

This is an addition to The Jockey Club's previous examination submission (ID 11977) submitted on 08.11.22.

The text below, which appeared in the Racing Post newspaper, written by its Newmarket reporter David Milnes, shows how the solar park application has been covered in the horseracing press and highlights the local concerns about itâ€•.

" Examiners from the Government planning inspectorate recently visited the historic Limekilns training grounds in Newmarket as part of the review into the application by Sunnica to build a 2.500 acre solar farm on its doorstep.

The scheme, which would be the biggest in the country if given the go ahead, is now being reviewed under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) process.

Registered parties are allowed onto the site visits and are also invited to attend the other upcoming Accompanied Site Inspections that are scheduled for November 2nd and 3rd and February 14th 2023.

The first site visit took place at â€œSunnica West Site Bâ€• this month which is adjacent to Chippenham Fen and Fordham, as well as the historic Limekilns and neighbouring Railwayland gallops where champions such as Frankel and Baaeed have been prepared.

Nick Patton, managing director of Jockey Club Estates said: 'We are deeply concerned by the proximity and high visibility of the Sunnica proposal to this sensitive area and the impact it may have on one of our valued landscapes, namely the Limekilns gallops, Racehorses have been trained on these historic and unique gallops for centuries. It is a beautiful, unspoilt setting with the highest quality grass gallops for training racehorses. The spectacle of watching the training of horses on these gallops is an important component of attracting racehorse owners and their investment to the area and it is essential to ensure that the gallops and their historical surroundings are not jeopardised in any way.'

Local Town and Parish councils have rejected the scheme, as have both local MPs Matt Hancock and Lucy Frazer. Cambridgeshire and Suffolk County Councils have also stated that they are unable to support the application.

The Sunnica scheme which would cover the area of 1,400 football pitches, has been in the making for over three years but has met with a huge amount of opposition from the many communities affected by it, despite residents being generally supportive of renewables, including solar. The magnitude of the Sunnica scheme is the issue.

Dr Catherine Judkins, who chairs the Say No to Sunnica Community Action Group, said: 'Residents here are not anti-solar, but over 93% are opposed to the Sunnica plan, At a time of global food insecurity, it is madness to take some of the UK's best vegetable producing land out of production. Not only is this likely to affect the local economy, but it is also likely to add to unnecessary carbon miles due to increased imports. There are many solar farm proposals currently in the pipeline across the UK, with a very large proportion being on productive agricultural land. This unregulated loss of farmland needs to stop.'

On their website Sunnica commented: 'Following the examination, the examining authority will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy as to whether the application should be approved or refused. The Secretary of State will consider that recommendation and make a final decision on whether the application should be granted or not.' "