

MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Ms Jane Challis

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING of MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 4th DECEMBER 2025, AT 6:30PM IN MELLIS MEMORIAL HALL

Present: Cllr L Read, Cllr A Cross, Cllr L Farley
Clerk – J Challis, DC Cllr Warboys

Apologies: Cllr Paterson.

1 Chair's welcome and to consider and approve apologies for absence

Cllr Read welcomed everyone to the meeting, and apologies received from Cllr Paterson were approved unanimously.

2 To receive Declarations of Interest on agenda items

None received.

3 To consider requests for Dispensations on agenda items

None.

4 To resolve the draft minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 30th October 2025 are a true and correct record

The draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 30th October 2025 were approved unanimously.

5 Reports from County Councillor and District Councillor

CC Cllr Fleming sent her apologies in advance of the meeting, her report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

DC Cllr Warboys report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

6 Public Participation Session (10 minutes set aside)

No members of the public present.

7 Chair's Report

- Cllr Read expressed thanks to Cllr Cross for coordinating the Village Meeting held on the 15th of November. Cllr Cross reported that it was a very successful meeting, with approximately 50 residents attending. Ed King from the River Waveney Trust was also in attendance to answer questions.
- Cllr Read thanked Cllr Farley for writing the Parish Council's most recent inclusion in the Messenger magazine. The next article needs to promote the council's casual vacancies. Due to other commitments Cllr Farley is unable to write the next article, so the Clerk will do so instead.
- MSDC have confirmed the Parish Council's Progress Power Community Benefit application, for funding towards the car park updates, has been successful. Funding of £10,000.00 has

been approved, and the council will use reserved funds to make up the small shortfall. Once the official offer letter has been received, the agreed contractor will be advised.

8 Clerk/RFO's Report

- Cllr Fleming has advised that she is conducting a site visit in Mellis on the 18th December, with the new local Highways Officer. Queries regarding installation of the VAS posts, new village gateways, and unsuitable for HGV's designation/Lorry Watch Scheme along Mellis Road will be forwarded for Cllr Fleming to look at.
- UK Power Networks have advised they will be cutting away vegetation from the powerlines outside Willow Lodge. MSDC have confirmed they have no objection.
- The Clerk has been copied into an email to Cllr Warboys regarding littering on the railway crossing after recent works have been carried out. Cllr Warboys has reported it to MSDC Public Realm.
- An email has been received from Suffolk County Council, advising that the government has announced it is minded to delay the inaugural mayoral elections for Norfolk and Suffolk, which were due to take place in May 2026, until 2028: [Written statements - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament](#).
- An email has been received from a resident asking why the east side of the common has not been cut by Suffolk Wildlife Trust. A reply has been sent advising that Suffolk Wildlife Trust have confirmed this to be due to insufficient growth from recent fly grazing.

9 National Grid (Norwich to Tilbury) Development Consent Order representation

The approved response was prepared by the Clerk and submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by the 27th November deadline, and can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

10 Government consultation on LGR in Suffolk

Councillors agreed unanimously that they wish to submit a response on behalf of the Parish Council. Councillors will send their comments to the Clerk for collation and submission prior to the 11th January 2026 deadline.

ACTION – Councillors/Clerk as above.

11 Environmental issues, including:

- **Report from Village Meeting held on 15th November 2025** – see Chair's report.
- **To discuss updating Mellis Emergency Plan** – It was agreed to request a meeting with MSDC's Emergency Planning Support Officer, Dawn Wnukoski, for her input on the importance of an emergency plan, and the updates needed to the current one for Mellis.
- **Suffolk Water Recycling, Transfer and Storage (SWRTS) project consultation 29th October to 10th December 2025** – it was agreed or councillors to forward their comments to the Clerk for collation, and submission on behalf of the Parish Council prior to the 10th December deadline.
- **Consideration and approval of Biodiversity Action Plan** – ongoing; a draft is being prepared by the Clerk, but needs further input to ensure all species and landscapes specific to Mellis are covered.
- **Mellis Common information leaflets** – Cllr Cross is in the process of rewriting the leaflets.
- **Mellis Garden ongoing works and maintenance** – Cllr Read expressed thanks to Cllr Cross for recently cutting the garden. Due to there being no progress in finding a contractor to conduct the ongoing maintenance, Cllr Cross indicated that he is happy to continue cutting the grass on a volunteer basis, submitting an expenses claim for reimbursement of any costs incurred. Councillors thanked Cllr Cross and agreed unanimously to proceed with this arrangement.

