

16th January 2026

Dear Planning Inspectorate

Please see below our objection to the latest change request submitted by Pinsent Masons on behalf of Sunnica Ltd (letter dated 13th November 2025).

- 1) This latest proposal adds new land to the Order limits and follows a number of previous changes by Sunnica Ltd. It is being applied for some 16 months post consent.
- 2) This request should be viewed cumulatively with the previous Grid connection and other changes.
- 3) SNTS AG Ltd provides an outline of previous changes to the Grid connection as follows:
 - During initial consultations, several Grid connection options were tabled by Sunnica Ltd which residents did their best to assess the impacts of.
 - Sunnica Ltd then proceeded to change its Grid connection options just before the start of the Examination. This entailed considerable changes to the large substation compounds at Sunnica West Site A, East Site A and East Site B including additional electrical infrastructure culminating in additional environmental impacts.
 - The Examination process began in July 2022, then had to be postponed (including rescheduling hearings) because Sunnica Ltd further delayed submitting their Change Request to the Examining Authority. It eventually resumed in September 2022, with a revised timetable for hearings etc.
 - These additional changes caused considerable stress and confusion to local communities, making it difficult for them to understand and review in a short timeframe, and undermined the impact assessments (Relevant Representations) that they had spent time preparing and submitting based on the application that had been accepted for examination in December 2021.
 - Residents had to re-assess the scheme, accounting for the Grid connection changes, which was unfair and unnecessary had Sunnica Ltd fully engaged with National Grid from an early stage. The associated timetable changes also required residents to reschedule time off work, holidays etc.
 - The application ought to have been withdrawn at that time and re-applied for once the necessary Grid connection had been finalised.
 - Unfortunately, the application was not withdrawn. Instead, Sunnica Ltd continued to 'drip-feed' changes and new information throughout the process.
- 4) You may recall that SNTS AG Ltd had to write a formal complaint to the applicant during the examination about "case-creep" and the unfair approach they were taking, incrementally releasing new information, often obscured within vast volumes of technical submissions with no cross referencing or clarity (letter dated 26th Jan 2023 - see copy attached). This unfair approach put our communities at a disadvantage, making it difficult to respond to the examination, assess impacts, etc in a complete and timely manner. This, in addition to withholding requested information during Examination, which resulted in another complaint letter from us (dated 15th February 2023, copy attached)
- 5) SNTS AG Ltd objects to the further 'drip-feeding' of changes, especially such a long time after consent has been granted, and when the environmental impact assessments and cumulative impact assessments that may have originally been made (and that this new request may have been assessed against), are now well out of date.
- 6) SNTS AG Ltd is particularly concerned that approving this latest incremental change would establish a precedent for further "creeping" amendments to the scheme. Taken together, such incremental

changes provide for a materially different scheme – but with restricted scrutiny and restricted public consultation, which risks circumventing the safeguards of the Planning Act 2008.

7) Alongside the above, SNTS AG Ltd also notes the number of changes to the Grid connection dates, having moved from April 2025, to October 2027 and more recently to 31 October 2030 (according to the TEC register). It could well be delayed further. This adds to the uncertainty felt by our communities. It seems clear that this scheme will make no contribution to the Government's "Clean Power by 2030" target.

8) Indeed, the availability of a grid connection may be beyond the 5-year restriction on commencement of the development meaning that when a connection is available the DCO will no longer be valid. Or the alternative is that Sunnica Ltd commence development in order to comply with the DCO but will be unable to complete.

9) The grid connection, cabling, location, etc. are fundamental to the Sunnica Energy Farm and should have been fully resolved and agreed prior to the application being submitted, and certainly prior to the Examination phase. Allowing the Order limits to be extended in this way post consent undermines the certainty, transparency, and finality that the DCO is intended to provide.

10) Limiting consultees to each of these piecemeal change requests is a further unfair blow to locals who have valid and deep concerns over the Sunnica development. Given the lateness of this request, any newly affected parties may also not have fair opportunity to engage.

