

SUNNICA ENERGY FARM

EN010106

Volume 8

8.12 Statement of Commonality

Planning Act 2008

Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010



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Planning Act 2008

The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010

Sunnica Energy Farm

Statement of Commonality

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Table of Contents

Cha	pter	Pages
1	Introduction	1
1.1	Overview of the Scheme	1
1.2	Purpose of the Statement of Commonality	1
1.3	Structure	2
1.4	List of Statements of Common Ground	2
1.5	Summary of Current Position of SoCG	2
2	Summary of Commonality of Each Topic Covered	9
3	Additional Commentary	11
3.1	Deadline 2	11
3.2	Deadline 4	12
3.3	Deadline 6	12
3.4	Deadline 7	13
3.5	Deadline 8	14
Tabl	le of Tables e 1-1 Status of SoCGs at Deadline 78e 2-1 Summary of Commonality with each party in relation to each to	3 pic covered at
Dead	dline <mark>710</mark> <u>8</u>	<u>10</u>
Tabl	e 3-1 List of matters under discussion where SoCGs could not be fine	alised14



1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of the Scheme

- 1.1.1 This Statement of Commonality has been prepared in respect of the application for the proposed Sunnica Energy Farm Development Consent Order ("the Application") made by Sunnica Limited ("Sunnica") to the Secretary of State for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy ("Secretary of State") for a Development Consent Order ("the Order") under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 ("PA 2008").
- 1.1.2 The Order, if granted, would authorise Sunnica to construct, operate (including maintain) and decommission a ground mounted solar farm across Sunnica East Site A, Sunnica East Site B and Sunnica West Site A. The Scheme includes the following key components:
 - a. Solar PV modules;
 - b. PV module mounting structures;
 - c. Inverters;
 - d. Transformers;
 - e. Switchgear;
 - f. Onsite cabling (including high and low voltage cabling) and cabling between the Sites and to the Burwell National Grid Substation;
 - g. One or more BESS (expected to be formed of lithium ion batteries storing electrical energy) on Sunnica East Site A, Sunnica East Site B, and Sunnica West Site A;
 - An electrical compound comprising a substation and control building (Sunnica East Site A, Sunnica East Site B, and Sunnica West Site A only);
 - Office/warehouse (Sunnica East Site A and Sunnica East Site B only);
 - j. Fencing and security measures;
 - k. Drainage;
 - Internal access roads and car parking;
 - m. Landscaping including habitat creation areas; and
 - n. Construction laydown areas.

1.2 Purpose of the Statement of Commonality

1.2.1 This document provides the Examining Authority (ExA) with an update on the position of each Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) between the Applicant and the interested parties in relation to the Scheme at Deadline



78. This document has been updated since Deadline 6 and will continue to be updated and submitted at the requested deadlines outlined in the Examination timetable for the Scheme 7.

1.3 Structure

- 1.3.1 This Statement of Commonality is structured as follows:
 - a. Section 2: Summary of commonality of each topic covered provides an overview of all topics covered and each stakeholder's position.
 - b. Section 3: Additional commentary for each SoCG submission deadline.

1.4 List of Statements of Common Ground

1.4.1 **Table 1-1** provides the list of SoCGs that have been prepared by the Applicant and the respective stakeholders in accordance with the list as requested by the Examining Authority in their letters issued on 28 June and 31 August 2022.

1.5 Summary of Current Position of SoCG

- 1.5.1 The updated SoCGs submitted alongside this document at Deadline 7-8 reflect the latest positions of the Applicant and stakeholders. For those SoCGs not updated and submitted at Deadline 78, please refer to the SoCGs submitted at Deadlines 2, 4 and 6, 6 and 7, as well as the additional commentary in Section 3.
- 1.5.2 **Table 1-1** provides an overview of the status of each SoCG.



Table 1-1 Status of SoCGs at Deadline 78

Party	Status at Deadline 2	Status at Deadline 4	Status at Deadline 6	Status at Deadline 7	Status at Deadline 8
Joint Local Planning Authorities	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft submitted. Discussions ongoing. Updated draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.		No update since Deadline 6. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	SoCG signed.
Environment Agency	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft submitted. SoCG agreed.	bmitted. SoCG SoCG signed SoCG signed.		SoCG signed.
Natural England	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 6. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	SoCG signed.
Historic England	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	SoCG signed.
National Highways	Draft submitted. SoCG agreed.		SoCG signed	SoCG signed.	SoCG signed.
Suffolk Wildlife Trust	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 6. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	SoCG signed.