12 Traffic and highway concerns, including approval of quotations for village gateways

As already advised, the Clerk will ask Cllr Fleming to look at installation of the VAS posts, and replacement of the current 30mph Mellis sign with a single 30mph, to accommodate a village gateway, when she visits Mellis with the new Highways Officer on 18th December. In addition, Wortham & Burgate Parish Council have advised that Cllr Fleming suggested a lorry Watch Scheme for Mellis Road, following concerns raised by residents. In order for this to be actioned, the road needs to be formally designated as unsuitable for HVGs. The Clerk will request this be looked at further as well.

After discussing, it was agreed to proceed with village gateways on the A143 side. The Yaxley side will be considered further at a future date. It was agreed to position one sign saying 'Welcome to Mellis' on the left as you enter the village, with another on the other side of the road saying 'Thank you for driving carefully', as you leave. Quotations will be presented for consideration at the next meeting.

ACTION – Clerk as above.

13 Bus Shelter Improvements

The Clerk advised that MSDC have confirmed there is funding available for a project of this nature. After discussing purchasing a new bus shelter versus covering the current one with ivy to hide the discoloured panels, as previously discussed, and taking into account the funding available, Cllr Cross proposed purchasing a new shelter. Seconded by Cllr Farley and approved unanimously. Cllr Read will seek quotations for consideration at the next meeting.

ACTION – Cllr Read as above.

14 Planning

To consider:

- **DC/25/05185** - Application for Listed Building Consent - Replacement of removed cementitious render with horizontal timber weatherboarding. The Old Forge, The Common, Mellis, Eye Suffolk IP23 8EB

After discussing, councillors unanimously agreed that they have no objection to this application.

ACTION – Clerk to add comments to MSDC Planning Portal as above.

To receive an Update on:

- **DC/25/04199** - Approval of Details reserved by Requirement 22 of The Progress Power (Gas Fired Power Station) Order 2015 (S.I. 2015/1570). Progress Power Ltd, Potash Lane, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 7HE – **GRANTED.**
- **DC/25/04333** - Householder application - Replacement of windows and door. The Granary Adjacent Ashtree Farm, The Common, Mellis, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 8EB – **WITHDRAWN.**
- **DC/25/04331** - Application for Listed Building Consent - Replacement of gable end windows. Hall Farm, The Common, Mellis, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 8EF – **GRANTED.**
- **DC/25/04508** - Planning Application. Change of use of land to residential. Home Farm, The Common, Mellis, IP23 8EE – **AWAITING DECISION.**
- **DC/25/04543** - Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area - Reduce sycamore tree and horse chestnut as shown in accompanying photographs. The Pyghtle, Earlsford Road, Mellis, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 8DY – **GRANTED.**
- **DC/25/02824** Regener8 Power Red House Farm - Planning Application - Construction and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System, together with related infrastructure, access, drainage, landscaping and other associated works. Land West Of A140, Red House Farm, Yaxley, IP23 8BH – **AWAITING DECISION.**
- **DC/25/03257** Regener8 Power Stone Cottages - Planning Application - Construction of ground mounted solar panel arrays and associated infrastructure which will have the ability to export 49.9MW (AC) electricity. Construction of new vehicular access. (EIA Development). Land At Stone Cottages, Bury Road, Botesdale, IP22 1QH – **AWAITING DECISION.**
- **DC/22/00416** - Application for Outline Planning Permission (All matters reserved) - Erection of petrol and electric charging facility with associated shop; roadside restaurant with drive through facility; E(g) (formerly B1) and B8 starter units; HGV lorry parking facility for rest area and drivers' facilities as a phased development. Land Adjacent North

Roundabout A140, Ipswich Road, Brome Part in The Parish of Thrandeston, IP23 8AW –
AWAITING DECISION.

