

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

MELTON PARISH - ROAD TRANSPORT PROBLEMS THAT WILL BE EXACERBATED BY THE SIZEWELL C & FRISTON ENERGY SCHEMES

v5

Introduction

1. This paper describes the background to the current heavy and growing traffic through Melton Parish. It explains that the major energy projects at Friston and Sizewell C (SZC) would hugely exacerbate the traffic volumes that cut through the middle of Melton village, causing delay to the movement of goods, services and people and creating intolerable conditions for residents. It also suggests road improvements that would benefit the region's economy and help to safeguard the people of Melton.

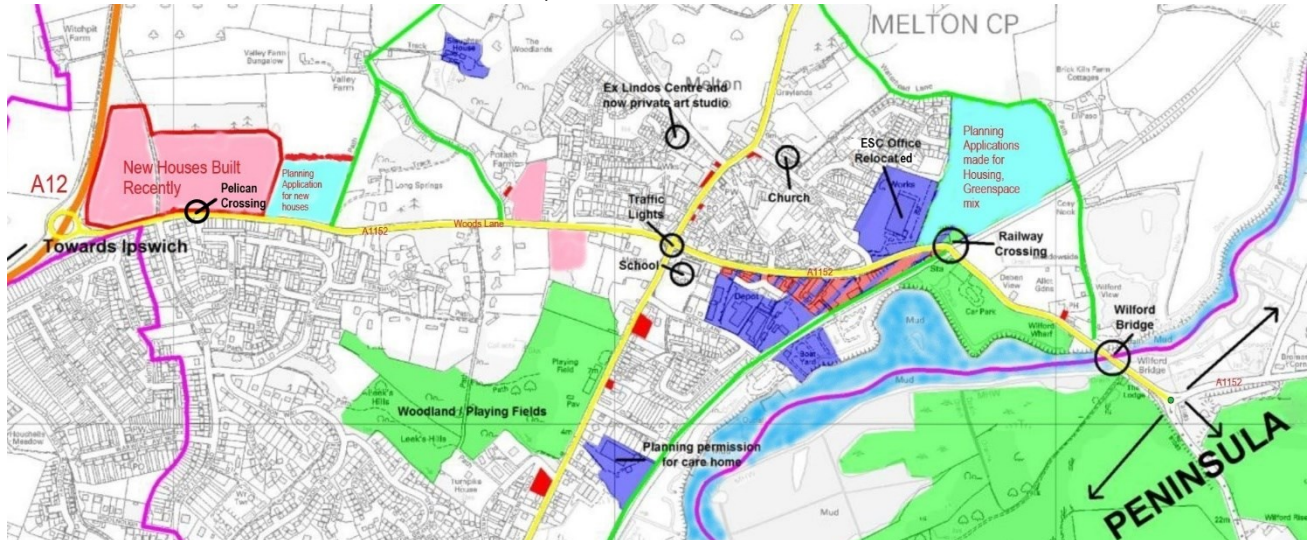
Melton Parish

2. Melton is a large parish, adjacent to Woodbridge and located at the first crossing point over the tidal stretch of the River Deben, at the Wilford Bridge. Melton has a healthy jobs base with several employment areas accommodating over 150 businesses. Melton's population has seen significant growth in recent years. There are over 1,800 dwellings in Melton Parish and an estimated population of between 4,000 and 4,275. We estimate that population has grown by about 10% in the last 4 years. Many new homes have been built recently, or are planned, along Woods Lane and other stretches of the A1152.
3. A map in **Appendix A** shows Melton's geographical position relative to key transport links, the Deben Peninsula and the various locations for the SZC project. **Appendix B** contains a detailed map of the whole of Melton Parish and is based on its 2016 Neighbourhood Plan, updated to show recent new-builds and planning applications.
4. The Local Plan describes Melton as the 'gateway to the AONB' – an accurate statement, though the less poetic reality is that the Wilford Bridge funnels heavy and growing traffic from all parts of the Deben Peninsula to the A12, and return. The Deben Peninsula is broadly defined as being the large area of land bounded in the south by the River Deben and in the north by the River Alde and includes Bawdsey, Hollesley, Orford, Rendlesham and the Bentwaters Business Park. Melton also straddles the main north-south routes to Sizewell for both road (A12) and rail.