11) SNTS AG Ltd is also aware of the latest notification from Companies House in relation to Sunnica Ltd – that they are processing a First Gazette notice for compulsory strike off.

In conclusion, the Sunnica Energy Farm is set to deliver substantial harms to our landscape and heritage assets, wildlife, and local economy, as well as taking land through compulsory acquisition and access rights causing a huge amount of stress and uncertainty for those involved. The harms were well evidenced by multiple Interested Parties during the course of the Examination and resulted in a recommendation by the expert Examining Authority for the scheme to be rejected.

This objection is directed to the Planning Inspectorate and the Secretary of State's planning team. We respectfully request that careful consideration is given to whether the proposed change genuinely meets the legal and policy tests for a non-material change.

And, given that Sunnica Ltd has applied for a non-material change for a Grid connection that is not yet assured, we respectfully request that this change is rejected, or at the very least that a decision on the change should be held back until such time as Sunnica Ltd is able to show that it has a fully consented grid connection and has the necessary funding to start any work.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Catherine Judkins

on behalf of SNTS AG Ltd

Say No To Sunnica Action Group Ltd

15th February 2023

Dear Sirs

SAY NO TO SUNNICA

Sunnica – EN010106

Unique Ref: Nos: 20031080

We are very concerned that matters that have been requested by the ExA or promised by the Applicant, Sunnica, have not to date been submitted. Furthermore, no indication has been given by Sunnica whether it is intended by them that they are to be submitted or not, nor if so when.

It is only fair that we have adequate notice of such matters and given the need for time to be given for consideration and involvement as necessary by our experts, substantial prejudice may be caused if new evidence is to be submitted with inadequate notice. The matters in question are as follows and go to the root of whether the proposed application site is able to be developed for a solar scheme in accordance with government policy or is contrary to such policy.

A. ALC Land Quality

Access to the Sunnica Site to verify the conclusion of the Daniel Baird Soil Consultants (DBSC) report [APP-115] in which DBSC surveyed 924ha of the Sunnica site and found less than 1% Best and Most Versatile land shown on [APP-115 -6.2 page 9 table 5-3]. The ExA will be aware that SNTS has repeatedly put forward extensive evidence by independent experts that disputes not merely the findings but the application by DBSC of standard methodology are flawed.

To date there has been continuing and repeated rejection of ways put forward by SNTS to seek to resolve the matter, including permitting our experts access to the relevant land to carry out their own surveys, and also the suggestion of carrying out a joint survey of the land in question.

In the absence of such agreement to verify the findings of DBSC which our experts have rejected in evidence as being unreliable, not in accordance with guidance and therefore unable to be accepted, we shall invite the ExA to draw inevitable adverse conclusions concerning the adequacy and reliability of the DBSC report on ALC, including drawing attention to the adverse findings of the Planning Inspector in his Report into the Ripon Motorway Service Area where DBSC were responsible for producing the report referred to as the Savills report [REP2-240D P94-98 paras 146 to 177], including the references below. As found there by the inspector, the DBSC approach to justifying a reduction from BMV to Grades 3b and 4 as in the Sunnica case was "largely unconvincing", to use the words of the inspector at Ripon.

Important and relevant answers remain to be given to the following by Sunnica/DBSC:

- a/ Inspection Pits: Why were so few inspection pits dug,
 - why were they not observed or recorded in accordance with Best Practice Guidance set out in the Soil Survey Field handbook,
 - why they were dug in unrepresentative locations,
 - why were no subsoil lab tests carried out, only topsoil,
 - why was a map of pit locations not provided only grid references which had to be reinterpreted,
 - why were no photos of the pits to support assertions taken

We note by way of comment that this is consistent with the Inspector's criticism at the Ripon inquiry of the Savills report [REP2-240d -p96 para 159].

