

This is my response to the planning consent order from Sunnica Energy Farm LTD.

My unique Ref No. 20031440

I have so many concerns regarding this proposal, its difficult to know where to start....

Batteries

The safety of these causes me great concern, being so close to schools and residential areas.

Last year, I wrote to both Cambridge and Suffolk Fire Brigade with my concerns, I await a reply!!!

On a Zoom meeting with Sunnica they confessed that for them it **‘was a leaning curve’**. How trite to play with peoples lives in such an off handed manner.

Sunnica have provided us with such little information.

- Is this project ALL about the battery storage?
- Why do they require such a large area for the batteries?
- How safe are the batteries?
- What are the minerals they are going to use?
- Where are they getting the raw materials from?
- What, in their opinion is a safe distance for schools and residential properties?
- Are there plans, If there was a fire? If so what are they?

After an accompanied site visit to Elms/Red Lodge with the Ex. A. on Wednesday, 3rd November I was astounded how large the battery site is, I asked Luke Murry how close would the school and residential properties be to Sunnic’s largest proposed Battery site. He was unable to inform me, however a member of Red Lodge Parish Council told me it is aprox 150-200m.

Decommissioning.

What are the applicants plans for decommissioning?

Surely, there should be a legally binding decommissioned plan, with money invested to pay for it. Otherwise we will leave a legacy of a 'Graveyard of panels' for the next generation to sort out!

Until these questions are answered and many more, with the utmost satisfaction, I cannot see how this Industrial Power Plant can go forward.

I have children and Grandchildren living in the areas near the proposed battery installations and their health, welfare and safety are of paramount importance to me.

Agriculture

Agriculture is the heart of the land intertwining between the villages which Sunnica wish to change dramatically. The surroundings will become an Industrial area for Cambridgeshire.

The land was classified in 1988, Grade 2,3 and 4, since then the structure and fertility of the agriculture land has changed.

By allowing an Independent Assessor to evaluate the soil quality we get an unbiased view to qualify the value of the land. We cannot/should not be guided by Sunnica's report and claim. it is incorrect!

Much of the Local produce is harvest, sorted and packed locally. Isleham Carrot Growers Ltd. Who supply carrots all year round.

Isleham Carrot Growers have invested in a biodiversity; investing in 42 acres of woodland in the fens and constructed two winter stored reservoirs for summer irrigation.

British Sugar in Bury St Edmunds produces not only sugar but it has invested in an Anaerobic Digestion plant which produces energy in the form of electricity. Due to the global situation food security is of upmost importance.

According to the The United Kingdom Food Security report the U.K. Produces 60% of its food, we need to improve on this dramatically, we can no longer rely on Imports from other countries.

This valuable versatile land will be taken out of production for 40 years. Sunnica reports the land is of low agriculture value, living here and seeing the harvest of these crops proves otherwise!

The proposed land provides a rotating supply of Potatoes, Onions Carrots, Parsnips, Sugar beet, Barley, Wheat, Maize and Salad.

How can we prove it, by allowing an Independent Assessor to evaluate the soil quality.

According to Sunnica and on record, the land can **'go back to being agriculture half an hour after the panels have been removed'!!!!**

Carbon.

I have read the report/ paper by Cranfield University and after extensive research they state that this project **IS NOT** Carbon neutral and never will be. So totally against Government Policy.

Also Carbon Neutral Cambridge are opposing the Sunnica Solar Farm. They have concerns that underlying business model implies that the scheme may well change ownership several times during the lifetime of the project. They state they would have to have Legally Binding Obligations imposed before they could support it. Appropriate Land Use. Biodiversity gain and minimisation of visual impact/Significant financial benefit to the community.

The Batteries, panels and caballing will loose their efficiency every year.

It is estimated that 1.1million solar panels will be needed, they need to be replaced every 20/25 years.

The enormous battery storage system is estimated to last approx 12years they will also need to be replaced during Sunnicas proposed 40 year lease.

Transporting these items form China? (I have not read that Sunnica have confirmed where they will be Imported from.) Will not help their Carbon Footprint.

Sunnica's proposal has already been proved not to be Carbon neutral On Social media Luke Murry states "it will secure affordable energy," I'm not sure how?

Impact on the Environment and Countryside

It will be devastating during the construction and forever afterwards.

Roads, Footpaths and Bridleways will all be closed and seriously affected during construction and the impact on our Environment will remain forever.

