

**Written Response Sunnica Energy Farm
Ref no. 20030060**

I am setting out the reasons why I consider the proposed development of the Sunnica Energy Farm application should be refused. I believe that Planning Decision should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment approval of this development will clearly significantly diminish our natural and local environment.

1. **Scale** The proposal is of such a scale and so dispersed that the cumulative impact of all the separate sites. This is inefficient use of land. These sites will dominate what is a truly rural and agricultural landscape turning it into an industrialised one.
2. **Land Classification** The 2800 acres identified for this site is on land that is predominantly, producing food much of it arable. Sunnica state that the vast majority of the land in question is using the Agricultural Land Classification graded at 3b or below. That simply does not reflect what I can see. The crops are regularly rotated and the land is irrigated from winter rain fed reservoirs to raise the yields. How can it be that potatoes and other high value crops are grown so extensively in this area if the soil is as poor as they state? Methods of farming have significantly improved since the land classifications were set in the 1960's and revised in the 1980's, yet no account has been taken of this. Sunnica have relied on this outdated classification to justify their site. What we see daily and year on year does not match with what their soil sampling has identified that we have poorer quality agricultural land.
3. **Food Security** The issues the country faces with the rapidly rising cost of food and our dependence on imports will only be exacerbated by taking this good quality land out of agricultural production.
4. **Landscape** This area to be developed is unique. It is where the Fen, Breckland and Chalkland meet. It provides within a very small area a rich diversity of environments each with their own distinctive characteristics which is reflected in our villages, the fields with their changing crops as they are rotated, the field patterns, whether they are hedged or not and the extent of the tree cover. This will disappear altering the way the centuries old routes connecting us with each other look.
5. **Views.** I live in Isleham. One of the outstanding features of our village is its setting on the fen edge. On entering the village by any route there are long distant views over open farmland, not heavily wooded or hedged. It is these views that place Isleham in the landscape. The development of Sunnica East Site A will destroy that setting to and from the East and South. From Sheldrick's Road, Beck Road and the ARK church. Because of their elevation there are views across the proposed sites EO1 - EO5 as well as EO9 and EO10. The view we benefit from is of the Churches at Freckenham and Mildenhall, to the Lee Brook, right through to the 4 ways bridge and to the Mildenhall Base. There are no trees or hedges in foreground of this view, it is wide and uninterrupted for 1km to the Lee Farm. The proposed mitigation of woodland planting and hedgerows to EO5 will close the length of the view down to 100 metres. This together with the planting of hedges along Beck Road will also take away the uninterrupted views back to Isleham in particular affecting St Andrew's Church and the ARK. The historic maps of the village show that Beck Road and Sheldrick's Road have not been hedged so this is clearly further detriment to our area. I travelled daily for 25 years when working using Sheldrick's Road and Beck Road and now regularly use this route to cycle to Mildenhall and have benefitted greatly from the views available here both to and from the village. It is clear that from Sheldrick's Road, Beck Road when immediately leaving the village and the ARK that sites EO1- EO4 will be clearly visible. In addition EO33 the site of the BESS and substation will be visible from these areas as the silos located on that area can be clearly seen. The solar panels, BESS and substation at Sunnica East A, which they recognise in their report as having a high Impact from Isleham, will still be clearly visible and yet this has not been taken into account in their proposal. What mitigation they propose around EO5 will neither contribute or enhance our environment, it is not in keeping with our current or historic setting and will destroy the current long and wide ranging views we in Isleham benefit from to the east of village.
6. **Batteries** I am concerned at the proposal to include Battery Storage in the scheme. I have concerns over the impact of these igniting, the consequent toxic gases that would be released

and the proximity to all of our communities. I am concerned that no full assessment appears to have been undertaken as yet.

Richard Radcliffe