Welcome

Welcome to our public consultation on our proposals for a 26MW, 108-acre solar farm, on land at Wilsons Road, Longstanton, Cambridgeshire.

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 ballot box provided.

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

About Us

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

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

Founded in 2018, we focus on the development of high-quality solar, storage, and . At the moment we have almost 50 projects across the UK, Italy Poland and New Zealand.

www.wilsonsroadsolarfarm.co.uk
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The Site

The 108 acre, 43.9 hectare site is on land at Wilson's Road, Longstanton, south of Longstanton village, west of Oakington, and north-east of Bar Hill.

In 2019, South Cambridgeshire Council declared a climate emergency and committed to becoming a Net Zero district by 2050.

They subsequently agreed a Zero Carbon Strategy, which aims to halve emissions in the area by 2030.

At the same time, they agreed a Doubling Nature Strategy, which seeks to increase the number of wildlife-rich habitats and improve people's access to green spaces.

As part of the Council's consultation on its Local Plan, they note that "Feedback included that we should support renewable energy production, use and investment."

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

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

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REGENER8 POWER

Benefits

Solar power is an excellent way of generating renewable energy, as it:

- Builds out quicker than other energy sources such as nuclear
- Provides the “cheapest… electricity in history” according to International Energy Agency[1], helping to drive down energy bills
- Helps improve the local environment by allowing intensively farmed land to rest, helping soil to recover, as well as delivering biodiversity improvements

[1] World Energy Outlook 2020, International Energy Agency

The 26MW development would **supply clean energy** (equivalent to the amount used by approx. 8,220 homes a year) into the National Grid.

Business rate contributions to South Cambridgeshire Council of approx. £52k per year, which can be spent on services, facilities, and infrastructure.

The **displacement of over 6,890 tonnes of CO_2** from equivalent fossil fuel energy. This equates to taking circa 3,280 cars off Cambridgeshire’s roads per year.

Landscape and views will be protected with the retention and enhancement of existing hedgerows through ‘gapping up’ and new tree planting at key places.

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

A community benefit fund will be provided. Part of the consultation is to discuss how this can best be managed and directed.

The site would have the ability to continue agricultural use in the form of sheep grazing.

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Opportunities & Constraints

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

We must ensure that our development works with what is there on the land, and 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. The plan below shows our thinking, and we would welcome your thoughts.

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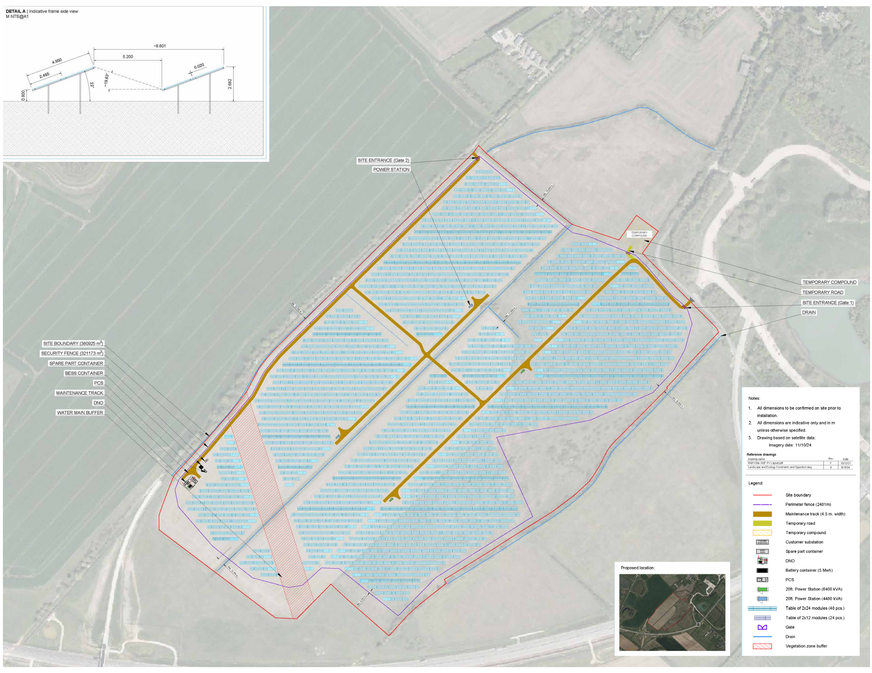

Wilson’s Road Solar Farm

Site Layout

The photovoltaic (PV) panels here would be up to 3m high, connected in strings that feed into an inverter to collect the energy generated and transport it to the substation.