E. Anglia is known for its wide open space and huge skies. Who wants to walk, ride a bike or horse amid a sea of panels?

Where will our wildlife go?

Rare and protected species like Stone Curlew, Bats and Great Crested Newts.

There are many species of birds, who will leave the area never to return once their environment has changed; Hen Harriers, Barn Owls, Buzzards, Redwing and Cuckoo to name but a few. in fact while on the accompanied Ex A. visits a group of us spotted a Buzzard.

The River Lea which is is on a Chalk Stream, is situated on the Sunnica site. What affects will the batteries and panels have once rain water has runs off them. At the moment the rain water is absorbed by the crops. Will the river become silted and what affect could this have on the fish and wildlife.

Rare flora and fauna can be found in this area too.

Tourism

The enormous affect on tourism cannot be understated.

Newmarket is a thriving HORSE RACING Town. The Horse racing yards are situated in Newmarket and the surrounding villages. There are over sixty trainers and at least 2,000 horses in training with 12 Studs in Newmarket area.

Solar panels and Battery storage facilities surrounding the Limekilns and surrounding training areas are not conducive with highly strung horses.

According to a Government paper written by Forest Health
NEWMARKET HORSERACING INDUSTRY FINAL REPORT (SEPT 2015) (westsuffolk.gov.uk)

The trainers employ over 2,000 people directly, and support substantially greater employment through associated expenditure by the yards and in the local economy by their employees based in Newmarket. Newmarket Racing is the key attractions in the area and pulls in tourist from all over the world.

Sunnica's plans to build an Industrial Solar Farm with solar panels and Battery storage facilities in this area would be devastating for the tourist trade.

Residents value

The Environment, Wild Life, Country Views, Leisure and Tranquillity. People Ive spoken to are not against Solar, just against where it is, Rooftops for Solar, Fields for Food.

Sadly, I have met many residents that Sunnica's plans have caused great anxiety. Many, Marina residents moved to this unique site for peace, tranquillity and views, some for mental health issues.

Residents In Isleham and other villages have confirmed to me that they will move if Sunnica get the go ahead. I personally know of one family who have already moved to Norfolk for fear Sunnica will get permission. I spoke to an elderly gentleman In Worlington who is desperately trying to sell his property, (his wife is unwell and they need a bungalow,) he has secured a buyer on several occasions, only when the solicitors do a 'search' on the property Sunnica comes up and he loses the sale.

The affect on many families who enjoy, riding, walking, jogging, fishing in this rural setting will be catastrophic. During the Pandemic the unique setting we live in provided calm for all, especially, those with Mental Health issues.

The Ark Church in Isleham was paid for and built sympathetically by the congregation to embrace the surrounding area. Sunnnica inform me that panels will face South: facing, in other words, towards the Ark building and the village.

Isleham is village with a vast amount of history attached, I know that IPC have included this in there representation. The close community enjoy many social events and have over 20 active clubs running. Many of which are attached to their surroundings. Fenland Friends; Friends of Isleham Nature reserve, Isleham Joggers, Isleham Orchard and Isleham Communal Allotment, (wine and weed on a Wednesday!) The residents who moved here did so with the rural setting in mind not to live in a Solar Power Plant.

Sunnic's consultation

During the Pandemic Sunnic's consaltation with residents, has been totally inadequate. Isleham, until recently, has been predominately a community of families who have grown up in the village, with many elderly relations.

Residents have reported even If they have computers are not familiar with zoom meetings. If they were able to join a meeting the ability to have a two way conversation was denied, question put forward on a link was not always answered or the ability to have responded were unavailable. Even after the Pandemic Sunnica refused many requests to have public meetings and engage by phone or reply to written correspondence.

Many people have told me they find the whole appeal process very very difficult to understand and confusing.

Residence in Burwell have reported Sunnica walking onto their land without permission and when asked to leave have been verbally abused and threatened. Residents have also reported that Sunnica have informed them that they will be served with compulsory purchase If they are denied access or refuse Sunnica's offer.

Recently, The National Grid informed Sunica that they no longer had space for them in Burwell, yet again proving that Sunnica fail to engage or hold consultations with involved parties.

32 years ago my husband and I decided to make a bold move from a London Borough. We left family, friends and familiarity behind in order to bring our children up in a rural setting, they too have chosen not to return to suburbia, to stay here to bring up their children.If Sunnicas plans are approved they have informed me they will not longer wish to stay in the area.