

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Sunnica Energy Farm](#)
Subject: Additional comments regarding closure of 204/5
Date: 12 March 2023 14:48:14
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[sunnica questionnaire.docx](#)

I write with the agreement of the Snailwell Parish Council Chair to make an additional comment regarding any closure of Bridleway 204/5 (as referenced in various Sunnica submissions) also known as the Icknield Way and Snailwell Gallops.

In addition to points made in my original submission, attached, it has occurred belatedly to the Snailwell Parish Council that this Bridleway is the only route contained within the Parish connecting the village of Snailwell to the cottages at the Eastern end of the Parish. Were it to be closed, the residents at the Eastern end of the Parish living in Derby Cottages would be forced to make a four mile detour, taking them out of the Parish and into Newmarket town and back again in order to reach the village. The same is true in reverse, of course. The effect of the closure of 204/5 would be to sever the Parish into two parts with no means of moving between them other than by making the detour referred to above.

It is therefore important that, whatever the outcome of the DCO application, the bridleway not be closed.

Hugh Murray [REDACTED]
Parish Councillor
Snailwell Parish Council



Icknield Way Bridleway Snailwell – impact of Sunnica proposal

I am not opposed to the development of a solar farm in principle, provided adequate mitigation is in place. Indeed, I believe that we need massively more investment in both solar and wind, as well as in nuclear to meet the current climate emergency. This document addresses the proposal to close the Icknield Way PRoW for the duration of the construction.

The Icknield Way is known in the various Sunnica documents as 204/5. Appendix 13A, Sub Chart E of the Provisional Environmental Impact Report (PEIR), states that this Right of Way is to be closed along the greater part of its length for the entire duration of the construction phase of about two years.

Impact of closure

The closure of the Icknield Way for two years would have a highly detrimental effect on the physical and mental wellbeing of local residents because:

1. It is very heavily trafficked. I can usually see at least a dozen other people using it at any one time whilst using it, which I do at least once every day. A few of those people are using it for access but the majority are using it for recreation and health.
2. It is used by a number of disabled individuals who are able to use both manual and motorised wheelchairs as well as other aids. It is also used by a local establishment for people with learning disabilities whose clients may behave in unpredictable ways and for whom the Icknield Way represents a safe space.
3. It is used primarily as an amenity rather than an access route and should be viewed as such. It is uniquely suited to dog walking, cycling, running and horse-riding and people come from Snailwell, Newmarket, Chippenham, Fordham and beyond specifically to use it. Local running clubs frequently incorporate it into their competition routes and seeing strings of horses using it is one of the joys of living in the area.
4. It is the only metalled path in the area, which means it can be used when all other routes for miles around are incapable of being walked upon due to weather.
5. There are no alternative routes within walking distance of Snailwell along which one can safely walk or cycle. The Newmarket Road, proposed as an alternative route, has no pavement and is completely unsuitable for pedestrian use.
6. Footpath 204/1 between Snailwell and Chippenham is planned to be severed where the Grid Connection Route crosses it, which will mean that during the period of severance there will be no public footpaths available from Snailwell and it will be impossible to walk other than on roads that have no pavements.
7. A water main runs under the 204/5 and Anglia Water requires regular access along it. At the time of writing, Snailwell is suffering from a failure of water supply and there is a fleet of Anglia Water trucks using the Icknield Way to gain access to the repair point. The PRoW would have to be kept open and clear for emergency access in any event.

Duration of closure

The Sunnica Plans call for the Icknield Way to be closed for two years. No reason is given for this. The path does not lie within the boundary of the scheme and no access to the scheme is proposed which requires the use of it. Based solely on the Sunnica documents, I see no reason to close it at all. However, I can imagine there may be short periods of time during which closure becomes

necessary for safety reasons and I would ask that any such closure be restricted to the affected part of the path and be for the minimum length of time necessary.

Relevant Comments on the Preliminary Environmental Impact Report

Chapter 13.6.6 states “There are no PRoWs (Public Rights of Way) situated within the boundary of the Sunnica West Site A or B itself. Adjacent to Sunnica West Site A there is Snailwell 5 bridleway (PRoW 204/5) which runs along the south-west boundary of that site”. This makes clear that the Icknield Way is without the boundary of the Scheme. Given that that is the case, no reason has been offered for the closure.

Chapter 13.8.10 states, “There is no data available on the number of pedestrians and cyclists using the PRoW that will be temporarily closed, however it is considered that the number of users affected will be low.” Whilst that may be true for some PRoWs, it is not true for 204/5. The PEIR admits that no data has been collected and this has resulted in a serious underestimate of the impact of closing 204/5. Chapter 13.8.10 goes on to state, “The magnitude of change on those using PRoW is minor adverse, the sensitivity is low, therefore the significance of the effect during the construction period is minor adverse. This effect would be short-term.” The reality is that the effect of the closure would be major adverse and would affect a great many people for two years.

Concluding comments

I ask Sunnica to reconsider the status of 204/5 and to ask if closure is really necessary. If it is, then I would ask that the closure be only for short periods when construction requires it, and not for the duration of the construction phase.

Yours sincerely

Hugh Murray

