

## **Report to Extra Ordinary Meeting of the Wickham Market Parish Council on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

WMPC to confirm its acceptance of the Sizewell C Wickham Market Transport Scheme presented to the joint working group on 29 September 2025 as the fixed design.

### Background

WMPC can trace its involvement with Sizewell C (SZC) back to 2013 when EDF began public consultation on a proposed new Sizewell power station. The parish council set up a Sizewell Working Group and continued this involvement through the Examination in Public, making representations to protect the village from anticipated adverse effects.

In September 2019 WMPC held a public meeting regarding EDF's proposal for a Southern Park & Ride site to the north of the village and later that year set up monthly meetings with EDF, East Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council Highways. We were aware that the park and ride site could attract over 1000 cars and light goods passing through the village (along Border Cot Lane and Lower High Street) for the duration of the construction of SZC and requested EDF to design and fund traffic mitigation measures in the village.

In October 2021 EDF held a 2-day open weekend in the village for villagers to view initial ideas for a traffic calming scheme. These ideas included gateways, road narrowing's, footway widening and amendments to on-street parking.

The Working Group met regularly during 2019, 2020 and 2021 to develop and refine the traffic calming scheme. This included liaison with neighbouring parishes and updates to full council. The full council made comments on the scheme in April and May 2022 and updated the public in April 2023 via its newsletter. The first set of detailed drawings were produced in September 2023 and the October 2023 newsletter included a link to view the drawings in the parish council website. The website also lists all the representations the parish council made to EDF's consultations, the Examination and minutes of all its working group and committee meetings. In 2023 the council also agreed to set up a SZC Committee to ensure its decision-making was in public. It first met in October of that year with 4 further meetings, with the public invited to attend.

In June 2024 and January 2025 SZC gave presentations to the parish council, ESC and SCC and near-recent drawings were uploaded in January 2025 and again in May 2025 with amendments.

### Current position

The final presentation was on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2025 when we were shown the inclusion of parish-council led amendments to retain as much on-street parking as possible whilst still seeing the improvements to safety for residents. Prior to that the SZC Committee and other councillors met informally to view the drawings with the awareness that these represent the likely final set of proposals by SZC who would be seeking WMPC's formal acceptance of the scheme. The presentation on 29<sup>th</sup> September was generally approved by those attending although WMPC queried the omission of SCC's previously supported 20mph speed limit between the Co-op and Revetts. We also queried the length of the parking bay opposite The Drift, whether street lighting could be installed on Border Cot Lane up to the Industrial Estate and confirmation of the total

number of on-street parking spaces removed. A verbal update on these points will be given at the meeting if SZC has responded.

The latest set of drawings were circulated to all WMPC councillors on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2025 to ensure they have had the opportunity to view before this Extra-Ordinary WMPC meeting. The set of drawings also included a slide show of the amendments and suggested wording that WMPC could use to confirm its approval of the scheme (see Proposal below). The latest drawings and slide show have been uploaded to the parish council website.

### Options

There are 3 options to consider – accept and approve the scheme, accept the scope of the design but request minor amendments, or abandon the scheme in its entirety.

1. Accept and approve. The benefits of the scheme include:

- The latest drawings have evolved over several years and the SZC Committee consider their input has been valued and incorporated.
- Although the predicted SZC traffic will predominantly use Border Cot Lane and Lower High Street, the SZC scheme commences near Wickham Place with widened footways, traffic calming features and improved pedestrian crossing points including a long-awaited traffic priority system between the Post Office and Crown Lane, affording pedestrians with a widened footway. These improvements are considered as significant, legacy improvements to this part of the village. In cost-benefit terms SZC are covering all the costs of the scheme which aims to provide permanent benefits to the village.
- SZC has submitted its traffic calming scheme to independent safety audit experts to ensure the scheme complies with all safety requirements which ensures there is confidence in the scheme. SZC has also consulted with ESC's Conservation officers as some of the scheme is within the village Conservation Area.
- Although there will be a small number of on-street parking places lost, mainly on Lower High Street, these losses are balanced by the investment in widened footways and traffic calming features to influence traffic speeds.
- Work on extending the 30mph speed limit further west on Border Cot Lane has progressed in advance of the main scheme and could be constructed in November/December this year which should appease local concerns.
- The scheme significantly meets the list of proposed improvements listed in para 7.14 of the adopted Wickham Market Neighbourhood Plan.

If WMPC gives its approval to the scheme SZC will then arrange a public engagement event in the village to show the proposed amendments to speed limits and waiting restrictions that form part of the scheme. SZC describe this stage as “pre-engagement”. Any issues raised will be addressed in discussion with the joint working group. The changes to speed limits and waiting restrictions would then be legalised by formal consultation on a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). SCC, as the highway authority for the roads in the village, will be required to grant technical approval and may require alterations to the design (although these would be expected to be minor if at all, as SCC has contributed extensively to the final design).

2. Accept the scope of the design but request minor amendments. SZC advise that the southern park and ride site will be in full use in October to December 2026 but that phased use will start soon. Allowing time for the next steps of the traffic calming scheme (final designs, SCC approvals and construction) time is of the essence in getting a scheme constructed to mitigate the expected build up of additional SZC traffic through the village. The SZC Committee has had sufficient opportunity to shape the scheme and welcomes the public engagement event to see if any further, localised issues arise.
3. Abandon the scheme in its entirety  
SZC has indicated that if it was the consensus of the parish council to abandon the scheme it would respect the council's wishes. This would seem at odds with the mitigation measures being progressed in other parts of Suffolk affected by SZC traffic such as in Leiston and along the B1068 and may be seen by the public as a failure by the parish council to protect its residents.

#### Compliance with Parish Council Climate Action Strategy

The Strategy action No. 1 states that Councillors should refer to the Climate Action Strategy (CAS) when making decisions and minute that consideration has been given to environmental factors. The Strategy states that the parish council would like to ensure that its climate and nature restoration goals are at the forefront of any decisions made by the Parish Council with residents' support. The proposed scheme includes in its aims of promoting public safety the inclusion of measures to influence lower traffic speeds which residents consider are excessive at the moment affecting pollution and noise emissions. We would ask for local consultation on the idea of additional street lighting on Border Cot Lane to balance energy use and light pollution versus public safety.

#### Proposal

The WMPC SZC Committee, and its representation on the joint Working Group, consider it needs to refer a decision on the proposed SZC transport scheme to full council to ensure all councillors have the opportunity to input into this significant scheme for the village. SZC will require approval from the joint Working Group which will include WMPC, SCC, ESC and SZC.

SZC has indicated that our formal acceptance of "fixing" the design will allow SCC to grant technical approval with confidence that the design has been approved by WMPC. SZC has offered the following words for WMPC to consider if it is minded to accept the design:

**Wickham Market Parish Council confirm their acceptance of the SZC Wickham Market Transport Scheme presented on 29 September 2025 as the fixed design to take to pre-engagement, Technical Approval and TRO consultation. We make this agreement with the following points assumed:**

- Any issues raised as a result of the pre-engagement and TRO consultation will be addressed in discussion with the working group
- Discussion will continue on:
  1. Construction programme and associated traffic management
  2. Any alterations to the design that are required by SCC at Technical Approval