Party	Status at Deadline 2	Status at Deadline 4	Status at Deadline 6	Status at Deadline 7	Status at Deadline 8
National Grid Electricity Transmission plc	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft submitted. Discussions ongoing. Updated draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.		No update since Deadline 6. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft SoCG submitted, negotiations ongoing but parties expect to reach agreement soon.
National Grid-Gas Transmission plc	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 6. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft SoCG submitted, negotiations ongoing but parties expect to reach agreement soon.
Chippenham Parish Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Draft submitted as part of the Town and Parish Council Alliance SoCG. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 4. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	See Town and Parish Council Alliance	See Town and Parish Council Alliance
Burwell Parish Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	SoCG signed.	SoCG signed.
Red Lodge Parish Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Draft submitted as part of the Town and Parish Council Alliance SoCG. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 4. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	See Town and Parish Council Alliance	See Town and Parish Council Alliance



Party	Status at Deadline 2	Status at Deadline 4	Status at Deadline 6	Status at Deadline 7	Status at Deadline 8
Fordham Parish Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Draft submitted as part of the Town and Parish Council Alliance SoCG. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 4. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	See Town and Parish Council Alliance	See Town and Parish Council Alliance
Moulton Parish Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	SoCG signed.	SoCG signed.
Freckenham Parish Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Draft submitted as part of the Town and Parish Council Alliance SoCG. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 4. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	See Town and Parish Council Alliance	See Town and Parish Council Alliance
Mildenhall High Town Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Draft submitted as part of the Town and Parish Council Alliance SoCG. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 4. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	See Town and Parish Council Alliance	See Town and Parish Council Alliance
Worlington Parish Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Draft submitted as part of the Town and Parish Council Alliance SoCG. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 4. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	See Town and Parish Council Alliance	See Town and Parish Council Alliance



Party	Status at Deadline 2	Status at Deadline 4	Status at Deadline 6	Status at Deadline 7	Status at Deadline 8
Snailwell Parish Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Draft submitted as part of the Town and Parish Council Alliance SoCG. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 4. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	See Town and Parish Council Alliance	See Town and Parish Council Alliance
Isleham Parish Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Draft submitted as part of the Town and Parish Council Alliance SoCG. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 4. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	See Town and Parish Council Alliance	See Town and Parish Council Alliance
Reach Parish Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Parich Council		See Town and Parish Council Alliance	See Town and Parish Council Alliance
Ministry of Defence	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	SoCG signed.
National Air Traffic Services	Draft submitted. SoCG agreed.		SoCG signed.	SoCG signed.	SoCG signed.
East of England Ambulance Service	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft submitted. SoCG agreed.	SoCG signed. SoCG signed.		SoCG signed.



Party	Status at Deadline 2			Status at Deadline 7	Status at Deadline 8
Say no to Sunnica and Newmarket Horsemen	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing	submitted. submitted. Disc		Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	SoCG signed.
Anglian Water	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing	Updated draft submitted. SoCG agreed.	No update since Deadline 4. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.		SoCG signed.
Kennett Parish Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing	No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing. No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.		No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	SoCG not submitted
Barton Mills Parish Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing	No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Updated draft submitted. Signature pending.		SoCG signed.
Wicken Parish Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing	No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	SoCG not submitted
West Row Parish Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing	No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted.	No update since Deadline 2. Draft not submitted.	See Town and Parish Council Alliance	See Town and Parish Council Alliance



Party	Status at Deadline 2	Status at Deadline 4	Status at Deadline 6	Status at Deadline 7	Status at Deadline 8
		Discussions ongoing.	Discussions ongoing.		
Newmarket Town Council	Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing	Draft submitted as part of the Town and Parish Council Alliance SoCG. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 4. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	See Town and Parish Council Alliance	See Town and Parish Council Alliance
Exning Parish Council		Draft submitted as part of the Town and Parish Council Alliance SoCG. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 4. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	See Town and Parish Council Alliance	See Town and Parish Council Alliance
Town and Parish Council Alliance		Draft submitted. Discussions ongoing.	No update since Deadline 4. Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	Draft not submitted. Discussions ongoing.	SoCG signed.



