



## Welcome

Welcome to our public consultation on our proposals for a 208-acre (84 acre) solar farm on land at Stone Cottages. The site is east of Botesdale, west of Wortham and north-west of Burgate Little Green.

Please take the time to read the information displayed here today, and when you are ready to let us know what you think, please fill in a feedback form and post it in the feedback box provided.

Members of the project team are available to tell you more about the proposals, answer any questions you may have, and listen to any feedback.



## About Us

Regener8 Power Ltd is a British based clean energy development company.

Our vision is to help power the country towards more reliable, affordable, and clean energy through innovative schemes, which do more than just create clean energy, they also benefit the local community.

Founded in 2018, we focus on the development of high-quality solar and energy storage projects. Regener8 have around 50 projects in development across the UK, Italy and Poland.

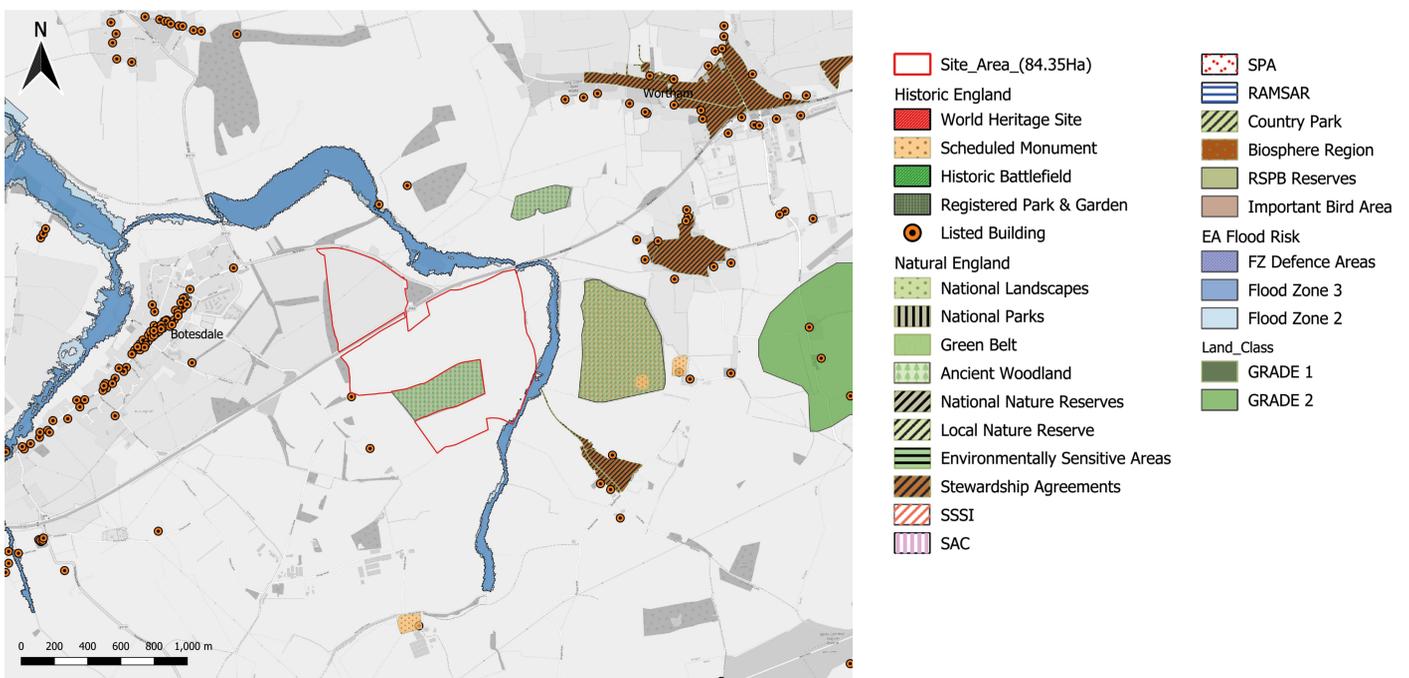


🌐 [Regener8Consultations.co.uk/StoneCottages](https://www.Regener8Consultations.co.uk/StoneCottages)  
✉ [StoneCottages@Regener8Consultations.co.uk](mailto:StoneCottages@Regener8Consultations.co.uk)



## The Site

The 208-acre (84 hectare) site is on land at Stone Cottages. The site is east of Botesdale, west of Wortham, and north-west of Burgate Little Green.



