

**Summary Points Document to Relevant Representation****1. Impact on daily lives**

- 35 miles perimeter fencing and intrusive security systems affecting landscape views, spaces, light and sound over 2500 acres. Footpaths 'tunnels' between fencing and high voltage security measures.
- Community connectivity severed by industrialisation of open countryside of traditional destruction of agricultural landscape between settlements.
- Road closures, Increased traffic creating longer, more fuel intensive journeys
- High volume of HGV traffic particularly at school times, on narrow lanes, many without footpaths, air pollution affecting those already health compromised
- Preventing open access to walks and tracks- re-routing, closing parts or denigrating areas permanently.

**2. Cultural, Landscape and property**

- We have chosen to live here investing decades in family and community
- We protect and preserve wildlife and fauna inc. Stone Curlew, Barn Owl, Cambridge Milk Parsley etc Mitigation is NOT preservation
- We have invested years of human & financial investment on listed buildings in our midst, the construction period alone will cause vibration and pollution damage.
- The scheme proposes to take best value productive agricultural land when food security is a priority. It is unrealistic that it will ever be returned to agriculture
- Property sales are already negated, affecting those already compromised by cost-of-living crisis

**3. Safety and The Scheme**

- Siting hundreds of Lithium-ion BESS containers far too close to property, schools, small businesses, and wildlife sites of specific interest
- The design puts villages at risk from multiple battery sites, therefore cumulative 'known risk' of toxic gas (lethal hydrogen fluoride)
- Ability of Fire and Rescue to respond & resource a disaster of this magnitude is untested
- Huge cost to Local Authorities for their obligation to enforce compliance of DCO
- Poor evidence of the zero-carbon efficiency of the scheme
- No full proof plan for decommissioning funded from the outset
- Little experience of 'life-time maintenance' or replacement of this technology and none by Sunnica
- The area **already supports 450MGW of appropriately sited renewable energy** current or approved to operate within 15 miles.
- Sunnica claims of output are highly inefficient producing *less than one seventh of the rated power of 500MGw*
- The storage facility (BESS) will trade power from The Grid from all sources as such they are stand-alone features and NOT accompanied development.
- No proof of ethical sourcing; almost 100% Solar PV and batteries are from China, well-documented as perpetuating slave labour
- Over 30 accidents in the past two years globally. One UK, investigated by the Operator Orsted, Liverpool 2020 -not independently.
- No regulatory authority taking responsibility for setting and enforcing safety standards of BESS, without this planning **should be denied**
- Other countries site Mega BESS Schemes away from people to mitigate known risk - No evidence is presented as to alternative UK areas for siting batteries to support the grid.

**4. Health**

- Loss of visual landscape essential to wellbeing
- Undocumented impact on local health services
- Adverse impact on connected communities.
- Adverse impact on mental health - Intense continual construction noise 12 hours/6 days a week, and catastrophic life and environment change inflicted upon us at scale. 499wds.

**Submission****1. Impact on daily life**

**The Sunnica proposal will transform the area from a predominantly rural environment to an industrialised landscape.** This in turn will impact hugely on the community, our way of life and our health for many reasons. Piecemealed throughout 7 villages and affecting 16 parishes this will create a cumulative negative affect on our communities with an inefficient design that will magnify its force on the greatest number of people.

These are inter-connected villages that generate social and supportive community engagement. I regularly meet my neighbours and residents from neighbouring villages on footpaths; Badlingham Lane, Snailwell - Icknield way path which provides a walking route into the town of Newmarket. Regular walks for ourselves, families, friends, and visitors across Chippenham Fen to Snailwell poor fen and the footpath across from Park Farm to Snailwell village (my grandchildren live in Snailwell). We enjoy sharing flora and fauna, the biodiverse environment of the wetland areas – we access this along roads and across field footpaths or rights of way.

We congregate as the Three Rivers Group of Parish Churches, for services, cultural and seasonal celebrations, sharing common interests and easy pleasant access along country lanes and paths between villages and places of worship. We share respected remembrance of lives lost at war time memorials including plane crash sites in Isleham and Badlingham, moving this historic knowledge down generations. We have dog-walking groups, cycle groups etc these activities will all be affected. These are all things that enrich our lives and in turn help us contribute to wider society, including economically.

Looking across the fields for example, around Badlingham Lane and the beautiful Snailwell to Chippenham avenue of trees established over 35 years, we have an established visual connectivity with our near villages, giving us our sense of place and belonging.

These will be obliterated by acres of panels above horizon height. Almost **every road** in and out of each village and linking each village will be flanked by 2m high deer fencing totalling 35miles. This is a disproportionate impact for a scheme

**2. Cultural**

We have chosen to live here investing time in family and community, we raise funds to maintain and preserve the Grade 1 listed buildings in our midst. The Sunnica construction period alone will cause vibration and pollution and potential damage, undoing generations of human & financial investment in local heritage. I am particularly concerned for prolonged heavy vehicle movement just yards from Chippenham Church wall. Erskine May (iconic author of Parliamentary Practice) is buried here. This will also change the nature of historic Chippenham Park and its environs for all local people.

We value and preserve wildlife and fauna inc. Stone Curlew, Barn Owl, Cambridge Milk Parsley etc Mitigation is NOT preservation.

Culturally this is an agricultural area, contributing to economy, employment, and recreation

The scheme proposes to take best value productive agricultural land when food security is a priority. It is unrealistic that it will ever be returned to agriculture as the industrial debris and contamination remain.

