

Stargoose Solar  
Energy Farm,  
Childerley,  
South Cambridgeshire

Statement of Community  
Involvement

Prepared for Solarcentury  
March 2021

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) outlines the pre-application public consultation activity undertaken by Solarcentury (the Applicant) prior to the submission of a planning application for:

***Installation of a renewable energy led generating station comprising of ground-mounted solar arrays, associated electricity generation infrastructure and other ancillary infrastructure comprising of storage containers, access tracks, fencing, gates and CCTV together with the creation of a woodland, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements***

1.2 The current social distancing measures have prevented the Applicant from holding face-to-face consultation events. As a result, the Applicant opted to undertake a digital consultation so that the local community had a chance to view the preliminary plans, ask questions and provide feedback in a safe manner.

1.3 The SCI has been written in line with the Greater Cambridge Statement of Community Involvement (July 2019), the Revised National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and the Localism Act (2011) to ensure that local people are at the heart of the planning system.

1.4 This Statement forms part of a portfolio of documents submitted as part of the planning application for the scheme.

## 2. CONSULTATION POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 The consultation programme was undertaken at the pre-application stage. It has been carried out in accordance with Section 122 of the Localism Act 2011, which requires developers to carry out pre-application consultation with local communities.

2.2 The consultation programme was also carried out in accordance with the Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019, which encourages early and proactive community engagement.

Paragraph 128 of the NPPF 2019 states that:

*“Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.”*

2.3 Additionally, it follows the guidelines of the Greater Cambridge Statement of Community Involvement, which sets out the importance of involving statutory bodies and the community in pre-application consultations and planning applications. Section 4.4 of the SCI states:

*“Both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Council encourage applicants to carry out early engagement with the LPA and the local community before submitting a planning application. Early discussion of a proposal in the form of a pre-application with the council can:*

- *Verify the information required to be submitted with the application;*
- *Reduce the likelihood of submitting invalid applications;*
- *Help the applicant to understand how planning policies and other requirements may affect their proposal; and*
- *Raise the quality of the development.”*

## 3. CONSULTATION ACTIVITY

3.1 The current social distancing measures have prevented the Applicant from holding face-to-face consultation events. As a result, the Applicant opted to undertake a digital consultation so that the local community had a chance to view the plans, ask questions and provide feedback in a safe manner.

3.2 On 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020, the Applicant sent an introductory letter (Appendix 1) to key stakeholders, informing them that the Applicant was in the early stages of assessing the land and reviewing a previous application for a solar farm on the site that had been refused in 2015. This letter also set out the next steps should the Applicant decide to go ahead with a planning application. The letter was sent to the relevant members of South Cambridgeshire District Council, local parish councils/meetings and the local Member of Parliament:

- Anthony Browne, MP for South Cambridgeshire
- Cllr Bridget Smith, Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Cllr Tumi Hawkins, Cabinet Member for Planning Policy & Delivery and site ward councillor
- Cllr Aidan Van de Weyer, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport
- Childerley Parish Meeting
- Caldecote Parish Council
- Bar Hill Parish Council
- Boxworth Parish Meeting
- Dry Drayton Parish Council
- Lolworth Parish Meeting

3.3 The Applicant then issued an update letter (Appendix 2) to stakeholders on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020, informing them of the submission of the application for a screening opinion. This letter also explained that the purpose of the screening application was to seek an opinion as to whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) would be required for the project.

3.4 On 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020, the Applicant issued a further update letter (Appendix 3) to stakeholders informing them that the screening opinion had been received and the aim was to submit a final planning application in early 2021. The letter also set out some details of the proposals and informed stakeholders of the intention to launch the wider pre-application consultation with the community in January 2021.

3.5 The pre-application public consultation was launched in January 2021 and a letter (Appendix 4) was sent to stakeholders on 15<sup>th</sup> January informing them of this and letting them know how they could engage with the proposals.

3.6 The Applicant issued a consultation leaflet (Appendix 5) to 2,393 addresses within an agreed consultation zone (Appendix 6). The leaflet introduced the proposals and provided details of how to get in touch with the project team should residents have any questions.

3.7 An email address and phone number were also included so that residents could contact the project team to find out more about the proposals.

3.8 The consultation zone covered the settlements immediately surrounding the site to ensure that all neighbouring residents were notified. This included all parishes who commented on the previous plans for the site in 2015, with the additions of Childerley and Caldecote.

3.9 A dedicated project webpage (Appendix 7) was set up on the Applicant's corporate website at <https://www.solarcentury.com/stargoose/>, through which residents were able to view the preliminary proposals for the project, submit feedback and get in touch with the project team.

3.10 The website included a feedback section with six multiple-choice questions and three open feedback questions where residents were able to write more detailed comments.

3.11 The website also included a section on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). The FAQs were updated to incorporate additional questions that had arisen during the pre-application consultation.

3.12 A press release (Appendix 8) was issued in January 2021 announcing the launch of the public consultation and setting out some of the details of the proposals. This was issued to the following media outlets:

- Cambridgeshire Live
- Cambridge Independent
- Cambs Times
- BBC Cambridgeshire

3.13 The release was covered by both Cambridgeshire Live (Appendix 9) and Cambridge Independent (Appendix 10).

3.14 As part of the public consultation, the Applicant provided interviews to local media outlets That's TV East and Cambridge 105 Radio. The interviews provided an opportunity to set out some of the details of the proposals to a wider audience.

