

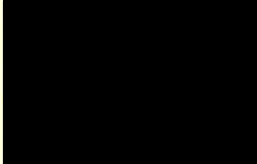
THE RT HON MATT HANCOCK MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Claire Coutinho MP  
Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero



16<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Dear Claire

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to you to express the concerns of the Say No to Sunnica (SNTS) campaign group from my constituency, regarding the Sunnica proposal and the broader issue of security for solar farms. They highlight significant concerns about the potential impact of the proposed development and the need for robust security measures.

Attached with this letter are two documents that shed light on the pressing issue at hand. The first attachment is a DeterTech report, which discusses the exponential increase in thefts from solar farms across the country. The report emphasises the need for high-security fencing and more extensive security features than what has been proposed by Sunnica. These concerns are not only significant to the landscape and visual impact but also raise ecological considerations, such as access routes for wildlife and potential disturbances related to noise and lighting.

The second attachment includes comments from Suffolk police on a different solar application, outlining the in-effectiveness of deer fencing and the need for more robust security measures. The absence of similar comments from Cambridgeshire DOCOs has raised concerns amongst SNTS about the consultation process, and it is vital that these issues are carefully examined.

As we approach the decision date of 7<sup>th</sup> December for the Sunnica proposal, SNTS argues that it is crucial to address these security concerns to ensure the safety of local communities, especially during the construction phase when thefts are known to be common. Moreover, the attached documents show the conflict between the proposed planning policy for solar farms, aiming for minimal landscape impact, and the reality of the need for heightened security.

Lastly, the issue of access for firefighters in the event of emergencies, such as BESS going into thermal runaway or fires at solar sites, requires careful consideration. Striking a balance between high-security measures and ensuring swift access for firefighting efforts is essential for the safety of our community.

Therefore, I ask you to carefully consider the concerns of my constituents and reject the Sunnica application.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to reading your response.

Yours ever



Working for Suffolk

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