

Isleham Parish Council 20030170

Comments Deadline 6

SUNNICA ENERGY FARM EN010106 Volume 8

8.52 Update by the Applicant on Heritage Matters and Substation Connection (REP3A-037) and Sunnica Ltd Deadline 5 Submission - 8.47 Environmental Masterplan (REP5-054)

Isleham Parish Council wishes to comment on the proposals set out in these reports relating to the potential impacts to the B-50 bomber crash site close to Isleham at Site E05.

We welcome that Sunnica have, at last, reacted to one of the numerous concerns of local residents to the development of this site at EO5, that the site is of importance to the local history of the area and their proposal to involve the Parish Council in the "interpretation scheme."

This site has a strong historic connection to our village in light of the tragic incident and the sacrifices made. The Parish Council's response to Sunnica Planning Application EXQ1 Q 1.4.13 Plane crash site (REP2-075), shows the importance of this to our community and the actions taken to record this tragic event. This is not fully reflected in Sunnica's comments. Residents have long commemorated this tragedy and this Council sought to commemorate it, long before Sunnica submitted their proposals. In addition we have contacted the JCCC to indicate the levels of local support for its continued commemoration.

The area of the site is extensive as shown by the applicant's geophysical survey report showing the location of the Isleham crash site visible as an area of 'magnetic disturbance' and 'ferrous/debris. The proposal to exclude from the development the "crash site" to a radius of 50 metres square is wholly inadequate and fails to match their recognition of this site importance to local history and to reflect the extent of disturbance. This is most important, despite assurances at the time, as to whether all the human remains have been found. Local residents report finding small remains to this day. The crash site should not be restricted to the of the impact crater. The Council considers that the proposals for the exclusion zone should extend to the whole of the crash area and it should be taken out of the development proposals.

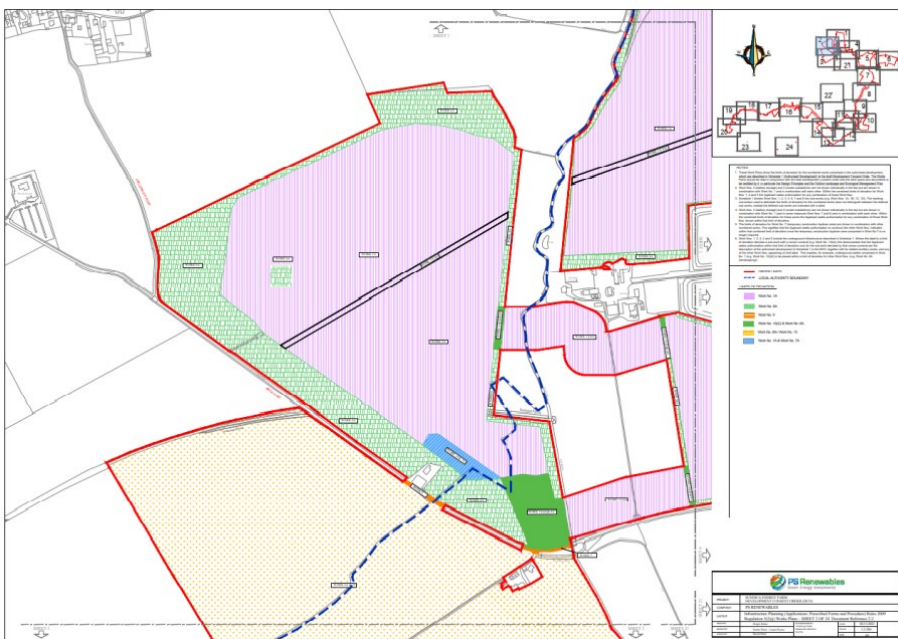


Figure 1 – taken from D5 submission 'after works plans'. The green square centre left is the proposed crater exclusion zone. The geophysical survey show that remains of the craft and crew were scattered over a much greater area than the excluded area. This exclusion zone would be completely surrounded by panels, which would themselves be surrounded by trees and hedgerows. The visual access and connection from the village and to nearby airbases would be lost forever.

What is abundantly clear is that if the excluded area proposed of 50 sq metres is accepted, it would be completely surrounded by the development of solar panels and the proposed hedging and wood to screen the development. That visual link from our village to the site will be lost and with it a part of our history, to be replaced by an interpretation board. The interpretation board will point readers to an area which cannot be seen as it would be surrounded by solar panels hedges and a wood. That essential link we have, from the village, Sheldricks Road and Beck Road will be lost and that natural connection with our history will be gone. Hardly a fitting commemoration.



Figure 2. View of Plane Crash Site from Sheldrick's Road/Beck Road. There is an open visual connection to the crash site from the village, with views over to Lakenheath. This would be lost

Isleham Parish Council considers that the proposals show a lack of understanding that the site is of importance to the local history of the area and do not reflect that fact. Out of respect for the families and friends of all the crew members and the Isleham community, we support the continued preservation of this important site and strongly object to any development on this area. The sentiments of Mr Brien Chatfield, (grandson of 1st Lt Robert W Chatfield, one of the brave crew who died in the tragedy) Los Angeles California sum this up.

"My grandfather gave his life in service to my country and sacrificed bailing out so as to save a village and the lives therein, the land should be respected for that and maintained as the farmland it was. I'm sure a better plot can be found. "
(as presented in REP2-075)

In Sunnica's submission EN010106 Volume 8 8.73 Applicant's Response to Other Parties' Deadline 4 Submissions (REP5-058) they disagree that the Scheme will destroy Isleham's place in the

landscape and seek to justify this through the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). However they further go on to explain that the latest Environmental Masterplan submitted at Deadline 5 (REP5-054) shows further amendments to E05, planting along the Lee Brook and a new permissive path trying to mitigate this loss of landscape and views from the elevated position of the village. This will still result in the cherished views over this area being shortened, materially changed and lost forever. The views to our neighbouring towns and villages of Mildenhall and Worlington would be closed off.

It is clear that the proposals for the plane crash site are inappropriate. This together with the visual impact of the Scheme at E05, the loss of landscape amenity and views, which would be industrialised and cannot be mitigated by inappropriate planting of woodland and hedging, the ecology concerns of the proposed development (in respect of stone curlew and other valued farmland birds), and on what we know are highly productive, high quality soils in this area result in this parcel being unsuitable for development.

Isleham Parish Council therefore considers and supports both the County and District Councils view that site E05 should be removed from the Scheme completely.