From:	[redacted]
To:	Sunnica Energy Farm
Subject:	Submission: Lucy Frazer MP and Matt Hancock MP
Date:	18 May 2022 14:51:24
Attachments:	Lucy Frazer MP and Matt Hancock MP letter to Examining Authority - 18 May 2022.pdf

Dear Examining Authority,

Please see the attached joint letter from Lucy Frazer MP and Matt Hancock MP in response to your call for comments relating to Sunnica's request for a timetable extension (your ref: EN010106).

Kind regards,

Joshua

Joshua Richards
Parliamentary Assistant for Lucy Frazer MP
Member of Parliament for South East Cambridgeshire

National Infrastructure
Planning Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

18 May 2022

Dear Examining Authority,

We are writing to you following your call to interested parties to respond to the submission by Sunnica Ltd. of a new proposed timetable, which includes the request to defer the preliminary meeting until 18th July. We oppose this request.

The Secretary of State sets an expectation of the Planning Inspectorate Examining Committee that the Preliminary Meeting be held no later than between 6 weeks to 2 months following receipt of relevant representations from interested parties, as clarified by Government guidance in March 2015 related to the Planning Act 2008. The timetable exists for good reason and is designed to bind any applicant that applies through the Planning Inspectorate. Therefore, it is our view that the process ought to go ahead as designed and the Examining Authority should refuse the call for a delay.

In addition, it is our view that it is not clear that "Option 3" is a realistic option at this time. Additional work is still required to determine feasibility, and amendments will need to be made to all relevant documents, including Land Plans, Works Plans and Access and Rights of Way Plans. We are not offered much assurance that it can be completed within the proposed timeframe either, based on the track record of the National Grid and Sunnica to work together quickly. For instance, it is our understanding that Sunnica was first informed of the denial of "Option 1" by the National Grid on 10 March 2022, yet according to Sunnica's letter to the Examining Authority via Pinsent Masons LLP on 28 April 2022, formal reasons had still not been produced by National Grid for Sunnica.

On a related note, if "Option 3" was progressed, this would require an additional consultation with local groups to consider the impact on residents, landscape, wildlife, noise, traffic, archaeology, and heritage. It is also at least a possibility that responsive changes to the project by Sunnica Ltd. would be necessary following the conclusion of this consultation. However, we are not clear whether this mid-July deadline accounts for this.

Even if there was time to do all of this, the deferral of the timetable sets unfair expectations of our constituents. If further consultation is required for "Option 3", it will come at additional unsolicited cost and inconvenience to residents, who have already expended funds in dealing with the original application and have devoted considerable time to defending their positions throughout the application process.

Finally, this request for a delay further demonstrates that there was a lack of analysis and rigour in the initial proposal. The extension of the Grid is a fundamental part of the scheme and therefore should have been established before the submission of the Development Consent Order application in November 2021.

We would be grateful if you would consider the above points when making your decision.

Yours sincerely,

Lucy Frazer
MP for South East Cambridgeshire

[redacted]

Matt Hancock
MP for West Suffolk

[redacted]