[REP6-051 Appendix 1] shows the unrepresentative locations chosen for the pits on the Sunnica site marked in red, with 3 pits on the headlands of fields, and none on the Grade 2 land shown on the ALC map [REP6-051-App1] , and 2 on areas shown on the ALC map as grade 4 land, the worst quality ALC land on the whole of the application site [See the plan REP6-051 Appendix!] with the pits marked, taken from grid references taken from DBSC evidence [Ref REP6-051 Appx 1 p6 plan red dots and DBSC evidence at APP1 15-6.2 Annex F pp84-86]. The sites chosen for the pits have for whatever reason avoided the BMV grade 2 areas identified on the ALC map. By comparison, ADAS on behalf of MAFF on the area next to the A14 east of the A1 1 (189ha) dug 8 pits.[ReiAPP1 15-6.2-P45]

b/ Why the auger borings are consistently shallower than would be expected given the mapped soils of the area. This is consistent with the Inspector's criticism at the Ripon Inquiry [REP2-240d -p96 para 159, 165,166 and 170]. Please also see below details of work carried out by Sam Franklin.

c/ No details have been given to support the Moisture Balance calculations that were used by DBSC to establish the ALC grading of the site. This is consistent with the Ripon inquiry [REP2-240d-p97 – para's166 to 170] This information was requested by SNTS in August 2022 and commented on by RAC [REP2-240d p137-138 para5.14to 5.17] and referred to in the [additional submission form Sunnica dated 6th December 2022 as requested by Natural England in the form of a Technical Note as the last point in para 3 Socio - economic and land use]. This information is critical to understanding the grading of the land.

d/ No explanation has been given why DBSC has downgraded grade 2 land (70ha found by ADAS next to the A14/A11) [APP115-6.2-P49] by 2 grades to grade 3b, even accepting their argument of a downgrading due to irrigation - which is not accepted as being published current guidance or policy on the Natural England website.

e/ No adequate explanation has been given by the Applicant as to why DBSC's report fails the British Society of Soil Science's Guidelines for a professionally acceptable ALC report, as more particularly set out in [REP4-045]

We refer to efforts made by SNTS to resolve the matters in dispute, which should be able to be achieved by professional experts, if the findings of DBSC are verified on site. Considering the unsatisfactory situation detailed above, SNTS recently for the fourth time asked for access by their experts to the Sunnica site, accompanied by DBSC, to take soil samples initially on Sunnica East A to verify the DBSC report.

Details of this request have been included in AG Wright and Son Farms Ltd's submitted evidence [REP6-051 Appendices 4 to 7]. Access was not granted. Sunnica replied to the letter (copy attached) stating in the final paragraph that 'little can be gained by undertaking a joint survey' which, to say the least, is illogical and can be taken as a clear refusal by Sunnica to co-operate with SNTS and seek to resolve the position. Again, we shall invite the ExA to draw the inevitable adverse conclusion that the DBSC evidence is unreliable, not transparent and has been refused to be verified by a meeting of experts on site.

Further, DBSC has also not responded to repeated requests by Peter Danks of RAC to explain their position on a number of points in the preparation of a Statement of Common Ground on ALC. Such a document is critical to ensuring that the ExA understands the reasons underlying SNTS' rejection of the findings of the baseline study of land quality. It should include the points of agreement and disagreement between the parties but if no explanation is given for a position being taken, little progress can be achieved.

As SNTS and its independent experts were repeatedly denied access to the application site to take samples, and with the end of the examination in sight, SNTS had no option but to obtain further evidence that the report submitted by DBSC is professionally unreliable and needs to be independently reviewed. This has been submitted separately.

SNTS through RAC commissioned Sam Franklin, a Soil Scientist and member of The British Society of Soil Science (credentials attached), to take auger bore samples on the nearest and comparable location to those undertaken by DBSC, on the boundary of Sunnica East Site A on land owned by Cambridgeshire County Council on the 10th February 2023, with the permission of the tenant farmer.