3.15 The interview with That's TV East was aired on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021 via the outlet's Freeview channel, whilst the interview with Cambridge 105 Radio was first aired on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

3.16 The Applicant was invited to attend a virtual meeting with Lolworth Parish Meeting on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021. A total of 17 people attended the meeting, which included an initial presentation from Solarcentury followed by a Q&A. The main points of the discussion included:

- The land grade of the proposed site;
- Potential for soil erosion during operation;
- Impact of operational noise on wildlife.

3.17 The Applicant also presented the proposals to Dry Drayton Parish Council at their meeting on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021. The main points of the discussion included:

- Mitigation measures to avoid impacting small mammals and their habitats, including new grassland planting to support biodiversity.
- Site access and construction traffic routes.
- Public consultation timescales and how best to provide feedback.

## 4. FEEDBACK

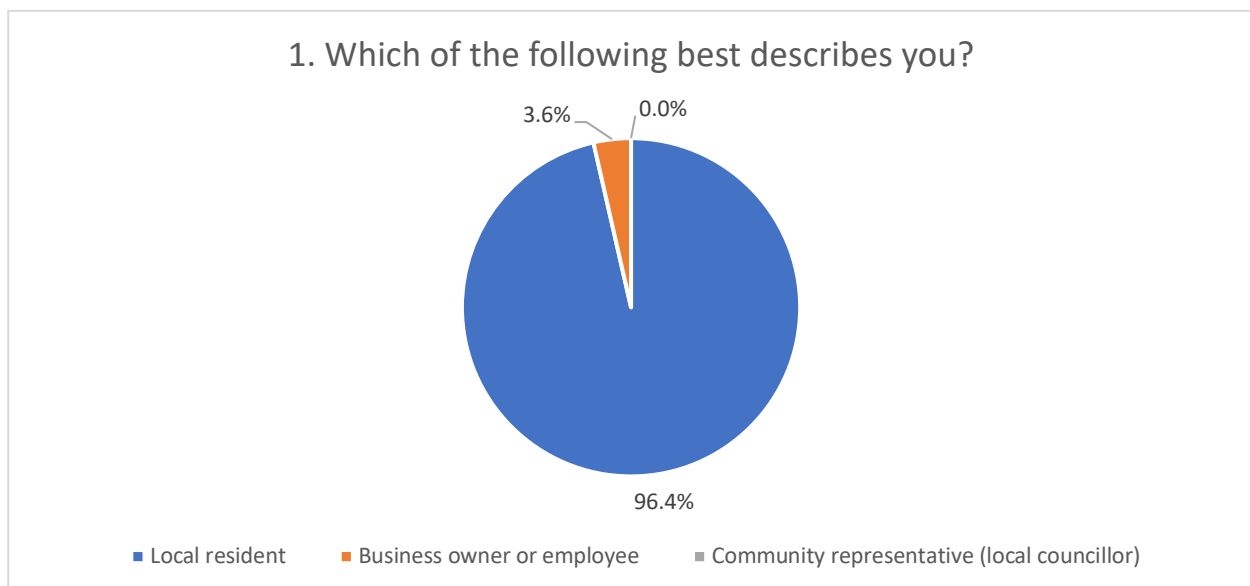
### INTRODUCTION

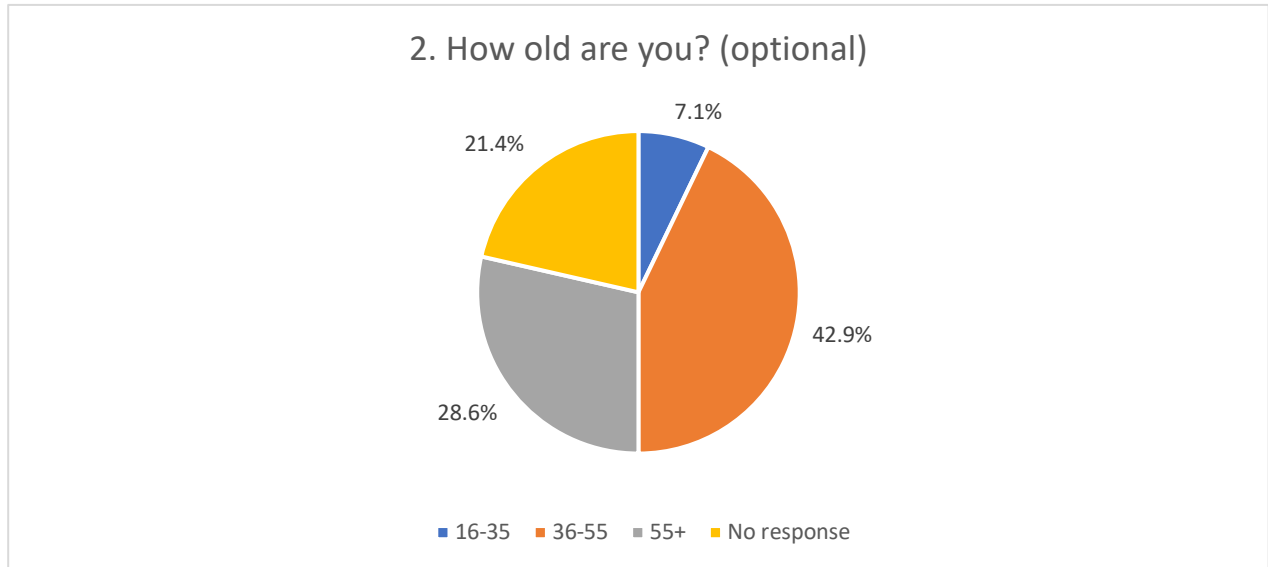
4.1 Local residents were given the opportunity to submit written feedback through the dedicated feedback section on the website, or through getting in touch via phone or email.

### QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

4.2 The feedback form consisted of six multiple-choice questions and three open feedback sections. A total of 28 feedback forms were received over the consultation period.

4.3 Questions 1 and 2 on the form were related to demographics, asking respondents their position in the community and age group. A breakdown of the first two questions can be found below.

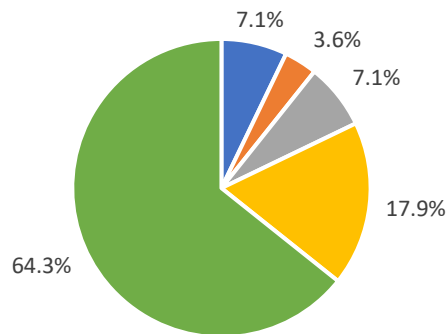




4.4 Questions 3, 4, 5, and 8 were related to respondents' views on the UK's energy generation, the principle of the development, and overall views on the proposals. A breakdown of the responses can be found below.

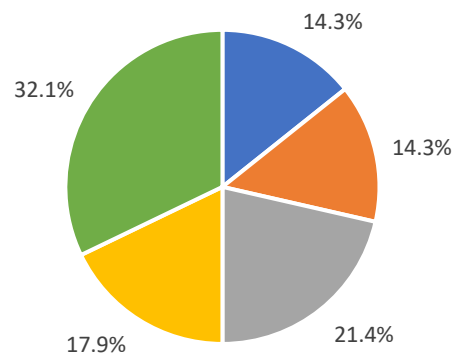
Question	Response				
	1 (Strongly disagree)	2 (Disagree)	3 (Neutral)	4 (Agree)	5 (Strongly agree)
3. Do you agree the UK needs to be generating more energy from renewable sources?	2	1	2	5	18
4. Do you agree the UK should be generating more energy from solar photovoltaic (PV) sources?	4	4	6	5	9
5. Do you agree with the development of a solar farm on land east of Battlegate Road in principle?	9	0	4	6	9
8. What are your overall views of our proposals for a new solar farm on land east of Battlegate Road?	8	1	2	10	7

3. Do you agree the UK needs to be generating more energy from renewable sources?



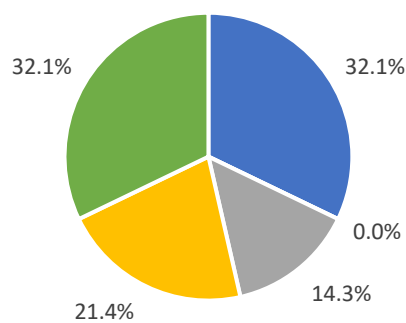
■ 1 (Strongly disagree) ■ 2 (Disagree) ■ 3 (Neutral) ■ 4 (Agree) ■ 5 (Strongly agree)

4. Do you agree the UK should be generating more energy from solar photovoltaic (PV) sources?



■ 1 (Strongly disagree) ■ 2 (Disagree) ■ 3 (Neutral) ■ 4 (Agree) ■ 5 (Strongly agree)

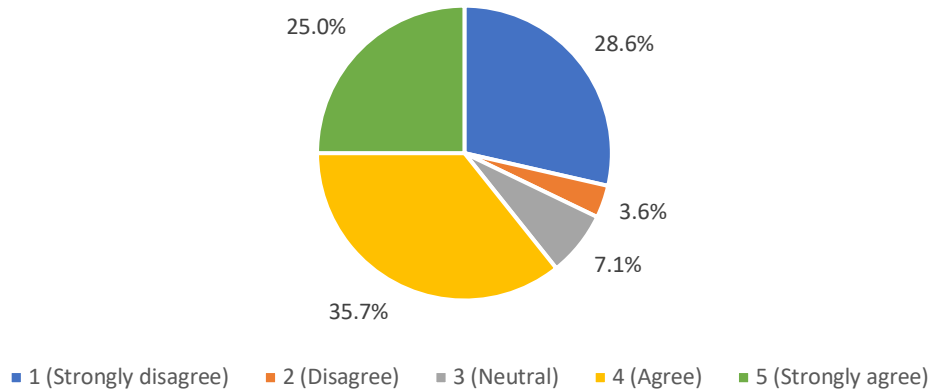
5. Do you agree with the development of a solar farm on land east of Battlegate Road in principle?



■ 1 (Strongly disagree) ■ 2 (Disagree) ■ 3 (Neutral) ■ 4 (Agree) ■ 5 (Strongly agree)



## 8. What are your overall views of our proposals for a new solar farm on land east of Battlegate Road?



### QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

4.5 25 respondents provided further comments (the full list of these comments can be found in Appendix 11). Many comments are supportive of the proposals, praising the prospect of increased renewable energy generation and the potential benefits to the community.

4.6 Other respondents have raised issues surrounding traffic and access, particularly with regards to whether footpaths and bridleways will remain open. Below are some examples of the comments received, broken down thematically.