2 Summary of Commonality of Each Topic Covered

2.1.1 **Table 2-1** presents a summary of commonality at Deadline 68, on each topic discussed between the Applicant and stakeholder using the following colour coding:

Matter agreed
Matter under discussionSome matters not fully resolved or some differences of views remain
Matter not agreed
Topic not relevant to the stakeholder



Table 2-1 Summary of Commonality with each party in relation to each topic covered at Deadline 78

Party	Protected Provisions	Design	Climate	Cultural Heritage	Ecology and Natural Conservation	Flood Risk, Drainage and Water Resources	Landscape and Visual Amenity	Noise and Vibration	Socio-economics and Land Use (including soils)	Transport and Access	Air Quality	Human Health	Glint and Glare	Effect Interactions / Cumulative Effects	Legislation and Policy	Compulsory Acquisition	Draft DCO
Joint Local Planning Authorities																	
Environment Agency																	
Natural England																	
Historic England																	
National Highways																	
Suffolk Wildlife Trust																	
National Grid Electricity Transmission plc																	
National Grid-Gas Transmission plc																	
Burwell Parish Council																	
Moulton Parish Council																	
Ministry of Defence																	
National Air Traffic Services																	
East of England Ambulance Service																	
Say no to Sunnica and Newmarket Horseman																	
Anglian Water																	
Kennett Parish Council																	
Barton Mills Parish Council																	
Wicken Barton Mills Parish Council																	
Town and Parish Council Alliance																	



3 Additional Commentary

3.1 Deadline 2

- 3.1.1 Since issue by the ExA of the letters dated 28 June and 31 August 2022:
 - a. A joint SoCG has been prepared for Cambridgeshire County Council, Suffolk County Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council and West Suffolk Council in line with the joint meetings with the Local Planning Authorities.
 - b. Natural England and Suffolk Wildlife Trust both agreed to enter into separate SoCGs with the Applicant.
 - c. The Newmarket Horsemen Group agreed to enter into a joint SoCG with the Say No To Sunnica Action Group (SNTS).
 - d. RSPB contacted the Applicant and raised that they were not registered as Interested Parties to the Examination so would not be able to act as signatories to an SoCG.
 - e. National Grid SoCG has been split into separate SoCGs for National Grid Electricity Transmission plc and National Grid Gas Transmission plc.
 - f. A number of other parties have come forward requesting input to SoCGs including: Isleham Parish Council, Reach Parish Council, Anglian Water, Kennett Parish Council, Barton Mills Parish Council, Wicken Parish Council, West Row Parish Council and Newmarket Town Council.
- 3.1.2 The following stakeholders had not provided comments on their corresponding SoCGs ahead of Deadline 2:
 - a. Chippenham Parish Council
 - b. Burwell Parish Council
 - c. Red Lodge Parish Council
 - d. Fordham Parish Council
 - e. Freckenham Parish Council
 - f. Mildenhall High Town Council
 - g. Worlington Parish Council
 - h. Snailwell Parish Council
 - i. Isleham Parish Council
 - j. Reach Parish Council
 - k. Ministry of Defence
 - I. SNTS and Newmarket Horseman Group
 - m. Anglian Water
 - n. Kennett Parish Council
 - o. Barton Mills Parish Council
 - p. Wicken Parish Council



q. West Row Parish Council.

3.2 Deadline 4

- 3.2.1 At Deadline 4, the following parties joined to form a Town and Parish Council Alliance, and as such a combined SoCG was produced:
 - a. Chippenham Parish Council
 - b. Red Lodge Parish Council
 - c. Fordham Parish Council
 - d. Freckenham Parish Council
 - e. Mildenhall High Town Council
 - f. Worlington Parish Council
 - g. Snailwell Parish Council
 - h. Isleham Parish Council
 - Newmarket Town Council
 - i. Reach Parish Council
 - k. Exning Parish Council.
- 3.2.2 The SoCGs submitted at Deadline 2 for the following stakeholders had already been agreed and therefore were not resubmitted at Deadline 4:
 - a. National Highways
 - b. National Air Traffic Services
- 3.2.3 The Applicant continued engagement with the following stakeholders, however they had not yet provided comments on the SoCGs submitted at Deadline 2. These SoCGs therefore remained under revision or unchanged and so were not resubmitted at Deadline 4:
 - a. Burwell Parish Council
 - b. Kennett Parish Council
 - c. Moulton Parish Council
 - d. Barton Mills Parish Council
 - e. Wicken Parish Council
 - f. West Row Parish Council
 - g. Say No To Sunnica and Newmarket Horsemen
 - h. Ministry of Defence.