15 Budget 2026/27 – deferred to next meeting.

16 Finance

i) A list of payments and receipts, expenditure against the budget, and bank reconciliation to 24th June was sent to councillors. Barclays bank account balance as of 22nd August 2025 - **£25,549.46.**

ii) Review and authorisation of payments presented:

1	J. Challis	Clerk Admin December	£588.60
2	J. Challis	Expenses – mileage	£12.33
3	Memorial Hall	Rural Coffee Caravan December hire	£20.00
4	Memorial Hall	December PC hire	£35.00
7	J. Challis	Expenses – ink	£39.19

Cllr Farley proposed approval of all payments above, seconded by Cllr Cross, and approved unanimously.

November payments approved by quorate email, due to meeting cancellation, and paid via online banking (dual authorisation):

- 1) Admin payment, Clerk, November, £588.60
- 2) Expenses Clerk mileage, £12.33
- 3) Memorial Hall, November, Rural Coffee Caravan hire, £20.00
- 4) L Curtis, bus shelter cleaning, £20.00
- 5) Memorial Hall, village meeting, £40.00
- 6) A. Cross, expenses magnets, £9.99
- 7) A. Cross, expenses refreshments, £16.32

iii) Internal Audit comments – deferred.

ACTION - Cllr Read and Cllr Cross to pay agreed payments above via online banking (dual authorisation).

17 The date of the next meeting is Thursday 22nd January 2026 at 6:30pm in Mellis Memorial Hall. It was also agreed for the February meeting to be held on Thursday 19th at 6:30pm in Mellis Memorial Hall.

Meeting closed at 9:00pm.

Parish Councils, December 2025

Councillor Jessica Fleming, Hartismere Division. Tel. 07714-597980 Jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk

Norfolk and Suffolk County Combined Authority Web Site – the Norfolk and Suffolk fledgeling Combined Authority is posting current information on a dedicated website - refer to www.norfolksuffolk-cca.gov.uk The site will serve as a central hub for information about the new authority, including the anticipated mayoral election on 7th May 2026.

Asylum Seekers in Mellis – Reportedly there are now 4 asylum seeking families or groups in Mellis housed in properties acquired by SERCO, one of the Home Office’s contractors. Some other locations in Suffolk are also being allocated for asylum seekers’ housing. No further information is available. Please refer to a link to the regional Strategic Migration Partnership website find out more about responsibilities for refugees & asylum seekers in this part of England. [What we do - Local Government East](#) .

Bird Flu - Sadly, there have been outbreaks at several commercial poultry facilities in West Suffolk and in Norfolk. DEFRA’s Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA) has imposed restrictions on the premises. More information on the locations of outbreaks can be found at: [APHA Interactive Avian Influenza Disease Map](#) SCC Trading Standards is managing enforcement of controls and is working with owners of poultry.

Consultation for a Proposed New Reservoir, Thrandeston – Essex & Suffolk Water are proposing to construct a new reservoir and other water supply facilities in the area of Thrandeston. A public consultation event is planned on 3rd December at 10.00 – 13.00 at Thrandeston Village Hall, Little Green IP2 4BX. Please consider attending if interested. A second reservoir is planned near Sipton. Details are provided in a separate PDF document.

EcoPower Suffolk - is holding meetings through its Community Liaison Group about plans for a large (approx. 3,000 acre/ 600 ha) solar farm with Battery Electric Storage (BESS) and a connection to National Grid’s substation in Yaxley. See [EcoPower Suffolk - Solar Farm and Battery Energy Storage](#) This is part of the non-statutory consultation process; SCC’s response to this consultation includes concerns over ‘mission creep’ – the potential for future amendments to expand on approved plans as is happening with Sunnica in West Suffolk. Refer to: Applicant’s request for Non Material Amendment [https://nsip-documents.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/published-documents/EN010106-006029-Letter%20to%20DESNZ%20re.%20Reduced%20Consultees%20\(003\)_Redacted.pdf](https://nsip-documents.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/published-documents/EN010106-006029-Letter%20to%20DESNZ%20re.%20Reduced%20Consultees%20(003)_Redacted.pdf)

National Grid Pylon Scheme - The application for the Development Consent Order (DCO) has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) by National Grid and accepted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State – [Planning Inspectorate’s website](#).

Suffolk County Council is objecting to the proposals, its Relevant Representations maintain its long-held, opposition to the scheme. The deadline for registering to comment has now passed. The county council’s objections primarily include:

- a clear preference for alternative options, in particular cable undergrounding or an offshore solution
- to formally and strongly request National Grid pausing the proposals, to enable the effective consideration of the alternatives.