### TRANSPORT AND ACCESS

4.7 The majority of respondents raised comments surrounding the transport and access aspects of the proposal. Comments included:

- *"I thoroughly concur to the finding that all construction traffic avoid must avoid local villages and minimise disruption to local communities. Access via the current proposal (via Childerley farmyard seems most appropriate)."*
- *"As the disruption will be short-lived, I don't see this as being a big issue. I live in Bar Hill and the A14 construction has taken many years and is much more significant than this solar energy farm construction."*
- *"The access arrangements for site construction traffic from the south appear satisfactory but what will happen about the footpath that traverses the site?"*
- *"This is currently one of the few bridle paths that we can use in this region. The bridle path runs right through the site. Will the path be diverted in a safe manner for horses and will it be safe to use whilst building work is going ahead? Given how busy the roads are and with more walkers out on tracks, it is increasingly important to ensure we have safe off-road riding and that pathways aren't destroyed."*

### ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

4.8 Many respondents raised comments surrounding the ecological and environmental implications of the proposal, particularly regarding the enhancement of biodiversity. Comments included:

- *"I'd be interested in in the local biodiversity and habitat management efforts that will go on assuming the project gets the go ahead."*
- *"If the site could be landscaped in such a way as to encourage the biodiversity of the local wildlife, this would be of great benefit to local residents and all who enjoy the area for recreation."*
- *"I am somewhat on the fence at the moment but would be strongly behind these proposals if they contained more definite and binding promises to enhance the biodiversity of the local environment, including the suggested woodland."*

#### COMMUNITY BENEFIT

4.9 Several respondents raised comments surrounding the potential benefits to the community. Comments included:

- *"Offers of financial support to the local parish councils would be helpful and also arranging visits for local people to better understand the principles and working of a solar farm once established would be another way of engaging local support."*
- *"Will local residents be able to have cheaper power generated from the site?"*
- *"If we have sustainable, reliable, affordable energy we will be very happy. I'm sure the schools and others will be able to make use of this project to educate and inform."*
- *"Keep us up to date - and let us benefit from it too. Discounted energy costs because of being able to take advantage of the local resources would be good, even if it means signing up to a particular company to get this benefit."*

#### EMAIL/PHONE FEEDBACK

4.10 In addition to feedback submitted through the website, the Applicant received emails and calls from a further 21 residents asking about the proposals. Below are some of the questions and comments received, broken down thematically.

#### TRANSPORT AND ACCESS

4.11 Reflecting the feedback submitted through the website, many email respondents raised comments surrounding the transport and access aspects of the proposal. Comments included:

- *"The proposal states that equipment deliveries to the site will be directed through Childerley to avoid traffic going through Boxworth. Will this also be the case for construction workers employed during the construction when arriving and departing in their private cars for the work day?"*
- *"We reiterate that we are supportive of solar energy in general and are prepared to support the planning application for the Stargoose project provided that the impact on the usage and state of Battlegate Road is kept to a minimum (the major failing of the previous proposal)."*
- *"The proposal as it stands looks reasonable to me. However, I – and others – objected to a similar scheme a few years back because of plans to use the road through Boxworth as the delivery route for lorries accessing the site. This seemed completely unnecessary because of the farm road your proposal focuses on. As long as the access does not come through Boxworth and remains as marked in the plan this would make a big difference."*

#### ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

4.12 Several respondents raised comments surrounding the ecological and environmental aspects of the proposal, particularly in relation to impact on wildlife. Comments included:

- *“In principle I have no objection to the Stargoose development except that the biodiversity and habit element needs reviewing to provide more provision than grasses and bird boxes.”*
- *“There’s no mention of the environmental impact of the manufacturing or commissioning of this installation let alone the all important decommissioning and how all this equipment will be recycled.”*

#### LAND USE

4.13 Several respondents raised comments surrounding the use of the land, particularly in relation to its current agricultural use. Comments included:

- *“Could you outline the process by which you will be evaluating the availability of alternative sites with lesser agricultural impact.”*
- *“I look forward to seeing the reports on the grade of arable land that will be lost to food production but am not impressed by the argument that it is only fit for hybrid maize. This is currently grown as it provides the best financial return, not because the land is so poor other crops cannot be grown.”*
- *“We desperately need climate change intervention, but not on grade 2 agricultural land with 2-3 billion extra mouths to feed during the operational life of this solar farm.”*

#### COMMUNITY BENEFIT

4.14 Some respondents raised comments surrounding the community benefit aspects of the proposal. Comments included:

- *“Further, can you advise on the community grants to support local projects. What are the values of such grants and what types of project do you support?”*
- *“Will the electricity generated from the Solargoose project be available to homes in the vicinity of the project?”*

#### VISUAL IMPACT

4.15 Some respondents raised comments surrounding the potential visual impact of the proposal, particularly from the nearest residencies to the site. Comments included:

- *“The site for me will be a complete eyesore and be a vast difference from the green and pleasant land I see now.”*
- *“In the landscape plan a view analysis is made for various PROWs and for Battlegate Cottage but it is not stated that the houses at High Barns Cottages also overlook the site directly from their second floor windows (and at a distance of 400m).”*
- *“The site is surrounded on 3 sides by public rights of way, one of the main features of these is the view across to the fens and Ely, all these will be lost with the construction of the site and the inclusion of screening*

*up to 3m high. The solar panels will be very visible for anyone walking these paths and will detract from their enjoyment.”*

#### GRID CONNECTION

- 4.16 A couple of respondents raised comments surrounding the proposed grid connection. Comments included:
- *“Why will the solar farm be attached to a pylon outside the planned area? This attachment area will spoil yet another part of the countryside?”*
  - *“Where will the connection to the grid be made? The plans are not very clear on this but it appears that an underground cable will be routed from the site, along and then across Battlegate Road to a pylon at grid reference TL 34162 62891 (a location 460m to the NW of High Barns Cottages). Is this correct?”*

## 5. RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK

5.1 The feedback in section 4 shows that residents are generally supportive of the proposals and are primarily concerned about the impact on traffic and access, biodiversity, use of the land and the community benefit aspects of the proposals.

