

**Addendum to Director's Report  
AGM 2020  
September 7 2020**

The report updates the Director's Report for the AGM which was drafted and uploaded onto the website in April 2020. Since then a number of issues of relevance have emerged and a brief overview has been prepared as an addendum to that report.

**White Paper on Planning Reform**

In August the Planning Reform White Paper was issued. The primary purpose of which is to speed up the delivery of housing. Boris Johnson's opening remarks in the consultation document about the English planning system are truly striking *The whole thing is beginning to crumble and the time has come to do what too many have for too long lacked the courage to do – tear it down and start again. That is what this paper proposes. Radical reform unlike anything we have seen since the Second World War.*

However, there are some very positive recommendations that SPS has long been calling for; a welcome emphasis on the need for improved design, recognition of the need for comprehensive resourcing of planning departments, a skills strategy for the planning sector, the creation of a Chief Officer role in every planning department with a responsibility for design and placemaking as well as the creation of a new expert local body to help planning departments make effective use of design guidance.

However, these positives are significantly outweighed by the potential negatives. The proposed simplification of the local plans system will radically affect planning as we have known it for the last 70 years. The reforms introduce a system zoning of land into three areas of Growth, Renewal and Protection and the introduction of standardised Development Management policies contained within the NPPF, rather than in Local Plans. This zoning would effectively remove the planning application stage, leaving public engagement solely at the plan making stage.

The Society has grave concerns about the implications for community involvement and the ability for local people to influence planning decisions that affect them. Accordingly, SPS will be working closely with CPRE Head Office in responding to the consultation and writing to our MPs to highlight our concerns about these reforms.

For full coverage of the White Paper see report by the Royal Town Planning Institute [here](https://www.rtpi.org.uk/policy/2020/august/proposals-for-planning-reform/) <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/policy/2020/august/proposals-for-planning-reform/>

**Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects**

Scottish Power's Development Consent Order application resumes in the autumn 2020 after a six-month postponement as a result of the pandemic. It has been decided by the Planning Inspectorate that the proceedings will be carried out primarily in a virtual format. The procedural aspects of the Examination are being considered in September and a provisional date for the submission of Written Representations by Interested Parties is in October.

In July the Planning Inspectorate gave leave for EDF's application for Sizewell C to proceed to Examination. Stakeholders who wish to Register as Interested Parties must do so by 30 September 2020.

It is of deep concern that both applications will be running concurrently, and that further energy DCO's are already coming forward. The NSIP applications are of a magnitude and technical complexity that small, community and amenity groups, including the SPS will find challenging. Therefore, we are actively exploring ways in which we can align ourselves with other groups with similar concerns in order to maximise our chances of effectively defending the county against such monumentally damaging proposals. This approach is in accordance with guidance set out by the Planning Inspectorate to ensure the smooth running of the Examination.

### **Suffolk View**

Suffolk View has been largely produced by Linda Clapham who has edited the magazine for 16 years. Earlier this year Linda retired from the role and we are enormously grateful to her for all her dedication and hard work on behalf of the SPS. We have appointed a new volunteer to help with producing the magazine, Elizabeth Coughlin and we are delighted to welcome her to the team. Inevitably discussions have been had about the ongoing costs of producing Suffolk View during these difficult times. However, as a much-valued offer to our members it has been decided that we will continue to produce a hard copy magazine. However, a new format is currently being prepared and will be launched with the next edition due out in autumn 2020.