatory authorities and other stakeholders as part of the DCO process. We will also identify and implement appropriate mitigations, for example bunding to mitigate for noise. We are at the early stages of the project and we have a long way to go before we undertake a full and detailed impact assessment and develop to mitigation and management measures that go with that.

A representative from Rettendon Parish Council asked if amenities will be included for workers.

BRB project response: The site accommodation will include local amenities. The Stage 1 consultation documents included information on amenities. In regards to accommodation and facilities, there is an opportunity for these to create legacy benefits. We will be engaging with the community about these as the project develops.

Representative of BANNG confirmed population of Bradwell-on-sea is 863 and commented that the project seems out of scale, as well as the it creating environmental impacts.

Bradwell-on-Sea Parish Council representative asked where the 500 permanent homes mentioned in the Stage 1 consultation would be.

BRB project response: When putting together the initial accommodation strategy, as outlined in the Stage 1 proposals, we looked at a range of solutions, including temporary and permanent worker accommodation. This broad approach means we can maximise economic benefits, but must also be mindful of balancing local impacts and being realistic about what can be delivered. The 500 new homes are not specifically at Bradwell-on-Sea, but refer to the number of permanent houses, which might be brought forward across the region. To create this number, we have looked at what is the baseline, including how many empty homes could be used and headroom in private rental sector.

Voluntary and community sector engagement

A representative from Maldon CVS asked how well represented the local voluntary and community sector has been in consultations to date, as voluntary sector busy due to Covid last year and also what plans there are to work at a local place based level for community impact.

BRB project response: In regards to the Stage 1 consultation, we did invite comment from Maldon CVS.

Whilst we recognise the pressures of Covid for many organisations, we did have a very large response to the consultation, more significant than any other new nuclear project consultation. That does not mean we captured all the key inputs from the sector and continue to engage with them.

When it comes to the end of the DCO process we have to demonstrate that we have effectively consulted with all potentially affected parties.

In regards to future consultation, local groups will be consulted again. We also have other ways to get in touch via website for contact details and door always open to engage with project and discuss how we engage going forward.

Schools engagement

A representative from Rettendon Parish Council and Maldon CVS asked what is being done in local schools to try to get the younger generation interested and involved in the skills that will be required.

SELEP response: For us school engagement is part of a broader approach about getting young people involved and engaged as early as possible in careers. The careers event and magazine we recently produced is one way we are starting to plant the seeds about careers and aim to work with partners to give as much information as we can about those sectors. For example, Lower Thames Crossing has developed an amazing resource. If we work together, we can make information as accessible as possible to the schools.

We also need to make labour market information available to schools and are getting more requests from schools for this. There is a range of information on our website.

BRB project response: We have had quite limited engagement with schools to date. As the moment, we have been engaging with partners such as SELEP and the Federation of Essex Colleges about what we will need to do in future to plan for our workforce. It is definitely a priority to inspire the next generation of our workers, but we need to make sure we engage at the right time.

A representative from Rettendon Parish Council stated that there was a national issue around promoting engineering, as many people think it is a manual job.

SELEP: The diversity of roles in these sectors is not always understood. We work with STEM Learning who have STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Maths) ambassadors, which go into schools to discuss about sector jobs. The careers event we delivered included information about construction and engineering to try to explain about the whole range of different roles in these sectors. High on the agenda for SELEP is to forge ahead in this area.

BRB project response: Creating the right workforce, is not just a single developer's problem, nor is it just a regional problem. It is a national problem. Developers need to work with local bodies focused on skills and education, as well as other developers. We also need to see regions working together and the Government working on national skills needs.

At Bradwell, we can learn a lot from what is happening at Hinkley and Sizewell and other infrastructure projects.

A representative from Federation of Essex Colleges said they are we engaging early with the local major projects and working closely with SELEP on skills and training needs locally. The organisation has had some projects come in and talk to students and are looking to work together with projects and the communities.

Item 9: Final remarks from the Chair.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions, confirmed a note of the meeting and slides will be circulated.

Additional Submission: Information from the Environment Agency

The Environment Agency was due to present at the Community Forum and give an update on the generic design assessment, planning and permitting. The below written note has been provided.

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Generic Design Assessment

- A summary of consultation responses published in July 2021.
- ONR and EA continuing detailed assessment.
- Our Decisions and Assessment Reports published in early 2022

Planning

We continue to provide pre-application planning advice as requested.

Water Discharge Activity Permit

- To transfer treated ground water, direct rainfall and surface water runoff.
- Does not include waste water from boreholes or foul water from welfare facilities.

The Environment Agency received two applications, the first for a water transfer licence which has been granted and a second for a water discharge activity which is under consideration.

The Water Discharge Activity permit application was publicised on GOV.UK and our CitizenSpace consultation website between 30 April 2020 and 15 June 2020. There were also public notices in the Colchester Gazette and the Maldon and Burnham Standard newspapers on 30 April 2020. Our public consultation received 16 responses and we continue to be open to receiving and considering further comments from the public. We have also consulted Natural England as the relevant statutory nature conservation body and have taken their comments into account.

The permit application is still in determination. A draft permit, informed by the consultation and including measures and conditions to protect the environment, has been shared with the applicant for their review.

For further information or questions, contact Niall Pettitt BradwellBNNB@environment-agency.gov.uk