**3. Safety and The Scheme**

**BESS pose new and unique threats to communities, first responders and wildlife.**

Insufficient evidenced information has been provided regarding magnetic fields generated through cabling /electrical connectors at scale spread through the area

Likewise potential heat islands from the largest solar expanse in the UK - without evidence of mitigating this at scale or documented impact as global temperatures rise – will this make this area even hotter?

As a first ever scheme of battery technology of this scale in the UK this is unacceptable

The Inspectorate should demand evidence on health impacts on people, such as:

Presenting examples of BESS schemes of comparable size (overseas) including the detailed design distance from residential areas.

- Collecting and presenting UK evidence from already operational smaller MGW battery plants from residents themselves; construction, light pollution, ongoing noise, and access issues and indeed answering the investigation into the Orsted Battery fire in Liverpool.

The siting of hundreds of Lithium-ion BESS containers is far too close to property, schools, and small businesses. Objections from Dr Bruno Erasin on the Cleeve Hill DCO identifying a fallout area of 4kms points to my village at potential risk from two of the battery sites, therefore at cumulative 'known risk' of toxic gas (hydrogen fluoride).

Monica Greenhalgh of **ReGen**, the industry insight and expertise body, speaking on radio BBC Cambridgeshire regarding Sunnica did not deny risk when questioned. But claimed 'the mitigation of disaster by siting batteries in different areas of the scheme', that is alarming in that it increases risk over an area of distributed communities and population numbers. She also stated that it was for Sunnica to provide community reassurance that the site was safe. By contrast Luke Murray of Sunnica, commented publicly in their community consultation webinars, that their technology is 'a steep learning curve, a very steep learning curve' and that they 'will be very sorry if thousands of lives are lost'. This is **no reassurance of their engineering expertise or safety at scale!**

This development is backed by European companies and Sunnica's own financial situation looks unreliable. No longer part of the EU these companies escape UK law. Decommissioning plans should be funded from the outset or Government must underwrite potential loss or failures of the scheme.

The fields may be full of degraded old technology in just 15-years' time as in USA, but no planned funded upgrades are evidenced. Charlie Pugsey, Deputy Commissioner for the London Fire Brigade, believes re-examining and retrofitting older, potentially hazardous battery storage systems should be an "essential" part of preventing harm; **"If we know some things could fail catastrophically or it could have those effects," he said, "it's going to be a difficult day if one of us is standing there in court saying we knew about it but we didn't do anything."**

The 20MGW lithium battery fire in Beijing, not only had fatalities but more fire appliances attended than Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue's entire fleet of vehicles.

There is no proof of any intention of ethical sourcing; Solar PV and batteries likely from China are well documented as perpetuating slave labour as in the 2021 Sheffield Hallam university report.<sup>ii</sup>

Sunnica have relied very heavily on the rhetoric of climate change and that 'people should expect to do the right thing' but have not demonstrated to the people that the scheme is Carbon Neutral over its lifetime. Doing 'the right thing' and doing *anything* are very different things.

#### 4. Human Health

**The health impacts of this scheme as presented by Sunnica, merely point to the lack of established measurement criteria in this area of construction on which to respond or examine health impacts. In this void they have presented neutral impact as a fact.**

Are our local Primary Care providers/services fully engaged in the impact this may have on their already stretched resources? If not, why not. Sunnica have not identified any costs to local health services and our Primary Care Practices around stress (including already generated), future noise, nuisance, or poor air quality.

The government budget for mental health now exceeds £18 billion annually, we cannot destroy an area that offers natural mitigation of healthy living and lifestyle. The pandemic proved that the advantage of this local landscape to the population's quality of life was immeasurable.

Adverse effects on mental health will be caused by restricting lack of open countryside, intense continual construction noise 6 days a week, demoralisation caused by catastrophic life and environment change inflicted upon us at scale.

The design takes no account of the community cohesion that exists here and contributes to population wellbeing. Well established Government promotion based on research from New Economics Foundation<sup>iii</sup> promotes mental health benefits of connectivity with others, immersion in countryside and nature and engaging in interconnected community activity – giving back, as vital contribution to healthy lives. This is reinforced by the mental health community, including MIND.

The link between the natural environment and wellbeing is recognised in National Planning Policy, “There is a very significant body of evidence linking contact and exposure to the natural environment with health and wellbeing” - Spatial Planning for health: evidence resource for planning and design, also referred by Public Health England.

“Time spent being physically present within or viewing from afar that contain elements of living systems that include plants and non-human animals across a range of scales and degrees of human management—from a small park to pristine wilderness.

The distinction between physical and visual contact with nature is equally important as stated in ‘Impacts of nature experience on human cognitive function and mental health’, Bratman Hamilton and Daily. *New York Academy of Science*<sup>iv</sup>

Asset Based Community Development is the strategy for Healthy Communities<sup>v</sup> in Cambridgeshire and across the UK, based on evidence that community connectivity supports resilience and in turn improves wellbeing. This way of life exists here and will be damaged

Sunnica’s own PEIR pointed to slightly better health in the districts compared to both East Anglia and National figures. This supports the argument that this is a humanly asset rich community that can provide inter-dependent support at resident level and potentially reduces the burden on local authorities and health services.

**Community connectivity will be broken by Sunnica’s plans, physically in separation, and socially with the disproportionate development and impact of overbearing and prolonged construction – this period of disruption alone will damage social cohesion irrevocably.**

#### References:

i [REDACTED]  
ii [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

iv <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22320203/>

v <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/our-work/devolution-1/2138-the-cambridgeshire-resilient-communities-strategy>