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**To:** [Sunnica Energy Farm](#); [Catherine Judkins](#)  
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From the Isleham Society

- (i) We wish to elaborate on the strong local connection between heritage and landscape specifically in terms of the education of our children and as they apply to a number of specific places
- (ii) We wish to present to the Examiners several issues raised at the Hearings which members attending feel have not been answered satisfactorily.

(i) Education. There are four projects currently underway led by the Isleham Society in full co-operation with the Parish Council and the Primary School. They are:

- (a) recording anecdotes of long term residents with particular reference to how life was fifty or so years ago in an isolated farming community.
- (b) turning the disused telephone box into a 'Tardis type' time capsule of the history of the village
- (c) creating a digital presentation of 20 photos with text spoken by children showing key aspects of the village and which will be used for networking as a 'twinning' outreach to similar sized communities around the world. Now that actual twinning visits has become much more difficult because of Covid, cost inflation, Brexit complications this will be a way of our children connecting with their international peer group
- (d) Isleham has always depended on goods being brought in or exported by natural or man-made waterways.

We are researching these with the intention of jointly creating an information board to be placed where small boats loaded and unloaded from Roman times to the Industrial Revolution.

All of these ambitious projects are designed to engage and educate children but also new people moving in to the village.. We are serious about our landscape not just being a 'nice view' but telling us about the deep rooted heritage which cannot easily be measured or graded.

One of the first events of 2023 is, January 21st, a footpaths walk where we (an all age group of oldies and new comers) discover the virtually undisturbed Roman embankment separating land for crops from unstable wetland, we find where the Saxons dug ditches to keep their cattle penned, where the Benedictine monks fished on Thursdays for their Friday supper, why Temple Road has nothing to do with a temple but everything to do with a rest house for the Knights Templars, how peat diggers and poachers crossed the River Lark and where hundreds, indeed thousands, came to witness full immersion baptisms including that of the great and still revered world wide preacher Charles Spurgeon.

Canals, barges, pubs in front rooms,...

walnuts and flower growing, the airbase and the terrible crash... there is so much to kindle the imagination of our youngsters and enthuse them with a love and respect for what has shaped this place. Yet every scene I mention here is in some way impacted by the Sunnica proposal and so, as an industrial site, becomes more removed, more distanced, from how children can understand the landscape of where they live and identify with their heritage. If there is one point which encapsulates all of this it is from the extraordinary 'Ark' looking towards Worlington and Mildenhall across the site of the dreadful bomber crash, but hold for us open fields and big skies as we think about those who lost their lives so far from their own homes to make it possible for the bomber not to crash on our village.

You, (and thank you Examiners for the extraordinarily difficult but fair minded way) you have heard and assessed so much passion and so much corporate influencing). Tough job.

You may read this while the icy weather is still gripping us all, so here is the Edward Thomas poem which means so much as we walk around and look out...:

'Across the fields, freckled with snow half thawed,  
The speculating rooks at their nests, cawed,  
And saw from elm tops, delicate as flower of grass,  
What we below could not see,  
Winter pass.'

These are our Winter fields which tell a story. We have Spring and Summer and Autumn fields which enrich that story. Don't let them be taken away from us and our children and grandchildren. Please.

(ii) Members who attended the Open sessions report particular concerns that:

- there seems to be serious information from the USA that the batteries can cause fires which are extremely toxic

- Sunnica has not appreciated in a genuine way how much damage will be caused by heavy traffic on narrow country roads

- we are not fully informed about the ownership and financing of Sunnica and that if things go wrong it may be the British tax payer who picks up the bill

- It really is not clear if, how the land can ever be reclaimed for agriculture - the criteria for grading much of the land under consideration is highly disputed and that the company has pulled a fast one by claiming it is less productive than it really is - the Sunnica team make a big thing about solar power being their legislated policy and therefore the Examiners (heavy pressure from Sunnica advocate) have to go along with that ('You must...') - but actually the discussion is much more open than that.

-from the first brochure which showed sheep grazing beneath solar panels in a totally false pastoral idyll Sunnica have tried to create a believable PR lie about the reality of what they will do

Thinking of you three as you chew over all of this needing the wisdom of Solomon to come up with a fair solution! And as someone who has been a teacher and assessor for almost fifty years I really hope you don't have too much anguish as a result of what you eventually agree.

with all good wishes

Mark Fletcher (Chair of the Isleham Society)