5.2 The Applicant also responded directly to all the emails received directly from residents. A summary of the emails and the responses given are summarised at Appendix 11.

5.3 A summary response from the Applicant with respect to all feedback is given below and set out in detail in the Application documents.

ISSUE	RESPONSE
Transport and Access	All traffic during the construction and operational phases of the development will access the site from the south using main roads and the Estate road. No traffic will be routed through the surrounding villages.
Ecology and Environment	The application includes significant biodiversity and landscape enhancement measures. These have been assessed against the DEFRA biodiversity tool and will achieve a net biodiversity gain of <b>+179.08%</b> .
Community Benefit	Solarcentury is committed to supporting local communities and established a community benefit fund for all its projects. A Stargoose Solar Energy Community Benefit Fund will be set up for the lifetime of the development and managed by a local environmental organisation.
Land Use	The site will be used for a combination of solar energy generation and energy storage. This requires the installation of both solar arrays, energy storage containers and associated electrical infrastructure.
Loss of agricultural land	Cambridgeshire as a whole has a high percentage of high grade agricultural land when compared to the UK as a whole. It is accepted by the local planning authority that development in South Cambridgeshire whether it be for housing, offices or commercial uses is likely to take place on poor performing agricultural land as there is a very limited supply of brownfield or previously developed land in South Cambridgeshire.
Visual Impact	The visual impact of the development will be mitigated by extensive tree and hedgerow planting as well as the planting of a small woodland. Full details are given on the Biodiversity and Landscape Plan.
Grid Connection	The solar energy farm will connect to the local distribution network 400 metres north west of the site. This is the most economically viable grid connection option.
Impact on public rights of way	There will be no direct impact on public rights of way or the bridleway during construction or operation. The Applicant considers that all public rights of way and the bridleway can remain open during the construction phase. A Public Rights of Way Mitigation Strategy accompanies the planning application.

Construction Works

The Applicant has significant experience of constructing solar energy farm in an environmentally responsible way whilst safeguarding the amenity of local residents. A Construction Hotline will be set up which will enable residents to report any concerns that they have about the construction of the development itself and any noise, dust or traffic issues.

## 6. CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 This SCI demonstrates the pre-application consultation undertaken with local residents and stakeholders for the development of a new solar energy farm near Childerley, South Cambridgeshire.
- 6.2 The consultation process has facilitated the Applicants' further understanding of local views on the proposals, which will be submitted as an application to South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- 6.3 The feedback indicates that residents are generally supportive of the proposals and are primarily interested in the impact on traffic and access, biodiversity and the community benefit aspects of the proposals.
- 6.4 All the feedback from the consultation, along with feedback from other key stakeholders has been reviewed by the project team to assist in the proposals for the development.
- 6.5 The proposals have been designed in response to a thorough analysis of Childerley and the surrounding area.
- 6.6 The development team will continue its discussions and engagement with local residents and stakeholders as the application progresses.

## 7.APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO STAKEHOLDERS [15.10.20]



Solarcentury  
90 Union St  
London SE1 0NW  
T +44 (0)20 7549 1000  
F +44 (0)20 7549 1001 [www.solarcentury.com](http://www.solarcentury.com)

15<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

Land East of Battlegate Road, CB23

I am contacting you on behalf of Solarcentury regarding the potential for land east of Battlegate Road to be developed as a solar farm (a site location plan is attached for your reference). Solarcentury is a leading solar energy company who develop, install and operate solar PV systems around the world.

We are in the early stages of assessing the land and the first stage of this process is to review the previous planning application that was refused by South Cambridgeshire District Council in 2015. This review will look closely at the reasons for refusal as well as local residents' objections to the application, in particular whether we can overcome the reasons for refusal and the objections. For example by:

- proposing an alternative construction traffic plan to avoid traffic impacts on local villages;
- reducing the amount of land used for the solar farm in order to reduce visual impacts on the wider landscape and from the public footpath and;
- using land that is further away from the heritage assets and is not Grade 1 or Grade 2 agricultural land.

Once we have completed our review, and if we decide to proceed with a planning application, the first stage will be to submit an application for a screening opinion to South Cambridgeshire. The screening opinion application is to seek a decision as to whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required and we will also seek advice as to what reports will need to be submitted with a planning application.

Subsequent to the local planning authority's determination and prior to submitting a planning application, we will conduct a full public online consultation to ensure local residents can engage fully with the proposals, ask questions and provide feedback before a planning application is submitted. This is likely to take place before the end of the year.