Highways, Construction & Ongoing Maintenance

Access for construction and maintenance vehicles would be from the new Northstowe Road to the south of the site. Wilson’s Road is only proposed to be used for emergency access.

Construction would take 6 to 12 months and we’d try to minimise disruption through measures such as restricting deliveries during rush hours and conditioned through a Construction Management Plan. At peak, there would be a maximum of 10 deliveries a day.

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

The application seeks planning permission for 35 years at which point it would be returned to how it looks today. Around 95% of the materials in solar panels are recyclable.

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Agricultural Use

An agricultural land grade assessment has concluded that the land is all grade 3b, indicating it is not ‘best and most versatile’ land. This means that the land is broadly ‘moderate’ to ‘low’ grade agricultural land.

Alongside the 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 wildlife such as bats, certain bird species, water voles, reptiles and insect pollinators.

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.

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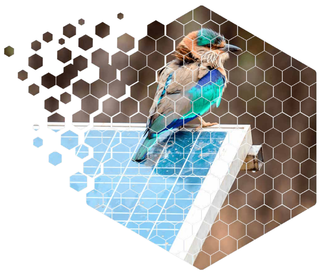
Landscape & Ecology

Not only are we facing a climate crisis, but we are facing an ecological emergency, too, and the two are intrinsically linked. Solar farms offer a unique opportunity to significantly improve the biodiversity of the land.

The exact details of our proposals to improve local habitats are still being developed, but we would welcome your thoughts on what you would and wouldn't like to see.



Our plans to achieve a considerable biodiversity net gain include:

- **Wildlife habitat features**, encouraging bats, birds and reptiles resulting in a significant biodiversity net gain
- **Carbon storage**, to help address climate change
- **Pollinator features**, to help improve biodiversity
- **Soil erosion mitigation**, which will help the land rest and recovery from years of intensive farming
- **Community engagement**, to understand the community's views on local wildlife and environment
- **Flood attenuation**, to help the land hold water better and improve drainage

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FAQs

Do solar farm developments consider the landscape?

Yes, we have carefully considered where best the panels should sit to minimise visual impact and impact on the landscape. This also includes measures such as new planting, and how we can restore traditional meadows and hedgerows. The maximum height of the panels is 3 metres, which is roughly the same height as a mature hedgerow.

Our landscape plans include planting new hedgerows, tree planting, new foraging areas for wildflower meadows, all of which will provide ecological benefit alongside screening views of the site.

We would appreciate hearing your views on this as well.

Will there be disturbance during construction?

It is very difficult to avoid disturbance during construction, but our team are 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, which will cover the construction and delivery route, delivery and working times and road conditions, e.g. mud on the road.

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

Why are most solar farms built on agricultural land?

Solar is one of the cheapest forms of clean renewable 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, due to the need for scale and rooftop solar being much more expensive. We have looked to see if there are any suitable brownfield sites in the area but there are none in this area.

Greater Cambridge's electricity demand is set to triple by 2031[1], and it is important to ensure there is enough supply to meet that demand.

[1] "Cambridge – the fragile energy situation underpinning the UK's science and research capital", KAO Data

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Community Contributions

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

Provision of a community benefit fund

We believe that the local community should benefit from this development and to support this, we will make an annual financial contribution to the community.

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:

As well as our community benefit, the scheme will pay an estimated £52k per year in business rates, which can be spent on local services and infrastructure.

- rooftop solar for community buildings or schools
- new community facilities or maintenance of existing one
- sustainable initiatives
- 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.

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Feedback & Next Steps

Thank you for coming to our public consultation today.

Your feedback will be used to help improve our plans, so please do complete a feedback form and put it in the feedback box provided. Following this consultation, we will consider every comment made before we finalise our plans and submit a planning application in the early part of 2025.

Our public consultation is open until Friday 10th January.

You can leave feedback via the online feedback form on our website:

wilsonsroadsolarfarm.co.uk

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

Get in Touch

info@wilsonsroadsolarfarm.co.uk

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

18th December 2024
Public Consultation

10th January 2025
Close of consultation window

Early 2025
Review of feedback, proposals amended and finalised

Early 2025
Submission of planning application to South Cambridgeshire District Council

Throughout 2025
Council will consider our application and decide whether to grant planning permission, we estimate this will take at least 6 months

Early 2026
If planning permission is granted, construction will take 6 – 12 months to complete. The scheme will be generating clean energy by 2027