The A1152 at Melton

5. The A1152 bisects the centre of Melton village. The map below shows the line of the A1152 from the Wilford Bridge to the A12.

THE A1152 ROAD THROUGH MELTON, CONNECTING THE DEBEN PENINSULA TO A12



6. This short stretch of road has several choke-points that slow or stop traffic flow, creating congestion and air/noise pollution. From east to west, the choke-points are:
 - a. East of the Wilford Bridge, there is a small but busy roundabout that is a strategic convergence point for roads from across the Deben Peninsula *[If possible, INSERT photo of HGVs navigating this small and congested roundabout]*
 - b. The railway level-crossing at Melton Station – at this location, the A1152 has an awkward dog-leg configuration that forces larger vehicles to swing into the outside lane to manoeuvre the sharp bend, regularly causing traffic hold-ups





- c. The cross-road junction between the A1152 and Melton Road and The Street/Yarmouth Road is in the centre of Melton village, next to the Primary School. There are 4 Pelican crossings to control the traffic lights. The school's main entrance is on its Melton Road side and the school also has a drop-off layby around the corner on the A1152.



- d. Woods Lane contains several features that impede the flow of traffic. Firstly, Woods Lane is joined by a number of side-roads, feeding traffic from nearby residential areas. Recently, there have been substantial housing developments along Woods Lane and more seem likely. This has and will create new access points onto Woods Lane and more vehicle movements, all adding to the already

high congestion on that road. There is also a new Pelican crossing just east of the Bredfield Road junction

- e. The busy roundabout at the A12 junction with Woods Lane (A1152).
- 7. The number and size of HGVs and agricultural vehicles that travel through the middle of Melton village has increased dramatically in recent years, as has the volume of car traffic. While some of the traffic increase comes from housing and commercial developments within Melton, most of the increase is attributable to through-traffic from elsewhere.
- 8. To measure air pollution near the primary school, 3 new monitoring sites have been added at the Melton crossroads in order to confirm concentrations at key points in this locality

The A12 at Melton

- 9. Traffic on the A12 is very heavy, especially where it passes Melton at its junction with Woods Lane (A1152). The A12 is frequently congested and sometimes at a standstill through Martlesham and the road sections between the Seckford Golf Course roundabout, the Grundisburgh Road roundabout and the Woods Lane roundabout. The common causal factors in all these places are the sheer volume of traffic and the clustering of roundabouts over a relatively short road length.
- 10. An additional cause of congestion on the Woodbridge to Melton part of the A12 is the fact that the sections from the Seckford Hotel to Grundisburgh Road roundabout and the Woods Lane roundabout to Ufford Road turn-off are both single-carriageway. There is also a pelican crossing on the A12 near Hasketon Road.
- 11. When the A12 is congested, traffic diverts through Melton and Woodbridge, causing significant tailbacks along Melton Road, Yarmouth Road and the full length of the A1152 within Melton (from Woods Lane to Wilford Bridge).
- 12. We note SZC's proposal to locate the southern Park & Ride site north-east of Wickham Market. We would very strongly object to the pursuit of the former Melton reserve option (on the A12 adjacent to Woods Lane, as mooted at Stage 2 Consultation) in its place. This has been our consistent view through all stages of the consultation process. Not only would a Melton P&R site make even worse the already congested A12 traffic at the Woods Lane roundabout junction; the repercussions back along Woods Lane (A1152) through Melton to the eastern parish boundary, combined with the traffic from all the new housing developments nearby (described in paragraphs 6 & 7) would create intolerable traffic congestion. In short, the area adjacent to the Woods Lane roundabout is now even more unsuitable for a Southern Park & Ride site than it was at the Stage 2 consultation. We state in the strongest possible terms that this option must remain off the table