3.3 Deadline 6

- 3.3.1 At Deadline 6, the following SoCGs were finalised and signed by both parties:
 - a. Environment Agency



- b. National Highways
- c. East of England Ambulance Service
- d. National Air Traffic Services
- 3.3.2 Discussions with the Joint Local Planning Authorities, Historic England, Natural England, Suffolk Wildlife Trust, National Grid Electricity Transmission plc and National Grid Gas Transmission plc, Barton Mills Parish Council are ongoing, and the content of these SoCGs will be finalised and signed at Deadline 8.
- 3.3.3 The Applicant continued to engage with the following stakeholders, however changes had not yet been made to the corresponding SoCGs previously submitted. These SoCGs therefore remained under revision or unchanged and were not resubmitted at Deadline 6:
 - a. Burwell Parish Council
 - b. Kennett Parish Council
 - c. Moulton Parish Council
 - d. Wicken Parish Council
 - e. West Row Parish Council
 - f. Parish and Town Council Alliance
 - g. Say No To Sunnica and Newmarket Horsemen
 - h. Ministry of Defence
 - i. Anglian Water

3.4 Deadline 7

- 3.4.1 The following SoCGs were finalised and signed by both parties at Deadline 7:
 - a. Barton Mills Parish Council
 - b. Burwell Parish Council
 - c. Moulton Parish Council
- 3.4.2 Since issuing the draft SoCGs to Kennett Parish Council and Wicken Parish Council on 1st November 2022, the Applicant has had not received a response. The Applicant followed up with the parish councils on the 7th December 2022, 19th January 2023 and most recently on the 22nd February 2023.
- 3.4.3 The Applicant continued to engage with the following stakeholders, however changes had not yet been made to the corresponding SoCGs previously submitted. These SoCGs therefore remained under revision or unchanged and were not resubmitted at Deadline 7:
 - a. Joint Local Planning Authorities
 - b. Natural England
 - c. Suffolk Wildlife Trust
 - d. National Grid Electricity Transmission plc



- e. National Grid-Gas Transmission plc
- Parish and Town Council Alliance
- g. Say No To Sunnica and Newmarket Horsemen
- h. Ministry of Defence
- i. Anglian Water

3.5 Deadline 8

- 3.5.1 The following SoCGs were signed by both parties at Deadline 8:
 - a. Joint Local Planning Authorities
 - b. Natural England
 - c. Historic England
 - d. Suffolk Wildlife Trust
 - e. Ministry of Defence
 - f. Say no to Sunnica and Newmarket Horseman
 - g. Anglian Water
 - h. Town and Parish Council Alliance
- 3.5.2 Kennett Parish Council and Wicken Parish Council SoCGs were not submitted at Deadline 8 due to those parties not responding to the Applicant's requests to engage with the content of the SoCGs.
- 3.5.3 <u>Discussions with National Grid Electricity Transmission plc and National Gas</u>

 <u>Transmission plc are ongoing. The protective provisions are substantively agreed and the Parties are in the late stages of finalising the terms of ancillary matters in order to facilitate the withdrawal of NGET's objection.</u>
- 3.5.4 It is noted that the Joint Local Panning Authorities, Natural England and Historic England SoCGs will also be submitted at a future Examination deadline to close out final positions that remain under discussion. For these SoCGs, the positions remaining 'under discussion' are outlined below in **Table 3-1**:

<u>Table 3-1 List of matters under discussion where SoCGs could not be finalised by</u> **Deadline 8**

<u>Party</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Sub-topic</u>	Matters 'Under Discussion'
Joint Local Planning Authorities	Transport and Access	Assessment - Vehicle occupancy	The LHAs consider that the Applicant should commit to and monitor a mode share equivalent to all staff travelling by car with a 1.5 vehicle occupancy throughout the construction period. This is on the grounds of promoting sustainable transport. The Applicant considers that there is sufficient scope within the approval process for the Final CTMP/TP to ensure that an appropriate mode share target is included to satisfy the LHAs.



