

Issue Specific Hearing Representation on Traffic and Transport for Melton Parish Council

1. Melton is a small village on the outskirts of Woodbridge close to the A12 and crucially straddling both the main arterial road to the Deben Peninsula (A1152) and the Railway line that will carry freight to the Sizewell site. Melton Parish Council (MPC) is a small non-political body of volunteers with limited resources. Nonetheless, we have engaged fully with the consultation process at every stage in the hope that we can protect the interests of our community.
2. This has proved a frustrating process not least because it seems likely that as a result of its own inaction and prevarication EDF may be about to be authorised to deliver up to 90% of all freight by night train or road, the two most environmentally damaging options and the one's least favoured by Melton Residents who prefer Sea (first) and day time Rail (second). It seems Melton residents and their neighbours in Woodbridge are to be subjected to noisy rail movements every 45 minutes throughout the night for years to come.
3. Furthermore, knowing their area as they do Melton residents fear that reliance on an unimproved single-track railway will inevitably lead to problems that will shift traffic from trains to lorries and some of those lorries from the congested A12 onto alternative back routes to Sizewell on the A1152 and through the heart of our village.
4. We know it didn't need to be this way. Papers submitted to you from SCC make clear that at stage 1 and Stage 2 consultations EDF's strategy was for freight to be moved mainly by rail, involving a capacity upgrade to the East Suffolk Line. However, EDF did nothing to put the necessary improvements to infrastructure in place in the two years following the Stage 2 consultations and now EDF maintains that because dual tracking has not been done, trains must run at night.
5. How can it be right that EDF can body-swerve their obligations in this way? If the inspection process has teeth, then EDF should be asked to return to this proper rail-based strategy, make the necessary infrastructure improvements and **only after that** start building their power station. If they get on with this now, they will only be a couple of years behind schedule. Whereas their projects for this type of reactor build in France and Finland are already many years behind plan.
6. If this is too unpalatable and night time trains are deemed unavoidable then we believe that EDF have significantly understated the likely disturbance of these trains in the Melton and Woodbridge areas and should be compelled to pay for independent expert analysis, using World Health Organisation parameters for noise measurement combined with input on train and line conditions in the area. That could then lead to a more realistic noise mitigation strategy and the setting aside by EDF of sufficient funds to put measures in place **before** the night trains start running rather than after people's lives have been disrupted.

7. Looking to the future and hoping to avoid the mistakes of previous consultations, we support the suggestion, at the Specific Issues Meeting, for the Transport Review Group (TRG) to have a voting majority held by SCC/Highways. The Transport Review Group's role should also be extended to include monitoring railway traffic issues and a representative or representatives from Local Councils should be invited to come and raise issues with the TRG directly.

Melton Parish Council
23rd July 2021