Please get in touch with me if you have questions or comments: Jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07714-597980 Twitter: [@jessfleming](#)

District Council Report December 2025

<p>Mayoral elections postponed</p>	<p>The Mayoral elections will be postponed until May 2028, and that means they will probably be held under a Supplementary Vote System rather than First past the Post.</p> <p>With the Supplementary Vote, if no candidate gets over 50% of the vote, the top two candidates continue to a run-off and all other candidates are eliminated. When casting their ballot voters can put a second choice (who they would vote for in a runoff) on the original ballot paper.</p> <p>This may mean that the election of councillors for the “shadow” unitary authority will be elected first.</p>
<p>LGR update</p>	<p>The government consultation on the two LGR proposals for Suffolk was opened last week and runs through until January 11th.</p> <p>The website for the District and Borough Councils’ three-unitary proposal www.threecouncilsforSuffolk.org has been refreshed, it is now easier to navigate and has a link to the government consultation. Whilst promoting the benefits of the three council option, it also plays fair by pointing residents to both MSDC proposal and the county’s ‘One Suffolk’ proposal.</p> <p>We are expecting the Government to publicise the final decision by March 2026.</p>
<p>Essex and Suffolk Water consultation on major new water projects for the Eye area</p>	<p>Essex and Suffolk Water has launched a consultation on its plans to build new reservoirs, treatment plants, and install new pipelines, across northern Suffolk. The project is intended to tackle the growing water shortage in our area.</p> <p>Water recycling plant near Lowestoft, Clean water released into R Waveney to be pumped out at the existing Barsham Works, pumped to new reservoirs and Sizewell C.</p> <p>Potential sites for a partially underground reservoir are being considered at Thrandeston and Eye airfield.</p> <p>As this is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), the government will have the final say on this project (not the local planning authority). MSDC is responding to this non statutory consultation.</p> <p>Essex and Suffolk Water held drop-in events in Eye Community Centre on Nov 12th and Thrandeston Dec. 3rd. Link: https://northsuffolkreservoir.co.uk/</p>
<p>Biodiversity and Nature Recovery</p>	<p>At its November meeting, Mid Suffolk District Council approved a package of funding of £1.8m over the next three years for nature recovery and biodiversity. The funding will be used to carry out the plans of the cross-party biodiversity working group, as well as meeting government proposals for biodiversity and nature recovery.</p> <p>Around half of the funding is going towards a new community Nature Recovery Grant fund. The fund will be split equally between both community-led projects and projects for the restoration of rivers and their catchments. The funds will support communities to create and manage habitat and nature recovery schemes, including natural flood management.</p> <p>For more on the new funding see: £2 million for Mid Suffolk biodiversity and nature recovery - Mid Suffolk District Council - babergh.gov.uk /</p>

	midsuffolk.gov.uk The action plan can be found here: https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/biodiversity-action-plan
Armed Forces Day Saturday, 27th June, 2026	Mid Suffolk District Council would be leading Armed Forces Day in Suffolk in 2026, and the event would be held in Stowmarket. Stowmarket Town Council has resolved to support to the District Council in hosting Armed Forces Day in the town.
New Youth Council for Mid Suffolk	The November Council meeting agreed unanimously to set up a new Youth Council for Mid Suffolk. The Youth Council aims to provide an avenue for young people to have their views heard, and to enable young people to better understand and engage with the political process. It is hoped the Youth Council will be operating by September 2026, the beginning of the next school year
Funding	Sustainable Communities Food fund: Our Sustainable Communities Food Fund provides grants to small scale food initiatives such as community pantries, fridges and food pop-ups.
Call for Development sites	The Call for Sites runs until 5pm on 9 January 2026, with the exception of Ipswich, which ends on Monday 15 December 2025. This invites submissions of land to be put forward for consideration to be included in Local Plans - for uses such as housing, employment, sports and leisure and community purposes. These are not planning applications, and no site put forward will automatically see development take place. The process involves a form to be completed by anyone wishing to submit sites. The form can be completed online, by email or by post: https://www.babergh.gov.uk/w/call-for-sites
Council Grants	For information on Mid Suffolk council grants available to support community projects and organisations, please see: https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/community-funding or email BMSDCgrants@babermidsuffolk.gov.uk for advice on funding options.ny requests for funding must be completed by Jan 2026 so if you have a project that you feel would qualify for funding please contact me. Further information on Locality Grants: https://midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/locality-awards

Rowland Warboys MSDC Cllr. Gislingham Ward
rowland.warboys@midsuffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07484186121

National Grid Development Consent Order (DCO) application for Norwich to Tilbury

MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL'S OBJECTION SUBMISSION TO THE PLANNING INSPECTORATE

Objection to the Scheme

Mellis Parish Council strongly objects to National Grid's current proposal for 184km of 50m overhead pylons to transport power from Norwich to Tilbury.

