



Report to	Development & Planning Committee
Subject	Parish Alliance Sunnica Group
Purpose	Information/Decision
Classification	Unrestricted
Meeting date	7th March 2022
Item number	13
Written By	Cathy Whitaker CLERK

Summary: This report outlines information regarding the Parish Council Alliance Sunnica Group and gives information about the costs incurred and forecasted for a Landscape Appraisal.

1.	Introduction
a.	Cllr Andrew Douch of Freckenham Parish Council attended the Full Council meeting on 28/2/22 and spoke about the Sunnica Energy Farm application.
2.	Context
a.	Stage 1 of the Land Appraisal is quoted at £11,500 - £3,000 of which has been contributed by members of the Parish Alliance Sunnica Group to date.
b.	Stage 2, if required, is estimated at £15,000.
3.	Proposal/Options
a.	There are currently no NTC member attendance at the Sunnica Group Parish Council Alliance meetings.
b.	NTC may wish to consider a contribution to costs of the group.
4.	Financial/Resource Implications
a.	There is no budget for the Development & Planning Committee. Funds would need to be vired from other Committee budgets.
5.	Next Steps/Recommendations
a.	Consider member representation for NTC at Parish Council Alliance Sunnica Group meetings going forward.
b.	Await the end result of the current year budget before considering a contribution to the alliance costs.

Townclerk

From: Andrew Douch [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 March 2022 16:35
To: Townclerk
Cc: Councillor Hall; Nick Wright; Fiona Maxwell
Subject: Sunnica - information about whole-scheme Landscape Appraisal for Parish Councils
- Alliance Sunnica Group
Attachments: 1186 F01 Sunnica PVD.pdf

Dear Cathy, thank you for your voicemail earlier.

Please find below information about the whole-scheme Landscape Appraisal being carried out by Michelle Bolger Expert Landscape Consultancy (website [Michelle Bolger](#)) concerning the Sunnica DCO application.

During 2019 the Parish Councils Alliance Sunnica Group discussed the idea of having a Landscape Appraisal covering the whole Sunnica application. This to:

- Use the actual Sunnica plans once they were known. The plans have been published by the Planning Inspectorate [here](#)
- Cover the whole scheme, to avoid situations where changes to the scheme (or mitigation) disadvantage one parish in favour of another.

The Parish Councils Alliance – Sunnica Group (membership Parish Councils affected by the scheme) took up this idea, mainly because the District and County Councils indicated they would not be carrying out similar work. Whatever people's views for or against the scheme, it was agreed that all member parishes wanted the appearance of the scheme to be properly analysed and to push for the best possible appearance (least visual impact), and best mitigation, during the Examination phase. It was felt that if despite the overwhelming opposition to the Scheme did go ahead we would have mitigated its effect as best we could. Which is vital.

The chartered landscape architect Michell Bolger <https://www.michellebolger.com/> is carrying out this work during the current Pre-Examination phase. Michelle will also represent the alliance at hearings during the Examination phase.

Some member Parish Councils have contributed towards the cost of Michelle's work, with contributions currently up to £3k according to ability to pay. Some councils are very small, e.g. Freckenham Parish Council comprises only 165 dwellings and has a correspondingly small precept.

I have attached Michelle Bolger's quotation for this work for your information. The scope of work and costs are shown on page 2 onwards.

Please let me know if you need any further information,

Kind regards
Andrew Douch (Cllr, Freckenham Parish Council)

cc. Nick Wright (Cllr, Chippenham Parish Council)
Fiona Maxwell (Chair, Parish Councils Alliance - Sunnica Group)



Say No To Sunnica
C/o Nick Wright

Via email: [REDACTED]

Ref: 1186 F01 Sunnica PVD.docx
24th March 2020

Dear Nick

Re: Sunnica Photovoltaic Development - Development Consent Order (DCO) Process

Thank you for asking us to provide a fee for providing advice to Say No To Sunnica (SNTS) during the course of the DCO Process with respect to the proposed Sunnica Photovoltaic Development (PVD).

