

Comments on whether Food Security and Land Use Implications should form part of the examination process.

It would be remiss if the examination process failed to consider the issues of Food Security and land use implications.

The UK cannot afford to lose the 2800 acres of quality agricultural land that Sunnica is proposing to develop.

Sunnica are using outdated and incorrect land classifications to identify the productive land within the application. Full disclosure information regarding actual yields over a sustained period – ie the life and beyond of the solar development – should be sought to quantify the loss. It is noted that the land owners and developer have to date refused permission for soil samples to be taken for analysis for re-classification.

The land propose for development both arable and pasture supports the production of Wheat, Barley, Potatoes, Sugar beet, Carrots, Celery and other horticultural crops along with grazing for Cattle and Pigs.

It would be morally irresponsible to develop this land.

Multiple recent global events and the ongoing climate change have focussed the minds of everyone to the importance of food security.

Russia and Ukraine currently produce over a quarter of the world's wheat, as well as many other crops. Future imports are no longer guaranteed due to the conflict. This could cause food shortages and increases in prices of staple foods from bread to vegetable oils, which would have a major effect on peoples lives and the economy.

Both incoming PM candidates have recognised the importance of Food Security and Land Use with Liz Truss stating 'We need food security, Farmers should be getting on with farming (sic) our fields should be filled with our fantastic produce - whether it's the great livestock, the great arable farms. It shouldn't be full of solar panels'.

Rishi Sunak confirmed he would 'Protect the best agricultural land from (sic) large-scale solar farms, to make sure they have minimal impact on food production'.

These views are not just vote catchers – they are vitally important tenets of any future Government and recognition that it is insupportable that such a precious and finite resource as valuable green land that has been or is used for farming which contributes to the £4.2 billion to the UK economy annually, should be lost to industrial development.