

## Appendix 14

1/ I have read the Environmental Statement Appendix 12B: Soils and Agriculture Baseline Report produced by Daniel Baird Soil Consultancy Ltd (appendix 13)– (DB). I do not accept the findings of the report and believe it must be further interrogated. I have set out the reasons below:

ALC Soil classification – DB finds only 3.8% Best and Most Versatile (BMV) soil.

a/ DB's report when assessed against the British Society of Soil Science (BSSS) criteria fails in three categories. The BSSS state that a report with a single failure should not be accepted without referral to specialists. Three qualified soil specialists have studied the report on behalf of SNTSAG and they do not agree with DB's procedures or findings. They state that if an ALC survey was done correctly the SISS would be up to 60% BMV.

b/ We live and farm in the area and see a variety of good crops being grown. It is a highly productive area to farm which is not how DB describes it.

c/ Four of our neighbours have invested in winter fill reservoirs because the soil will support high yielding crops of vegetables. DB does not give the capacities of the winter fill reservoirs. However using DB's descriptions from pages 12B - 11 to 12B - 16 appendix 13 in the Environmental statement and the figures in Appendix 9B Groundwater Abstractions (this reports Appendix 15 with summary) the winter fill reservoir storage figure amounts to 651,593 m<sup>3</sup>.

d/ Patrick Stephenson and Sam Franklin two soil experts dug 8 trial pits on the boundaries of the Sunnica site. All 8 pits have been assessed as grade 3A without the uplift for irrigation. See appendix 16 for pit positions

e/ No land along the cable route has been surveyed by SA a high proportion of this is shown as more than 60% likely to be BMV in appendix 15. Natural England's predictive BMV land assessment.

f/ Comment on specific points made within the DB report to be read in conjunction with appendix 13

5.4.2 – Drought stress - does not affect yields achieved to bring them below national averages or the variety of crops that can be grown on these soils.

h/ 5.4.3 – All six landowners have already invested in irrigation systems and have licences to abstract.

i/ 5.6.3 – from our experience compaction on light soils is simple to deal with.

j/ 5.7.2 / 5.7.4 / 5.7.16 / 5.7.22 / 5.7.27 / 5.7.37 / It is not necessary to have irrigation available for growing sugar beet. See appendix 17

k/ 5.7.3 – Proximity to the Bury St Edmunds sugar beet factory is a strong reason to keep the land in agricultural production. See appendix 18 letter from British Sugar.

l/5.9.1 – sheep grazing under solar panels cannot be regarded as credible livestock agriculture. They should be seen as convenient statement to make out agriculture is continuing. In reality the sheep are grazed at a very low density and are difficult to shepherd and do not prevent mechanical cleaning or cutting of grass. Many sites do not have sheep.

m/5.9.3 – Farmer D lift their own potatoes and lift all the potatoes on Farmer A and B's land. Farmer F also lifts all the potatoes on their farms and Farmer E's land. The average rotational gap with potatoes in the area is 6/8 years.

n/ Email to Natural England Appendix 19. Sets out why it is not possible to have just 3.8% of BMV on the SISS