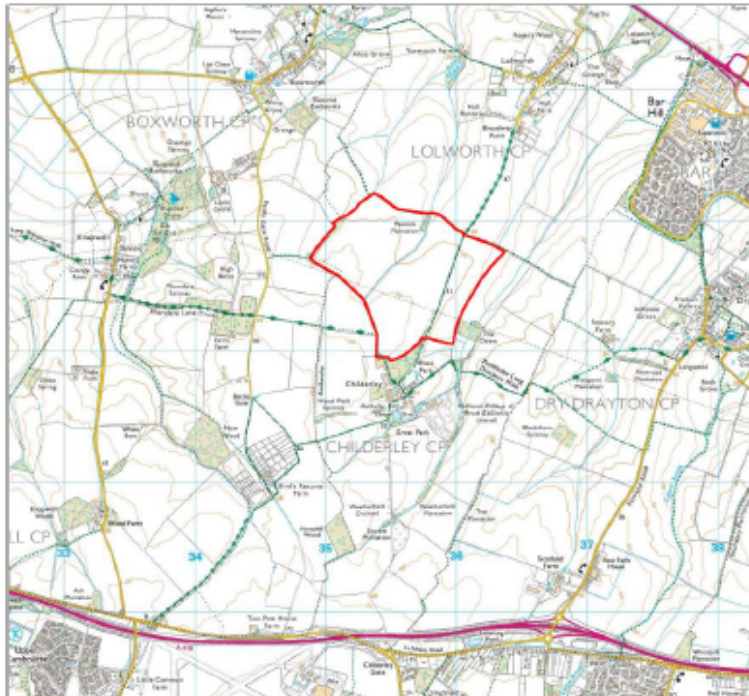


In the meantime, should you have any questions about Solarcentury or have any comments that you would like to feed into this early stage of our review, please contact my colleague [REDACTED] by emailing [REDACTED] or calling [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,



**Gareth Hawkins**  
**UK Business Development Manager**  
**Solarcentury**



Solar Century Holdings Ltd  
Registered in England and Wales no. 3570325  
VAT registration no. 743874893

APPENDIX 2: SCREENING OPINION SUBMISSION LETTER TO STAKEHOLDERS [03.11.20]



Solarcentury  
90 Union St  
London SE1 0NW

T +44 (0)20 7549 1000  
F +44 (0)20 7549 1001

[www.solarcentury.com](http://www.solarcentury.com)

3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

**Land East of Battle Gate Road, CB23**

Further to my previous letter in October, I am writing to let you know that we have now submitted our application for a screening opinion to South Cambridgeshire District Council. The screening opinion application is to seek a decision as to whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for the development of a solar farm on land east of Battle Gate Road. A copy of our application is attached.

Once South Cambridgeshire District Council has issued its screening opinion, we will then make a decision as to whether to proceed to submit a full planning application. If this decision is positive, the next step will be pre-application consultation with the local parish councils and community.

We do appreciate that current national lockdown will have an impact on how we consult with the community. We are therefore looking at how we can best ensure local residents still have the opportunity to participate in the consultation should we decide to proceed.

In the meantime, should you have any questions about Solarcentury, please do get in touch by emailing [REDACTED] or by calling me on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,



**Gareth Hawkins**  
UK Business Development Manager  
Solarcentury

Solar Century Holdings Ltd  
Registered in England and Wales no. 3570325  
VAT registration no. 743874893

APPENDIX 3: UPDATE LETTER TO STAKEHOLDERS BEFORE CONSULTATION LAUNCH [17.12.20]

██████████  
By Email

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear ██████████

#### STARGOOSE ENERGY FARM – PUBLIC CONSULTATION

I am writing to let you know that, following the decision by South Cambridgeshire District Council on our scoping opinion request and having now undertaken a preliminary assessment of the potential to develop an energy farm on land near Childerley, Solarcentury is now working towards submitting a planning application to South Cambridgeshire early in the New Year.

One of Solarcentury's core principles is to consult as widely as possible on its energy projects and to do so as early on in the development phase as possible so that everyone's views can be taken into account. To this end I am therefore writing to let you know what our pre-planning application consultation plans will be and how you will be able to participate in the process

#### The Stargoose Energy Project

The project comprises a solar farm and an energy storage facility located on land that is currently farmed on the Childerley Estate. The solar generation will have a maximum output capacity of 60GWh which is sufficient electricity to deliver power to 18,000 homes every year. The energy storage component is a series of batteries that will store energy from renewable energy generation – mainly wind and solar – and when there is too much energy in the UK's electricity infrastructure. At times of high demand this energy will then be fed back into the grid.

We are proposing a combined generation and storage system because decarbonisation of the UK's energy supply and the replacement of fossil fuel generation will require more sophisticated energy systems that store energy for use whenever it is needed - day or night.

The land proposed for the project is two fields totalling 65 hectares, of which around one-third will be dedicated for habitat, biodiversity, and landscape improvements.

### How we plan to consult the local community

Due to current Coronavirus guidelines, we will be conducting a digital pre-application consultation over six weeks to ensure that everyone can find out about the plans and have a say in a safe way. As a first step, in January we will be sending an information leaflet to all residents within the consultation zone.



The leaflet will include a link to a dedicated project website which will have detailed information about the project and a dedicated feedback section. We will then use the feedback from this consultation to inform our project proposals and for our community consultation report to the local planning authority. All aspects of the project, including traffic plans, will be available in early January during the pre-application consultation.

### Get in touch

In the meantime, if you would like to arrange an informal discussion with me, have any questions, or require further information about the project, please do get in touch by emailing me at [REDACTED] or by calling me on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,



**Gareth Hawkins**  
UK Business Development Manager, Solarcentury

APPENDIX 4: PUBLIC CONSULTATION UPDATE LETTER TO STAKEHOLDERS [15.01.21]



Solarcentury  
90 Union St  
London SE1 0NW

T +44 (0)20 7549 1000  
F +44 (0)20 7549 1001

[www.solarcentury.com](http://www.solarcentury.com)

**Sent by email**

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Stakeholder,

**STARGOOSE SOLAR ENERGY FARM – PRE-APPLICATION PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

Following my letter in December 2020, Solarcentury is pleased to announce that the public consultation has now commenced for the Stargoose solar energy farm, on land east of Battlegate Road on the Childerley Estate.