Whilst the Parish Council acknowledges the government's net zero commitment, and is mindful of related energy security, carbon reduction and energy poverty issues, it recognises the findings of the Hiorns report, in that the need for additional transmission capacity is more likely to be closer to 2034/2035 than National Grid's programme delivery date of 2030.

The Parish council believes that a pause to the scheme is essential to allow preferable alternatives such as a fully integrated off shore grid, or HVDC underground cables, to be fully considered and consulted upon. This delay would be more likely to enable delivery of the objectives of this and other projects in the region, whilst minimizing the impacts of such developments on the local communities and environment.

Key Impact Issues:

Visual Impact & Heritage

Mellis is a historic settlement appearing several times in the Domesday survey of 1086.

There are 32 listed buildings in Mellis; 29 are Grade II listed, and 3 are Grade II* listed, including the 14th century Church of St Mary.

The Suffolk County Sites and Monuments Record lists 14 sites of archaeological interest from various periods within Mellis. The earliest remains listed include a Bronze Age arrowhead, an Iron Age Occupation site, and some Roman pottery shards. Three medieval moated sites are still visible.

Oliver Cromwell exercised his troops in Mellis during the Civil War. The name of Cavalry Barn on the Common bears testament to this.

Whilst many commons were enclosed and lost, Mellis Common was not, and provides a visual example of what large parts of the country used to look like. In fact, Mellis Common has not been encroached upon or changed in shape since the Hodgkinson's 1783 map of Suffolk.

The proposed pylons, RG098 to RG117 to the north and west of the parish, will completely overshadow Mellis Common, and forever change this historically important unobstructed view.

Three properties on the Common, Grade II listed Hall Farm, Grade II listed Potash Farm, and the Old Parsonage, are all the sites of visible medieval moats. The settings of these unique historic sites will be irrevocably, adversely affected by the above pylons.

These precious heritage assets must be protected.

Biodiversity

The construction activity between RG097 – RG119 will be detrimental to the movement of various wildlife that live in this area. The powerlines will pass through natural habitats which will disrupt wildlife migration patterns, disturb ecosystems and pose risks to bird populations due to decimation of the hedgerows as well as potential collisions with the lines. Mellis is home to successful breeding grey partridges, skylarks, yellow hammers, oyster catchers, lapwings

and turtle doves. Local farmers and conservationists have worked very hard in recent years to reclaim wildlife and biodiversity and thus their numbers have increased, most notably the grey partridges which are included on the Red List for endangered species. The village is also home to bats, barn owls, kestrels, tawny owls, roe deer, muntjac deer, hares, badgers, water voles, hedgehogs and great crested newts.

Mellis Common is unique being the largest unfenced area of Common land in England, and a conservation area. In summer rare plants such as green winged orchid, sulphur clover, and adder’s tongue flourish. The abundance of small mammals provides the perfect hunting ground for the barn owls and tawny owls. Great crested newts, which are a European protected species live in the ponds and wet depressions on the common, which were previously a source of clay for building, due to Mellis being situated in the central part of the Plateau Claylands. In their Preliminary Environmental Information Report, National Grid has stated that the Plateau Claylands will be directly affected by construction activity, particularly between RG117 and RG122, which run to the south of Mellis.

The UK government has made a commitment under the G7 Nature compact biodiversity and sustainability agreement to ‘support and drive the protection, conservation and restoration of the ecosystems critical to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and tackle climate change, such as supporting the target to conserve or protect at least 30% of global land’. Mellis Parish Council strongly upholds these values, which National Grid seemingly does not.