In 2019, Mid Suffolk District Council recognised and declared a climate emergency, making a commitment to look for ways that can reduce greenhouse gas emissions - and support Suffolk's aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

The Council hopes that their commitment will:

- 'take the lead in responding to the challenge of climate change and protecting and enhancing our natural and historic environments' and
- 'leave a positive legacy for our children and grandchildren'

Regener8 has a rigorous site selection process, and this site was rated highly in the following key areas:

- Close to a grid connection point that has capacity for renewable energy
- Visually discreet and well-screened from residential areas
- On low-grade agricultural land, the site is classified as grade 3
- Good access for construction vehicles
- Is categorised as Flood Zone 1, which is the lowest risk





## Our Proposals



### Site Layout

The photovoltaic (PV) panels will not exceed 3m in height from existing ground level.

 Site Boundary	 Existing contours	 Existing Ditches	 Proposed vegetated buffer
 Public Right of Way (footpath)	 Existing retained trees and field boundary hedgerows. Those shown within the site boundaries are to be retained and brought into long term management	 Suggested Vehicular access point (Primary)	 Proposed tree planting
 Public Right of Way (byway open to all traffic)	 Ancient Monument	 Suggested Vehicular access point (Secondary/emergency)	 Ecological connectivity to the surrounding
 Public Right of Way (bridleway)	 Existing Pond	 Proposed area to be developed	 250m ecological buffer zone
 Listed buildings		 Proposed area of wildflower seeded underneath solar panels	 Opening in existing hedge to allow access and movement
 Existing contours		 Indicative location of proposed access track	 Proposed area for 32kv substation
			 Proposed hedgerows to be enhanced

Solar panels are connected in strings that feed into inverters.

The inverters collect the energy generated and transmit it to the National Grid infrastructure.

We are also proposing a suite of measures to enhance the local environment including the planting of wildflower meadows on the site and provision of new habitats for wildlife.

## Highways, Construction & Maintenance

All deliveries for the solar farm would be from the A143 (Bury Road).

Construction would take 6 to 12 months, and we would minimise disruption through measures such as restricting deliveries during rush hours and agreeing a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

Once operational, the scheme will require minimal maintenance, which will likely take the form of occasional visits in a passenger vehicle.

The solar farm has a lifespan of up to 55 years, after which the solar farm will be decommissioned. The land would then be returned to its original state. Around 95% of the materials in solar panels is recyclable.





## Benefits

Solar power is an excellent way of generating renewable energy

- ▣ Quicker to build than other energy sources
- ▣ Provides the “cheapest... electricity in history” according to International Energy Agency<sup>1</sup>, helping to drive down energy bills
- ▣ Helps improve the local environment by allowing intensively farmed land to rest, allowing soil to recover, and delivers biodiversity improvements

<sup>1</sup> World Energy Outlook 2020, International Energy Agency

### Key benefits include:



The development would **supply clean energy** into the National Grid.



**Landscape and views will be protected**, with the retention and enhancement of existing hedgerows through ‘gapping up’ and new tree planting in strategic locations.



The **displacement of thousands of tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>** from equivalent fossil fuel energy.



**A community benefit fund will be provided.** As part of the consultation, we want your input on how this can best be managed and directed.



**Considerable biodiversity net gain**, providing ecological benefits through new habitats, such as wildflower meadows, grassland areas, new hedgerows and tree planting.



**Agricultural use of the site would still be possible, in the form of sheep grazing.**



**Business rate contributions** to the Council, which can be spent on services, facilities, and infrastructure.





## Opportunities & Considerations

The benefits of solar energy are significant, but it is important that it is done right.

We must ensure that this development works with the existing landscape, that we are able to maximise any opportunities for delivering things that the community would like to see, and addresses any concerns raised, as far as possible.

Things we are taking into consideration for this scheme include:

- Topography of the site
- Surface water drainage
- Visual impact
- Existing planting
- Local biodiversity and ecology
- Construction and access
- Agricultural Land Classification
- Consultation feedback
- Heritage
- Noise impact

### Agricultural Use

Provisional Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) mapping indicates the land is grade 3. This means that the land is broadly 'moderate' to 'low' grade agricultural land.

A detailed ALC assessment will be undertaken and submitted with the application.

Alongside the solar panels, we are proposing a suite of measures to enhance the local environment, including the planting of wildflower grassland, tree planting and additional hedgerow connections.

This will enhance wildlife corridors across the site, providing new habitats for a variety of species.



Hosting solar farms allows farmers to find new revenue, helping British farming to continue.

There will be the ability to continue food production through sheep grazing on the site.