I have reviewed the response by the combined Local Planning Authorities (The Councils) with regard to the Preliminary Environment Information Report (PIER) (Phase 4 consultation) and I have the following comments:

- The Councils have provided a comprehensive response and it is clear that they are being supported by competent landscape planners.
- The Councils have raised issues with the Methodology used and the way the information has been presented (in particular the visualisations).
- The Councils have raised issues with the fundamental landscape suitability of some of the sites chosen.

The degree of criticism expressed by the Councils to the Landscape and Visual Chapter suggests that either there will be significant changes between the PIER and the final ES or there will be substantial objections on behalf of the Councils.

The PIER has undertaken individual assessments for each of the sites/cable runs and then a cumulative assessment at the end. There is potential for this to bury the key assessment – the overall impact of the development – at the end of the document. A key objective of our review would be to bring the overall impact to the fore.

I have also noted that the location of the proposed development across two Local Planning Authorities and across two counties adds to the complexity of the background information.

The PEIR has been produced by AECOM who are a large multi-disciplinary environmental practice who have their own in-house landscape architecture team.

Scope of Work

We have divided the scope of work into two key stages below.

The full extent of work required to support SNTS during the DCO process is not yet known as it is dependent on the Inspectors appointed to examine the application, known as the Examining Authority (ExA) and Sunnica. It is not possible to know at this stage how much new material Sunnica might produce as the DCO proceeds or the degree to which they will respond to issues raised by the Councils and other interested parties. We have therefore outlined what we anticipate may be required for the second stage and provided an indicative cost with daily rates.

Stage 1:

Assessment of the Landscape and Visual Effects of the development; and
Review of the submitted LVIA Chapter

The Councils have generally confined themselves to commenting on the material received. We consider that it is important to present an alternative assessment of landscape and visual effects that focuses on the areas of importance. It is our experience that the comprehensive nature of the assessments required for the DCO process means that significant effects get lost amongst dozens of 'negligible effects'.

This work would commence once the DCO application had been submitted.

- Site visit
- Review of relevant landscape policies, national, county and local landscape character assessments, and landscape strategies that have been prepared for the area
- Prepare our own assessment of the landscape baseline for the sites
- Prepare our own assessment of the landscape and visual impacts of the development with a particular emphasis on areas close to village
- Focus on the overall impact of the development as a whole and on significant effects.
- Review of the quality and adequacy of the LVIA, including if the methodology is compliant with best practice guidance, chiefly the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 2013* (GLVIA3) and *Visual Representations of Development Proposals (Technical Guidance Note 06/19)* or subsequent advice notes issued by the Landscape Institute.
- Prepare a formal written report for submission to the DCO Hearings which would describe the likely landscape and visual impacts of the development and any relevant comments on the submitted LVIA.
- We would prepare Figures and Appendices to support our written report.

Cost

£11,500

Stage 2. The DCO Examination process

Responding to questions asked by the Examining Authority

Once the DCO application has been validated the Inspectors appointed to examine the application, known as the Examining Authority (ExA), will issue a series of questions, some of which will be in response to issues raised by third parties. The extent of the questions will depend on how comprehensive the ExA feel the application is, and whether Sunnica has addressed the issues/objections raised by the Councils and other statutory consultees. The following will be required:

- Review of submissions on landscape and visual issues by other consultees, in particular the LPA.
- Review of ExA questions.
- Contribute to the written response to ExA questions submitted by SNTS
- Continued liaison with SNTS.
- Review of revisions to the scheme and mitigation measures by Sunnica
- Review of revisions to the assessment by Sunnica.

The extent of the work that would be required at this stage is dependent on how the DCO proceeds. For example, the ExA is likely to issue a series of questions depending on the answers they receive. It is our experience that the promoters issue revisions to the scheme during the course of the DCO examination and revisions to mitigation measure to try and address issues raised. Following this they revise their assessments. These will need to be reviewed.

It is not possible to know how many 'rounds' of questions there will be or how many changes Sunnica may make.