Public Rights of Way

The need to underground the existing UK Power Network to the north west of Mellis will directly impact the parish footpaths and bridleways making them unusable to horse riders, walkers, dog walkers and Mellis Cani-Cross Group. There are no safe alternatives and residents’ daily lives, routines and leisure activities will be affected, which in turn impacts on mental health and well-being. It is unknown if, how or when the PROW will be reinstated.

Affected PROW:

PROW No.	Pylon No.
9	RG097
10	RG099
12	RG100
14	RG114 – RG115
27	RG110
35	RG106 - RG107
36	RG109

There are many horse owners in and around Mellis, with livery service GLH Equestrian situated on Mellis Road past the primary school towards Yaxley. Overhead high voltage power lines are simply incompatible with horses. Horses are prey animals and the low frequency noise and magnetic fields can cause a flight reaction from horses at grass or being stabled, and/or whilst ridden or led.

Affected bridleways:

PROW No.	Pylon No.
14	RG114 – RG115
35	RG106 – RG107
10	RG099

Furze Way and Stonebridge Way are both byways which will be hugely and negatively impacted by pylons RG108 to 105, and the undergrounding of the existing UK Power Network. They are due to be used as service roads, for which they are completely unsuitable. Furze Way has been the subject of complaints from residents for many years, due to the poor state of repair making it hazardous for vehicles, pedestrians, horses and cyclists, and prone to flooding, yet it is due to be used as a service road, which is simply unacceptable.

Dam Lane, is a beautiful green lane covering 1.6 miles across country, between Mellis Ash Road and the A143, near Wortham. It is a historical, local asset, much loved by ramblers, dog walkers and horse riders. Dam Lane which will be visually impacted by pylons RG103 to RG100, has been highlighted by National Grid as an area of constraint, however the north end is still within the red line area of physical impact, and the proposed site of a compound. Along this route there is an early mediaeval, moated site, next to Seething's Wood which was investigated in the 1930's by the archaeologist Basil Brown, who discovered the Anglo-Saxon Ship Burial at Sutton Hoo. The Parish Council believes Dam Lane needs permanent protection and should be treated as a historic relic.

Pylon RG100 is proposed to be sited directly at the north end of Dam Lane.

Construction and Traffic Impact

National Grid's intention to underground the existing 30m tall UKPN pylons to the west of Mellis will have a devastating impact to PROW, nearby listed buildings, (there are three Grade II listed buildings in close proximity to the north on Mellis Road, as well as Grade II* listed Burgate Church), farmland, and flood control.

The Parish Council is deeply concerned that this work will impact the natural drainage of the farmland through which the undergrounding will pass. Mellis and the surrounding parishes have seen a significant increase in localised flooding in recent years. There is a natural land drain to the west of Mellis Common which is at risk of disruption from the proposed works. During winter 2023/24 Mellis Ash Road was severely flooded on numerous occasions, and the Parish Council is concerned that this will significantly worsen as a result of the undergrounding. If the drainage ditches and ponds on Mellis Common are affected, the village is at an even higher risk of flooding.

The increase in traffic and HGVs during construction of the pylons, access roads, compounds and all associated works will have a significant impact on Mellis. The Parish Council has been campaigning for many years to reduce the existing high volume of traffic and HGVs travelling through Mellis from the A143 to the A140. Mellis Primary School is situated on this route, and there are already public and road safety concerns at school drop off/collections times. Whilst Mellis Road has not been specified in Appendix 16.3 of National Grid's Preliminary Environmental Information Report, the expected increase in HGV on nearby roads is unbelievably high:

A143 – 20% increase

Thornham Road – 371% increase

Eastlands Land – 6308% increase

Lion Road – 215% increase

B1113 – 93% increase

There is a precedent from recent local developments for HGVs to use Mellis Road to cut from the A140 to the A143, despite being prohibited from doing so. The Parish Council has concerns that this is certain to happen again during

construction of the scheme. It is also inevitable that Mellis will see an increase from local and through traffic, using alternative roads to avoid those officially being used for construction traffic.

The existing road network in and around Mellis is made up of mainly single, narrow roads, many of which are already in a state of disrepair, and will be unable to cope with any increase in traffic.

Mellis Parish Council also objects to the amount of noise from construction work between pylon RG097 – RG119 should the project go ahead. This construction activity will subject the usually quiet conservation village to varying amounts of noise each day from 24 decibels up to 110 decibels. In addition, the proposed working hours are unacceptably long and include weekends and Bank Holidays. As the nights draw in, flood lights will be needed to light the construction which will visually impact our dark night skies with light pollution.