Over time, these measures combined with a reduction in intensive farming practices can improve soil structure, increase carbon sequestration, and support beneficial microorganisms within the soil.





## Landscape & Ecology

Not only are we facing a climate crisis, but we are also facing an ecological emergency. The two are intrinsically linked. This development offers a unique opportunity to significantly improve the biodiversity of the land.

Details of our proposal to improve local habitats are still being developed. We welcome your thoughts on what you would and wouldn't like to see.

Our plans to achieve considerable biodiversity net gain include:



**Wildlife habitat features**, encouraging bats, birds and reptiles resulting in a significant biodiversity net gain



**Soil erosion mitigation**, which will enable the land to rest and recover from years of intensive farming



**Flood attenuation**, to improve the land's ability to hold water and enhance drainage



**Community engagement**, to understand the community's views on local wildlife and environment



**Pollinator features**, such as wild flower meadows and hedgerows, to improve biodiversity



**Carbon storage**, to help address climate change





## FAQs

### **Do solar farm developments consider the landscape?**

Yes, we have carefully considered the location of this site to minimise visual impact and effect on the landscape.

This also includes measures such as new planting, and how we can restore traditional meadows and hedgerows.

The height of the solar panels will be no greater than 3 metres above ground level. This is roughly the same height as a mature hedgerow.

Our landscape plans include planting new hedgerows, tree planting, and new wildflower meadows. These measures will provide ecological benefit as well as screening views of the site.

We welcome your views on the landscaping you would like to see delivered on the scheme. We will, wherever possible, adapt our approach to best meet the needs of your community.

### **Will there be disturbance during construction?**

It is very difficult to avoid disturbance during construction, but our team is highly experienced, and we will do all we can to minimise disruption.

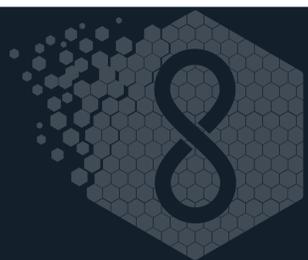
We will agree a formal Construction Management and Ecology Plan with the Council. This will cover the construction and delivery route, delivery and working times and road conditions, e.g. management of mud on the road.

Should planning be granted, we would commit to liaising with local councillors and residents to further help this.

### **Why are most solar farms built on agricultural land?**

Solar is one of the cheapest forms energy and is vital in helping tackle both the climate and cost of living crisis. This cannot be achieved through rooftop and brownfield solar installations alone. We have conducted searches for suitable brownfield sites in the area but none have been identified.

According to National Grid, the UK's energy demand is set to double by 2050, and it is important to ensure there is enough supply to meet that demand.



## Community Contributions

In addition to helping the UK meet its net-zero targets, we believe it is important that the local community also benefit from this development.

### Provision of a community benefit fund

To ensure the local community gets the most out of this development we will make a significant financial contribution to the community.

As well as our community benefit, the scheme will pay business rates every year to the Council, which can be spent on local services and infrastructure.

We are keen to know your priorities and welcome any suggestions you may have for suitable projects to fund.

Examples of how the fund has been distributed through other schemes include:

- rooftop solar for community buildings or schools
- sustainable initiatives
- new community facilities or maintenance of existing one
- helping with local energy or food poverty

Have an idea for what community benefit could be spent on? We would love to hear from you.





## Feedback & Next Steps

**Thank you** for coming to our public consultation today.

Your feedback will be used to help improve our plans, please do complete a feedback form and put it in the box provided. After consultation, we will consider every comment received before we finalise our plans. We intend to submit a planning application in May 2025.

**Our public consultation is open until Monday 21st April.**

You can also leave feedback on our website by visiting:

**[regener8.solar/StoneCottages](https://regener8.solar/StoneCottages)**

Copies of the banners you have seen today will also be available on the website.

### Get in Touch

 **StoneCottages@regener8.solar**

 **Freephone 0800 689 5209**  
(working hours)

 **Write to us at Freepost  
CONSULTATION REPLY**

(If you write this address on an envelope and put it in any post box, it will come to our office, no stamp required)

### Indicative Timeline

-  **7th April 2025**  
Public Consultation
-  **21st April 2025**  
Close of consultation window
-  **April/May 2025**  
Review feedback, project design amended and finalised
-  **May 2025**  
Submission of planning application to Mid Suffolk District Council
-  **Summer 2025 Onwards**  
Local Planning Authority will consider the application and decide whether to grant planning permission
-  **November 2025**  
Anticipated decision timeframe 6 months from date of submission
-  **November 2026**  
Procurement stage 6-12 months following decision