To launch the consultation, we have sent a copy of the attached consultation leaflet to around 2,400 local addresses. The leaflet includes a link to the project website, through which you can find out more about Solarcentury, view the plans and submit feedback via the 'Have your say' page. The project website can be viewed by visiting: [www.solarcentury.com/stargoose](http://www.solarcentury.com/stargoose).

We will use the feedback from this consultation to inform our proposals, before preparing and submitting a planning application to South Cambridgeshire District Council.

**Get in touch**

If you have any questions or require further information about the project, please do get in touch by emailing me at [REDACTED] or by calling me on [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully,



**Gareth Hawkins**  
UK Business Development Manager, Solarcentury





## Stargoose solar energy farm

Solarcentury is proposing to develop a new solar energy farm on land east of Battlegate Road, CB23.

The site has been carefully chosen for its potential to deliver solar-powered electricity to the grid. The proposed development will generate 60GWh of electricity per year – enough to power up to 18,000 homes.



### Have your say

Before we finalise our plans and submit a planning application, we want to ensure the local community are involved and have a chance to review the plans, ask questions and provide feedback. The current social distancing measures prevent us from holding a face-to-face consultation event, so we are instead undertaking a digital consultation. There are lots of ways to find out more and get involved:

- 1 Visit [www.solarcentury.com/stargoose](http://www.solarcentury.com/stargoose) to find out more about the proposals, watch information videos and view detailed plans.
- 2 Provide online feedback using the dedicated 'Have your say' section of the website.
- 3 Contact a member of the team using the contact details provided.

## The proposals

The proposed solar energy farm will have a capacity of 49MW and will boost the local supply of renewable energy which will support the UK's target of zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. We are also proposing to install batteries to store electricity and feed it back into the local energy network at times of high demand.

The site entrance will be from the existing track which goes to the Childerley Estate farmyard. During its operation the land between and under the solar panels and around field edges can be harnessed to improve and enhance local biodiversity and ecology. As solar farms are temporary structures the land can revert back to agricultural use once the solar farm is decommissioned.

To find out more about the proposals, please visit our project website:  
[www.solarcentury.com/stargoose](http://www.solarcentury.com/stargoose)

## Why solar?





The UK is committed to an energy target of net zero by 2050, which can only be achieved by increasing the amount of renewable electricity generation. At present, the UK provides less than 4% of its electricity from solar. The Stargoose Solar Energy Farm could be another step in the energy transition by preventing 2,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere each year.

## About Solarcentury

Operating for over twenty years, Solarcentury is one of the world's most respected and longstanding solar companies, with 1.3GWp of projects deployed around the world. Our aim is to make a meaningful difference in the fight against climate chaos through the widespread adoption of solar power.

### Get in touch

If you have any questions or would like further information or do not have Internet access, there are alternative ways of contacting us here:

-  [www.solarcentury.com/stargoose](http://www.solarcentury.com/stargoose)
-  [stargoosesolar@solarcentury.com](mailto:stargoosesolar@solarcentury.com)
-  0330 363 6229
-  Solarcentury, 90 Union Street, London, SE1 0NW





APPENDIX 6: CONSULTATION ZONE





APPENDIX 7: CONSULTATION WEBSITE

- [HOMEPAGE](#)
- [WHY SOLAR ENERGY FARMS](#)
- [FAQS](#)
- [HAVE YOUR SAY](#)
  - o [STARGOOSE-CONSULTATION.COM](#)



**Digital public consultation on plans for Stargoose solar energy farm****18<sup>th</sup> January 2021****For immediate release**

Solarcentury has today launched a digital public consultation on plans for a new solar energy farm on Land East of Battlegate Road, Childerley in South Cambridgeshire.

An information leaflet has been sent to local residents including details of a dedicated project website: [www.solarcentury.com/stargoose](http://www.solarcentury.com/stargoose). The website contains details of the plans for Stargoose solar energy farm, including information about how solar farms and energy storage work, further details about the design and layout of the site and how the plans can support local wildlife.

The website also includes a dedicated feedback section to ensure the local community can have their say on the plans before they are finalised.

Gareth Hawkins, UK Business Development Manager for Solarcentury, commented:

*"We had intended to share our plans with the local community in person but unfortunately this isn't possible due to current government guidelines to prevent the spread of Coronavirus.*

*"We are therefore carrying out a digital public consultation to make sure everyone, including local residents and our staff, remain as safe as possible.*

*"We look forward to engaging with the local community and stakeholders in the coming weeks, ahead of preparing a planning application to South Cambridgeshire District Council."*

**The proposals**

The land proposed for the project is two fields totalling 65 hectares, of which around one-third will be dedicated for habitat, biodiversity and landscape improvements. The plans include a solar farm and an energy storage facility located on land that is currently farmed on the Childerley Estate. The solar generation will have a maximum output capacity of 60GWh, which could power up to 18,000 homes every year.

The energy storage component is a series of batteries that will store energy from renewable energy generation when there is too much energy in the UK's electricity infrastructure. At times of high demand, this energy can then be fed back into the grid. This is because decarbonisation of the UK's energy supply and the replacement of fossil fuel generation requires a more sophisticated energy system that can store energy for use whenever it is needed - day or night.