Attending the Examination Hearings

The ExA will hold Issue Specific Hearings (ISH). Landscape and Visual matters are likely to be one of the specific issues. However, given the nature of the scheme it is possible that the ExA might also (or instead) hold locationally specific Hearings, i.e consider all the issues (landscape, cultural heritage, drainage, transport etc) for one of the sites at one Hearing. The ExA may use the questions already issued to structure the Hearing but they are more likely to set an Agenda of issues to be considered for each day. A meeting in advance of the Hearing is advisable to agree approach / strategy. The ExA may ask for a post hearing note that encapsulates the discussion. The following work will be required:

- Continued liaison with SNTS including a meeting.
- Prepare for and attend Hearing(s).
- Prepare post hearing note(s).
- Attend Inspectors' site visit

The EXA will undertake a number of site visits before and after the Hearings. Assuming it is allowed, you may wish us to attend one or more of the site visits.

Assumptions

The following assumptions have been made:

- All reports would be issued electronically. Hard copies can be provided on request and would be charged at cost.
- Our review would examine the contribution of archaeological and cultural heritage assets to the character and value of the landscape. However, it would not address the significance of individual heritage assets or any harm to their heritage significance.
- Hard copies of the Photomontages will be necessary. It may be possible for you to obtain a copy from one of the Parish Councils. If necessary, we would organize hard copies to be printed which would be charged at cost - likely to be in the region of £300-400

The above work (Stage 2) would be charged on a time and expenses basis based on the following daily rates:

Michelle Bolger CMLI - £950/day

John Jeffcock CMLI- £640/day

Klara Sokolova - £450/day

Daily rates for attendance at Hearings for Michelle Bolger is £1,200/day.

We anticipate that the work involved at Stage 2 would be in the region of £15,000 which would represent approximately 10 days work by Michelle Bolger and 10 days support by John Jeffcock or Klara Sokolova. We would keep SNTS informed of the spend through monthly invoices.

Payment Terms and Conditions

The fee quoted is exclusive of VAT and expenses. Mileage is charged at 55p/mile and any other expenses are charged at cost and would be listed on our invoices. Our Conditions of Appointment are attached.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Bolger'.

Michelle Bolger CMLI

Townclerk

From: Charlotte Williams <charlotte.williams@quod.com>
Sent: 02 March 2022 09:45
To: Townclerk
Subject: RE: Proposed Development at Studlands Retail Park, Newmarket

Dear Cathy,

I hope you're well.

Thank you again for arranging the presentation I gave to Members on 7th February 2022. We are close to submitting the planning application to West Suffolk Council for the proposed drive-thru unit at Studlands Retail Park and as per my email dated 10th February, I wanted to provide members with a summary of the Transport Assessment (TA) before the application is formally submitted.

The main points of the TA can be summarised as follows:

- The majority of proposed trips on the highway network are anticipated to be secondary trips. This is based on up-to-date survey information.
- A capacity assessment has been undertaken which demonstrates that the proposed development would not impact the operation of the local highway network.
- The proposed development would result in a net loss of 32 car parking spaces. To confirm, these are standard car parking spaces. No accessible spaces will be lost as a result of the proposed development.
- A parking survey has been undertaken and confirms that the proposed development will not impact the availability of parking under normal trading conditions.
- A total of 2 cycle parking spaces will be provided as part of the proposed development.
- The pedestrian footpath which currently runs part way through the car park will be extended to the footway on Oaks Drive.

Members also requested a breakdown of full-time and part-time jobs. I can confirm that a total of 11 no. full-time equivalent jobs are proposed. I cannot currently provide a breakdown of part-time / full-time as this will be dependent on the operator's requirements.

If you or any of your members have any further queries then please do not hesitate to get in contact.

Kind Regards,
Charlotte



Charlotte Williams
Senior Planner
07841 342 024
www.quod.com

From: Charlotte Williams
Sent: 10 February 2022 16:00
To: Townclerk <Townclerk@newmarket.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Proposed Development at Studlands Retail Park, Newmarket

Hi Cathy,

I hope you're well.