



SUNNICA ENERGY FARM

EN010106

Draft Statement of Common Ground with Isleham Parish Council

Planning Act 2008

Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010



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**The Infrastructure Planning
(Examination Procedure) Rules 2010**

Sunnica Energy Farm

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

- 1.1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared in respect of the proposed Sunnica Energy Farm Development Consent Order ("the Application") made by Sunnica Limited ("Sunnica") to the Secretary of State for 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, Sunnica West Site A and Sunnica West B. 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);
 - 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;
 - h. An electrical compound comprising a substation and control building (Sunnica East Site A, Sunnica East Site B, and Sunnica West Site A only);
 - i. Burwell National Grid Substation Extension, should Burwell National Grid Substation Extension Option 2 be taken forward;
 - j. Office/warehouse (Sunnica East Site A and Sunnica East Site B only)
 - k. Fencing and security measures;
 - l. Drainage;
 - m. Internal access roads and car parking;
 - n. Landscaping including habitat creation areas; and
 - o. Construction laydown areas.
- 1.1.3 This SoCG does not seek to replicate information which is available elsewhere within the Application documents. All documents are available in the deposit locations and/or the Planning Inspectorate website.

- 1.1.4 This SoCG has been produced to confirm to the Examining Authority (ExA) where agreement has been reached between the parties to it, and where agreement has not (yet) been reached. SoCGs are an established means in the planning process of allowing all parties to identify and so focus on specific issues that may need to be addressed during the examination.

1.2 Parties to this Statement of Common Ground

- 1.2.1 This SoCG has been prepared by (1) Sunnica as the Applicant and (2) Isleham Parish Council.
- 1.2.2 Sunnica is a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) incorporated in December 2013 to construct, operate, and decommission the Sunnica Energy Farm.
- 1.2.3 Isleham Parish Council is an interested party to the Examination of the Application.
- 1.2.4 Collectively Sunnica and Isleham Parish Council are referred to as 'the parties'.

1.3 Terminology

- 1.3.1 In the tables in the Issues chapter of this SoCG:
- a. "Agreed" indicates where the issue has been resolved.
 - b. "Not Agreed" indicates a final position of the parties that is not agreed, and
 - c. "Under discussion" indicates where these points are the subject of on-going discussion wherever possible to resolve, or refine, the extent of disagreement between the parties.
- 1.3.2 It can be taken that any matters not specifically referred to in the Issues chapter of this SoCG are not of material interest or relevance to Isleham Parish Council's representation and therefore have not been considered in this document.

2 Record of Engagement

- 2.1.1 A summary of engagement between Sunnica and Isleham Parish Council in relation to the Application is outlined in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Record of Engagement

Date	Form of engagement	Summary of engagement
29/07/2022	Email from Sunnica	Issue of first draft SoCG.
16/09/2022	Email from Sunnica	Issue of second draft SoCG that summarises the key points and also a request for a meeting to discuss the matters raised.

- 2.1.2 It is agreed that this is an accurate record of the key meetings and consultation undertaken between (1) Sunnica and (2) Isleham Parish Council in relation to the issues addressed in this SoCG as at the date of this revision of the SoCG.

3 Issues

3.1 Matters Agreed

3.1.1 **Table 1** below details the matters agreed with Isleham Parish Council.

Table 2: Matters agreed

Topic	Sub-topic	Details of Matters Agreed
		This draft of the SoCG is being issued in advance of substantive discussions between the Parties. The Applicant's objective is to move matters that can be agreed to this section as discussions proceed between the parties during the examination.

3.2 Matters Under Discussion

3.2.1 **Table 2** below details the matters under discussion with Isleham Parish Council.

Table 3: Matters under discussion

Topic	Sub-topic	Details of Matters Under Discussion
Landscape and Visual Amenity	Scheme location.	Whether or not Sunnica has provided sufficient evidence to support the selection of the Scheme's location considering proximity to adjacent settlements
	Residential views	The effects of the Scheme on residential views
	Landscape character	The effects of the Scheme on the landscape character.
	Visual mitigation	Whether Sunnica has proposed sufficient screening to mitigate the visual effects of the Scheme
	Screening establishment time	Whether the Application has given sufficient consideration to the time required to establish screening associated with the mitigation of the visual effects of the Scheme.
Heritage	Local heritage	The effects of the Scheme on local heritage
	WW2 crash site	The effects of the Scheme on the World War II crash site near the former RAF Snailwell base.
Land Use	Agricultural land and food security	Whether Sunnica's assessment of the effect of the Scheme on best and most versatile agricultural land is in accordance with and compliant with planning policy. What weight should be attributed to food security in the decision making process.
Access	Permissive paths	Whether or not the permissive paths proposed within the Application are sufficient
Location	Scheme location.	Whether or not the Applicant has provided sufficient evidence to support the selection of the Scheme's location
Scale	Scheme size	Whether the scale of the Scheme is acceptable.
Scheme Design	Scheme design	Whether the Applicant has provided sufficient information to justify the chosen design of the Scheme
Cables	Electrical losses	Whether Sunnica has given enough consideration to the electrical losses associated with the length of the grid connection
Human Health	BESS risks to local residents.	Whether or not there is a risk of fire at the battery energy storage system (BESS) and how that is managed.
Watercourses	Lee Brook chalk stream	The effect of the Scheme on Lee Brook Chalk stream
Decommissioning	Recycling of solar panels	Whether or not the Application requires the recycling of solar panels at decommissioning
	Financial bond	Whether or not a financial bond needs to be provided to ensure availability of funds for decommissioning

Topic	Sub-topic	Details of Matters Under Discussion
	Farmland restoration	The timescales associated with decommissioning and compliance with the decommissioning environmental management plan
Construction	Residents	Whether or not the Scheme gives rise to unacceptable effects during construction on local residents
	Local environment	Whether or not the Scheme gives rise to unacceptable effects during construction on the local environment
Socio-economic	Community benefits	Whether or not the Application provides appropriate community benefits.
Habitats	Wildlife habitats and corridors	The effects of the Scheme on wildlife habitats and corridors
Consultation	Adequacy of consultation	Whether or not the consultation undertaken by the Applicant was sufficient

3.3 Matters Not Agreed

3.3.1 **Table 3** below details the matters not agreed with Isleham Parish Council.

Table 4: Matters not agreed

Topic	Sub-topic	Details of Matters Not Agreed
		All matters under section 2.2 remain under discussion and will continue to be discussed during the examination. As such no matters are entered in this section. The Applicant is committed to resolving the issues referred to in section 2.2.