<u>Party</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Sub-topic</u>	Matters 'Under Discussion'			
			The Applicant will update the Examining Authority prior to the end of examination on the status of the Vehicle Occupancy.			
		Site Access Proposals	The Applicant and the LHAs have engaged on a number of technical points related to the Site Access Proposals. The Applicant has updated the Plans within Annex C of the Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan and Travel Plan at Deadline 7. Additionally, the Applicant has commissioned a Haulier's review of the AlL routes, which has been shared with the LHAs, and provided indicative layouts for Temporary Traffic Management proposals. Road Safety Audits of key locations are scheduled for 14/03/23, with the LHAs in attendance. This matter remains under discussion, subject to the review of the aforementioned information. The Applicant will update the Examining Authority prior to the end of examination on the status of the Site Accesses.			
		Monitoring, reporting and enforcement of the F-CTMP/TP	In Chapter 13 of the Local Impact Report, the Councils outlined a number of requests in terms of the monitoring, reporting and enforcement of the Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan and Travel Plan. The Applicant has made substantive updates to the Monitoring, Reporting and Enforcement sections within the Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan and Travel Plan submitted at Deadline 7, which the Applicant considers addresses the Councils' comments. This matter remains under discussion subject to the review of the updated F-CTMP. The Applicant will update the Examining Authority prior to the end of examination on the status of the monitoring, reporting and enforcement of the F-CTMP/TP.			
		Side Agreement	Discussions on the Side Agreement are progressing and should be concluded prior to the end of the examination. The Applicant will update the Examining Authority prior to the end of examination on the status of the Side Agreement.			
	Socio- economics	Mitigation – Compensation package for local communities	An Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan has been submitted as part of the DCO Application [APP-268] and updated at Deadline 7. This seeks to secure the potential improvements, mitigation and compensation to local communities that could be implemented as part of the Scheme.			
	<u>\$106</u>	Provision of S106	Discussions on the S106 are progressing and should be concluded prior to the end of the examination. The Applicant will update the Examining Authority prior to the end of examination on the status of the S106.			



<u>Party</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Sub-topic</u>	Matters 'Under Discussion'		
	Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and Permissive Paths	Provision of accessible routes	Discussions are continuing on the provision of permissive routes through the Scheme and potential impacts on users of existing PRoWs, including noise, health etc. The Applicant will update the Examining Authority prior to the end of examination on the status of the PRoWs.		
Natural England	Agricultural land use and Soils	Soil Handling	All soil handling will be subject to a Soil Management Plan that will form part of the CEMP. A Framework CEMP is included in Appendix 16C of the Environmental Statement [REP7-033] which sets out the underlying principles of this plan. Natural England has provided additional comments on this at Deadline 7 [REP7-104] where additional wording and clarification was suggested. Natural England is satisfied that these can be resolved before the end of the examination. The Applicant expects soil handling operations to be confined to April to October inclusive. However, suspension of site works to protect soil will be based on rainfall and soil consistence, not calendar date. Soil excavated from cable trenches will be placed to the side of the cable trench, with a separation of topsoil and subsoils materials maintained. This soil material will be returned to trench immediately following laying of the buried services. Topsoil recovered from areas of access track will be stored in bunds for the duration of the operational development, to be reinstated at decommissioning.		
Historic England	Mitigation	Outline HEMP	The Outline HEMP will be updated to address Historic England's comments outlined in an email received on 8 March 2023.		
National Grid Electricity Transmission plc	Protective provisions	Protective provisions	The protective provisions are substantively agreed and the Parties are in the late stages of finalising the terms of ancillary matters in order to facilitate the withdrawal of NGET's objection. The parties expect to submit a signed final SoCG before the end of Examination.		
National Gas Transmission plc	Protective provisions	Protective provisions	The protective provisions are substantively agreed and the Parties are in the late stages of finalising the terms of ancillary matters in order to facilitate the withdrawal of National Gas Transmission's objection. The parties expect to submit a signed final SoCG before the end of Examination.		