Local Businesses and Properties

There are many local businesses in Mellis which will be negatively impacted by the proposed scheme. Many of these are tourist led such as holiday lets, and rely on visitors who are attracted by the uniqueness of the local environment; Mellis Common, the history and heritage, and the beauty of the local landscape and unobstructed views.

The proximity of the pylons will also negatively impact property prices. The Parish Council is aware that knowledge of National Grid's proposals is already affecting interest in the village and property values.

Breaches of Holford Rules

The Parish Council believes there are several breaches in the guidelines on overhead line routing, first formulated in 1959 by Sir William later Lord Holford, who was a part-time member of the CEGB. They are known as the 'Holford Rules.' National Grid continues to employ them as a basis of the company's approach to overhead line routing.

Rule 2: Avoid smaller areas of high amenity value, or scientific interests by deviation; provided that this can be done without using too many angle towers, i.e., the more massive structures which are used when lines change direction. Where possible choose routes which minimise the effects on the setting of areas of architectural, historic, and archaeological interest including Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings; Mellis is in a Conservation and Special Landscape Area.

Rule 4: Choose tree and hill backgrounds in preference to sky backgrounds wherever possible; and when the line has to cross a ridge, secure this opaque background as long as possible and cross obliquely when a dip in the ridge provides an opportunity. Where it does not, cross directly, preferably between belts of trees;- The route will site 50-metre-high pylons against the large sky background of the unique and historic Mellis Common.

Rule 5: Prefer moderately open valleys with woods where the apparent height of towers will be reduced, and views of the line will be broken by trees: - The ruling states Where possible avoiding cutting extensive swathes through woodland blocks and consider opportunities for skirting edges of copses and woods. Protecting existing vegetation, including woodland and hedgerows, and safeguard visual and ecological links with the surrounding landscape; the pylon route cuts through a beautiful, wooded area at the bottom of Furze Way, which is situated north of Mellis. The undergrounding of the existing UK Power Network, to accommodate the pylons, cuts through the length of a wooded area north of historic Dam Lane.

CONSULTATION

Mellis Parish Council does not consider it has been consulted in a way that is open, fair or transparent.

Mellis Parish Council has identified the following deficiencies in National Grid's consultation process:

Consultation meetings have all been timed for during the working day, denying working people the chance to have their say. There has only been one meeting in Gislingham, timed 1pm-6pm. The meetings were felt by members of the public not real consultation more paying lip service to a process.

The Public Consultation/Information Events have been held in locations inaccessible by public transport.

Mellis Parish Council and its residents were not consulted when the proposals were at a formative stage. The route was predetermined. The decision for pylons was also predetermined. This is against the Gunning Principles.

Information on the proposals has been inaccessible to many people.

The maps sent to householders are small scale area maps, generic and lacking in detail.

Information has only been sent to householders within 1km of the pylon line when the visual impacts of the project are far wider.

The interactive online map does not show all properties, only listed buildings.

Internet access is required to fully access the proposals and their supporting information

The supporting documents on National Grids website are not labelled or indexed in a way that makes them straightforward to access. Information is being deliberately obscured.

National Grid has failed in making residents aware of the increased traffic requirements to build the infrastructure.

National Grid has failed to make the information available and user friendly for the residents.

Staff at the consultation/information events have not had the necessary knowledge to respond to queries. Parishioners report that staff have avoided responding to pertinent questions.

There has been no personal engagement with homeowners who are adversely affected.

Homeowners do not feel the issues they have raised in feedback to previous consultations have been addressed.

Homeowners seek personal engagement given the life changing impact of these proposals

The impact of the proposals on property prices has not been assessed. This is an important omission in the process

National Grid has made no attempt to assess the impact of the proposals on health and mental health/wellbeing. This is an important omission in the process.

National Grid has failed to give residents any faith in the process – most have been left with the impression that their views will be ignored, and that the outcome is a foregone conclusion.

During the targeted consultations January – March 2025, National Grid's decision to renege on their Waveney Valley alternatives proposal was not consulted upon. No reason was given for this omission, and it is inconceivable that the proposal was offered as an alternative and then withdrawn without and form of consultation.