

Sizewell C Project - PINS Reference No. EN010012

**Response to Targeted Consultation on Rail Noise impacts/mitigation
(Houseboats)**

INTRODUCTION

Shortly after publication of the targeted consultation document, your office confirmed that it had also been hand-delivered to houseboats in Melton. In turn, Melton Parish Council (MPC), hand-delivered a note to each houseboat inviting comments on your targeted consultation as part of our all-Parish consultation exercise on the overall SZC night trains proposal. At the time of writing, MPC had not received any comments from Houseboat residents on your consultation proposals.

MPC HAS PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE “RAIL NOISE MITIGATION STRATEGY”

In May 2021, such was MPC’s concern about SZC’s night train proposal and the community’s general lack of awareness of its implications, that our volunteers leafleted all 2,100 households in Melton to inform residents of what was being planned and invite them to complete an on-line survey where they could have their say.

Residents’ responses to the on-line survey have confirmed MPC’s view that freight movement by Sea is its first choice mode of transport. Rail in daytime-only is its second choice. Most residents oppose night trains.

MPC has recommended to the Examining Authority a number of mitigations to the SZC freight train proposal, including the following:

- there should be a further increase in the volume of construction material be moved by sea;
- rail freight movements must be in daytime only, on an upgraded East Suffolk Line which is dual-tracked between Melton and Saxmundham, and without the loss of any regular daytime passenger services;

The latter mitigation, while consistent with EDF proposals in the earlier stages of consultation, has been excluded from SZC’s current draft “Rail Noise Mitigation Strategy”.

MPC has also asked the Examining Authority to include Houseboat residents within its overall consideration of the impact on households of night train noise and vibration and the accompanying disturbance of sleep.

MPC’s detailed response to the SZC night train proposal, including other recommended mitigations, is set out in its Written Representation (Deadline 2) to the Examining Authority, and can be viewed here: [Sizewell C – Melton Parish Council \(melton-suffolk-pc.gov.uk\)](https://www.melton-suffolk-pc.gov.uk)

MPC’s statements and recommendations in its Written Representation to the Examining Authority apply to all the households in the parish, including Houseboats.

SZC “NOISE MITIGATION SCHEME”

Woodbridge Town Council’s (WTC) Written Representation (Deadline 2) contains a technical report entitled “*Review of Railway Freight Transport with specific reference to Noise and Vibration impact in Woodbridge*” that has been shared with MPC. We agree with WTC’s contention that EDF has understated the effects of train noise through Woodbridge (and by implication Melton and other areas) in a number of ways, including a failure to heed the latest international guidance by the World Health Organisation on maximum noise levels for night-time train traffic. We support WTC’s request that EDF should be asked to look again at these issues using the range of expertise available to them to see whether greater mitigation should be provided. That review should also extend to the measurements of railway noise and vibration used to assess the impact on Houseboats.

Subject to the outcome of the above review and acceptance that your mitigations would need to form part of the final DCO whether or not dual-tracking or a passing loop is provided, we support the proposal to further amend the “Noise Mitigation Scheme” to make specific provision for a more flexible application of mitigation for Houseboats in Melton.

We note you are proposing riverside acoustic barriers in Woodbridge but not in Melton (because you say noise impact here is less). It is hard to imagine there would be public support for acoustic barriers beside the River Deben in Melton - therefore, we ask that if your recalibrations of noise mean that acoustic barriers become a possible option for Melton, please contact us immediately.

Melton Parish Council
11 June 2021