The samples were taken 4 metres from the boundary with Sunnica East Site A by SNTS - Pit 6 shown marked blue in [REP6-051 Appendix1]. The land on the Sunnica site opposite and less than 10m away (DBSC Sample numbers APP115 P.101. LF164) is concluded by DBSC to be Grade 4 with auger boring depths being restricted to 30cms, which SNTS's experts found unreliable and not in accordance with the MAFF 1988 guidance which remains current. Mr Franklin wished to ensure that he had clear verifiable evidence of the way that he took the auger boring and so he made a contemporaneous video. His video and Report (attached) shows boring depths to 75/80cms of a medium clay loam with a porous soft chalk at 80cms. Sand and stone were not a factor. Mr Franklin graded this land as Grade 2.

It is highly irregular to have a three grade difference in ALC grade (from grades 4 to 2 as concluded by DBSC) within such a short distance and therefore in Mr Franklin's opinion this throws the DBSC sample into doubt. If the land on Sunnica East site A is not restricted to a 30cm depth as claimed, Mr Franklin has concluded that it will not be grade 3b or 4 but it will be BMV land grades 3A and 2.

Natural England have been contacted but have declined to meet SNTS's experts as they say that they do not engage with interested parties. They have, however, met with DBSC / Sunnica. A copy of this email has been sent to NE, DBSC and Sunnica. To attempt to resolve this matter concerning the accuracy of auger borings, we ask that the ExA visit the site with SNTS's experts and representatives from DBSC/Sunnica to observe for themselves an auger boring taken in the location of LF164 and the soil depth able to be obtained.

If the DBSC report is unreliable and flawed as SNTS and its independent experts claim, it cannot be concluded that less than 1% BMV of the 924ha site area of the site is BMV land, as concluded by DBSC. It is more likely than not that a substantial part of the site i.e. over 50% is BMV, as the 2017 Natural England predictive BMV land Map indicates [REP2-097 u p3]. If the inevitable adverse conclusion against DBSC and Sunnica is not to be drawn, the ALC matter must be further investigated.

B. Carbon

Cranfield University have requested the explanation and information of the formula used by Sunnica to alter (NB for the third time) their Carbon calculations. These methods of calculation have not been provided to allow the conclusions reached by Sunnica to be confirmed. Again, if not provided, the inevitable adverse conclusion is to be drawn that the conclusions and calculations of Sunnica are unreliable.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Faithfully

[Redacted]
On behalf of SNTS

Say No To Sunnica Action Group Ltd

Badlingham Farm, Chippenham, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 5QQ



26 January 2023

Dear Sirs,

Planning Act 2008 (as amended)

Application by Sunnica Ltd for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Sunnica Energy Farm (the DCO Application)

The Sunnica DCO Examination Process

We are writing to express our concern about your approach to the Sunnica DCO examination. In particular, we regard your approach to the presentation of your case to be damaging to the fairness of the process. We are writing direct to you at this stage to provide an opportunity to remedy this approach.

As you will be aware, it is incumbent on an applicant to put forward its full case at the outset of any DCO examination and to identify the impacts that a proposed scheme will have. The process provides two main ways to do this: (1) a proper environmental impact assessment of all potential impacts; and, (2) a response to matters raised in any consultation. After the application is made, we accept that the process allows for the development of an application in light of the submissions of interested parties. This may include responding to entirely new points. However, the process does not permit 'case creep' whereby an applicant attempts to remedy the inadequacies of the original application at a later stage, nor does it permit a continuous evolution of the application obscured within copious repetition of submissions.

