

My wife and I live in Chippenham having moved to the village in August 2009. We wanted to live in a village to enjoy surrounding countryside so we could take walks at the weekends, and on other days once we retired ( [REDACTED] ).

We are both outraged at the Sunnica Energy Farm proposal, and even more outraged at the Sunnica organisation who do not care one jot about the points being raised by the villagers in Chippenham and all the other villages affected by this poorly thought out scheme.

There are many objections raised regarding the proposal, of which there are 3 which I think are the most pertinent:

1. High quality crop producing farmland is being taken away to become sites for the erection of the thousands of solar panels, batteries, concrete platforms, and other equipment and infrastructure. In these times of needing to be self sufficient, I'm staggered that Sunnica are allowed to even pursue a proposal that takes away such crop producing farmland;
2. The close proximity of the proposed sites to the villages is a serious safety concern. There have been a number of fires at other energy farms (plants is a better definition) which have been serious and that's where these were located in sensible places away from local villages and towns. The fire safety record for such sites needs to be 100%, certainly incredibly close to this level, the sad fact is with previous sites the safety record is well below this level. I'm really concerned about the risk of fire engulfing one of the villages should the sunnica proposal get approved.
3. Sunnica claim their proposal is good for the environment, but that's not true. I'm not knowledgeable enough to state all the data to support this view, suffice to say the impact to the environment will be far more severe than Sunnica are suggesting. One example, all the solar panels and batteries need to be transported to the sites which is bad for the environment, more the point though is what happens to all these solar panels and batteries when they end their useful life, which I'm told will be less than the 40 years Sunnica suggest?

For my wife and I, we did not move to a village to have to endure 2-3 years worth of disruption, which will be almost continuous throughout this period. We won't be able to take our walks due to the large lorries which will be transporting in the various equipment (and actually the roads infrastructure is seriously lacking for such transportation), and we will have delays getting to and from our village because when the volume of transport linked to this project starts the roads are bound to get clogged.

Then there's the visual impact. Now when we take walks we enjoy nice views over farmland, if the project goes ahead then these views will be field after field of steel infrastructure, in essence the countryside will be taken away. This is bad enough, but I understand within the proposal there's plans to erect 3 large electrical sub-stations, so the views out of the villages will change and effectively become like an industrialised scheme rather than the countryside we have now.

My wife and I are quite anxious about what's being proposed, our main anxiety being the concerns on fire and safety. Giving up good farmland which will result in us having to import more produce, which goes against the environmental argument as this means there's more import transportation using various fuels etc, also worries me, right now we have a cost of living crisis in effect caused by Russia, we have to become self sufficient so we're protected against outside influences like this, this project would move us away from this objective.

I'm 100% in favour of renewable energy, so I am a little conflicted because of that. However, renewable energy sites can be set up in areas that have less impacts to people, good farmland, and wildlife, granted setting up in such areas might cost more, but surely cost cannot be the

overriding objective when there are much bigger issues at play.

Sunnica are clearly in it to maximise profits, they don't care about any of the concerns I raise, and all the other villagers raise. Yes let's create a large renewable energy plant, but lets position it where it's impact is solely positive and negate all the negatives which the Sunnica proposal has.

Thank you for reading my concerns.

Kind regards

Kevin Hempson