Impact of Energy Projects

13. The Friston and SZC energy projects will generate a quantum leap in traffic on the A12 and A1152. To this should be added the extra HGV traffic from the possible increased use of Bentwaters Business Park for off-site support offices, stores etc.
14. We are extremely worried that a further increase in traffic congestion through the middle of Melton village would make life intolerable for its primary school children and residents. It would also be bad for business and hinder the efficient transport of goods, services and people.
15. There is also widespread local concern that the Friston and SZC energy projects will also lead to an explosion of rat-running when drivers choose to avoid using the A12 or the Southern P&R site. Vehicles seeking alternative north-south routes would use rat-runs through Martlesham, Woodbridge and Melton that converge in the middle of Melton village and follow the A1152 over the Wilford Bridge and on to Rendlesham, Bentwaters, Tunstall, Snape, Sizewell & Friston.

Cumulative Impact of Major Developments

16. The traffic impact of the Energy Projects is part of a wider concern we have that multiple major developments are having a cumulative impact on the strategic highways network and creating an investment need that is not being met by the incremental approach of the statutory planning process.

Suggested Road Improvements

The A12

17. A key priority is to keep the A12's traffic free-flowing. This minimises pollution and avoids congestion on the A12's many feeder roads. We contend that the A12 must be dualled continuously from Woodbridge to the Friday Street junction with the A1094. We therefore support:
 - a. Dualling the single-carriage stretch of the A12 between the Seckford Hall turn-off and the Grundisburgh Road roundabout
 - b. Dualling the single carriage stretch of the A12 between the Woods Lane roundabout and the Ufford Road turn-off.
 - c. A dualled 4-village bypass scheme, similar to that promoted by Suffolk County Council (SCC) within its *Suffolk Energy Gateway* scheme. At Stage 3 of the SZC consultation, EDF said it supported SCC's scheme and was prepared to provide a financial contribution in lieu of a two-village bypass. We are aware that SCC's scheme did not proceed but given our new awareness of the greater traffic impact of the combined Friston & Sizewell energy projects, we believe the SCC/EDF proposal should be re-visited.

The A1152 - the Deben Peninsula's access to the A12

18. The continuing growth of traffic over the Wilford Bridge and cutting through the middle of Melton to the A12 will be bad for business and the people of Melton. We would welcome any mitigation measures to the A1152 in Melton that improve road safety and reduce pollution. Our top priority is for the dog-legged level crossing at Melton Station to be upgraded and straightened out.
19. We would also like to work with the relevant authorities to evaluate any and all options that might reduce the number of vehicles, especially HGVs, that transit Melton village.