In our view, this examination has been blighted by case creep. There were significant flaws in the original application which you have tried to resolve through a drip-feeding of information. In some cases, that information has been available to you for months and has been disclosed with delay. When new information has been drip-fed in submissions, this is obscured by repetition of extensive parts of your submissions made at an earlier stage. That repetition is often not cross-referenced, and so it is extremely difficult to identify what is in fact new. On some occasions, you have taken multiple unpermitted attempts at responding to submitted documents. We provide in the annex to this letter what we say are examples of this.

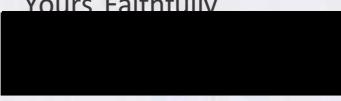
The unfairness of this approach has already significantly impacted upon interested parties. This examination has been foisted upon them; they have not asked for this and they derive

no benefit from the application. The time required of volunteer residents to comb through the thousands of pages you have submitted, including cross-checking repetition and identifying new information, is vast. The expense of engaging experts to respond to examine lengthy repetitious documents, to identify how the case has evolved through the drip-feeding of information and reply, is considerable. These difficulties will also have been faced by the Examining Authority in examining this application. Put simply, this approach is not fair.

The time and expense already lost by this approach cannot be reversed. A proper approach to the original application (based on a careful and thorough consideration of impacts), rather than one where the scheme was developed on the basis of land ownership considerations, would have avoided this loss. However, SNTS invites you to remedy your approach going forwards. You must now set out your final case in full so that interested parties (including their experts) are not faced with a continually evolving case. You must cease to engage in extensive repetition or, in the alternative, cross-reference such repetition. When you provide new information you must identify this. It is only with these steps that there can be a move back towards a level playing field for interested parties.

This letter is copied to the Examining Authority for the Sunnica DCO Examination; any further correspondence on this issue will be provided to them. SNTS will make any submissions it feels necessary as a result of this correspondence in submissions in the examination. We also reserve our position in respect of making an application for costs at the appropriate stage.

Yours Faithfully


Dr C Judkins (Director)

Annex

Example of extensive repetition:

The Applicant's repeats its opinion on the landscape baseline provided in the Environmental Statement - Chapter 10 - Landscape and Visual Amenity **[APP-042]** at:

- Paragraph 2.1.7 of Appendix K to the Applicant's response to the Examiners' First Written Questions **[REP2-038]**.
- Page 156 (final paragraph) of the Applicant's response to SNTS's Written Representations **[REP3A-035]**.
- Page 44 second row first paragraph of the Applicant's response to SNTS Deadline 2, 3, and 3A Submissions **[REP4-036]**.

In our submissions at deadline 6 some of our experts comment on the extent of the repetition that they have experienced in the deadline 4 and deadline 5 submissions.

Example of the drip-feeding of information:

Drip-feeding of information has occurred both in respect of information which was available to the Applicant prior to the submission of the application, and to information responding in a piecemeal fashion to the case advanced by interested parties.

- The submission of appendixes A, I, J, K, L, M of the Applicant's Response to the Examiners First Written Questions at deadline 2 **[REP2-038]** rather than at the outset of the application.
- The submission of appendix A to the Applicant's response to the LPA's Deadline 4 Submissions, which concerns walkover surveys of arable flora undertaken on 5 and 7 September 2022, at deadline 5 **(REPS-057)** rather than when that data became available¹.
- The submission of further information and maps concerning the Chippenham Park RPG at deadline 5 **[REPS-060]** rather than in the heritage assessment as part of the original application.

Example of multiple attempts to respond to submissions:

Multiple attempts to respond to submissions means that interested parties cannot properly understand the case advanced against them and instruct experts in a timely manner. This difficulty is amplified by new information being obscured by repetition of past submissions.

¹ This information was prompted by the early submission of SNTS's report on ecology to Sunnica. This information was promised at deadline 1 but did not materialise. This is documented at appendix 2 (electronic page 81, and more generally) of the ecology report attached to SNTS's Written Representations **[REP2-240e]**

The most pertinent example of this is the applicant's response to SNTS's Written Representations at both deadline 3A **[REP3A-035]** and deadline 4 **[REP4-036J]**.