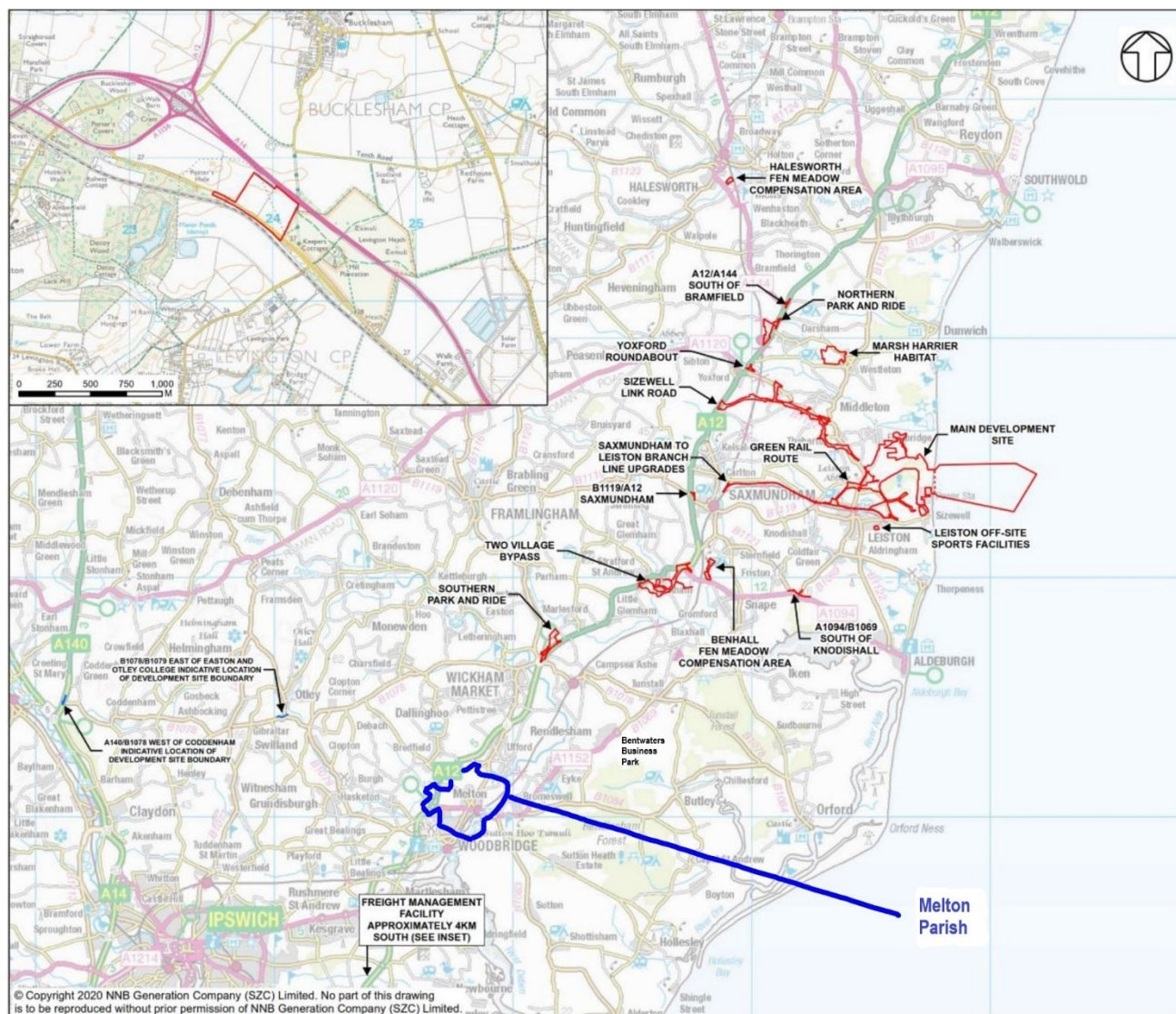
Conclusion

20. While this paper concentrates on the traffic impact of SZC, it should be noted that our views on SZC's planning application are consistent with those we expressed at each previous stage of the pre-application planning process, and took into account MPC's consultation event with its local community in March 2019. The headline points are:
- a. the people of Melton are affected both directly and indirectly by the SZC proposals
 - b. overall, the community dis-benefits of SZC outweigh the benefits
 - c. the biggest single adverse impact is on road traffic, mainly (but not exclusively) during in the construction period.
21. This is why we have suggested road improvements that would not only ameliorate conditions for Melton people but also deliver economic gain to the region through the more efficient movement of goods, services and people.

Melton Parish Council
September 2020

APPENDIX A

Map showing the position of Melton Parish relative to key transport links, the Deben Peninsula and the various build-locations of the proposed SZC project [Reproduced by kind permission of EDF].



KEY

- Neighbourhood Plan boundary
- MEL1 - Physical Limits Boundaries
- MEL 2 - Provision for cyclists and pedestrians:
 - ▼ Pedestrian / Cycle Crossing Point
 - Traffic Calming / Dedicated Cycle Access
 - Footpath / Cyclepath Provision
- MEL3 - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- MEL7 - Land opposite McColls Convenience Store, The Street
- MEL9 - Improvement to Community Facilities
- MEL11 - Special Landscape Areas
- MEL12 - Local Green Space
- MEL13 - Protection of Trees and Rural Character
- MEL14 - Retention of Riverside Qualities
- MEL15 - Residential Boats
- MEL16 - Melton Conservation Area
- MEL17 - Areas to be Protected from Development
- MEL19 - General Employment Areas
- MEL20 - Deben Mill
- MEL21 - Land off Wilford Bridge Road
- Deben Estuary Special Protection Area (Natura 2000)
- Housing built recently
- Commercial Premises built recently
- Planning Permission applied for recently