**-ENDS-**

**Notes to Editor:**

About Solarcentury: Established in 1998, Solarcentury is a leading global solar power company that develops, constructs, owns and operates utility-scale solar and smart technology. Solarcentury is known internationally for developing and building some of the largest utility-scale solar projects in the UK, the Netherlands, Spain, Kenya and Mexico, including pioneering projects such as the world's first solar bridge at Blackfriars Station in Central London.

Solarcentury's mission is to make a meaningful difference in the global fight against climate chaos by making solar power the dominant energy source worldwide. During Solarcentury's 22-year history the business has helped solar power become mainstream, and our projects have generated 6 billion kWh of clean electricity, saving over 1.7 million tonnes of CO2 emissions. In November 2020 Solarcentury joined forces with Statkraft – read the press release here: [www.solarcentury.com/statkraft-acquires-solarcentury](http://www.solarcentury.com/statkraft-acquires-solarcentury)

About Statkraft: Statkraft is a leading company in hydropower internationally and Europe's largest generator of renewable energy. The Group produces hydropower, wind power, solar power, gas-fired power and supplies district heating. Statkraft is a global company in energy market operations. Statkraft has 4,000 employees in 17 countries. [www.statkraft.com](http://www.statkraft.com)


# Solar farm that could power 18,000 homes proposed near Cambridge

The solar farm would be put on a site near Bar Hill

SHARE   

By [Benjamin Hatton](#)  
11:33, 18 JAN 2021

NEWS

Enter your **postcode** for local news and info  Enter your postcode  



A solar farm has been proposed for Childerley (Image: Daniel Leal-Olivas/PA Wire)

**Sign up to our newsletter for daily updates and breaking news**

When you subscribe we will use the information you provide to send you these newsletters. Sometimes they'll include recommendations for other related newsletters or services we offer. Our [Privacy Notice](#) explains more about how we use your data, and your rights. You can unsubscribe at any time.

An energy company is proposing to build a solar farm on agricultural land to the north west of Cambridge.

Solarcentury has proposed the solar farm, which it says could create enough energy to power up to 18,000 homes, on a 65 hectare site on land currently farmed as part of the Childerley Estate, east of Battlegate Road, north of Childerley village, and about a kilometre south of Bar Hill.

The estate is home to the Grade II listed Childerley Hall, which is used as a venue to host events and weddings. The energy company says woodland between the proposed location and the Childerley Farm provides "good levels" of screening.

ADVERTISEMENT

**Free £15 Bonus**  
On Casino

£15

Join here

Must be 18+ and a UK resident. Free £15 bonus credited to your account within 24 hours of registration. The maximum amount you can win is £100. Terms & conditions apply. See our [Privacy Notice](#) for more details.

Sponsored By William Hill


£15 No Deposit Bonus

See More


138212091369

## MOST READ


- 1




**A505 accident: Police name driver killed in tragic crash that closed the road for hours**
- 2




**Dogs Trust, Wood Green RSPCA, Blue Cross: Adorable dogs you can adopt in Cambs during lockdown**
- 3



**Met Office Cambridge: Cambridgeshire prepares for a wintry weekend as ice and snow warning launched**
- 4



**MoneySavingExpert Martin Lewis warning to 410,000 households after two energy suppliers collapse**
- 5



**Single mum 'humiliated' as Tesco refuses to let her shop with young**



## Solar farm that could power 18,000 homes proposed in South Cambridgeshire

By Ben Hatton, Local Democracy Reporter  
Published: 06:45, 24 January 2021



A solar farm that could create enough energy to power more than 18,000 homes is proposed for agricultural land in South Cambridgeshire.

Energy company Solarcentury has launched an online consultation about its plans for Stargoose Solar Energy Farm on a 65-hectare site on land currently farmed as part of the Childerley Estate.



A solar farm

The estate is home to the grade II-listed Childerley Hall, which is used as a venue to host events and weddings. The energy company says woodland between the proposed location and the Childerley Farm provides “good levels” of screening.

Gareth Hawkins, Solarcentury’s UK business development manager, said: “We had intended to share our plans with the local community in person but unfortunately this isn’t possible due to current government guidelines to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

“We are therefore carrying out a digital public consultation to make sure everyone, including local residents and our staff, remain as safe as possible.”

The site comprises two fields, lying east of Battlegate Road and north of Childerley village, near Boxworth and about a kilometre south of Bar Hill.

About a third of the 65 hectares will be dedicated to “habitat, biodiversity and landscape improvements”, the company says.

APPENDIX 11: FULL COMMENTS SUBMITTED VIA CONSULTATION WEBSITE

PLEASE NOTE – A NUMBER OF THE COMMENTS BELOW CONTAIN INACCURATE INFORMATION BUT HAVE BEEN INCLUDED AS SUBMITTED IN THE INTERESTS OF TRANSPARENCY. ANY IDENTIFYING INFORMATION HAS BEEN REDACTED IN THE INTERESTS OF ANONYMITY.

<b>Question: Do you have any comments on the transport and access aspects of the proposal?</b>
Again yet more transport in what was a beautiful and tranquil part of Cambridgeshire.
I would like acknowledgement that all access to the Childerley Solar Farm should be through Childerley Estates and not through the village of Boxworth / Battlegate Road. Importantly, this includes not only the initial development but also all maintenance, employee access and decommissioning.
<p>I believe that your plan to avoid local villages should not only be limited to the construction phase. It should also specify that ALL heavy goods traffic should be routed through the same approved route from the south via Childerley. This should also be the case for any decommissioning work, for the lifetime of the project.</p> <p>Battlegate Road is a single track local road, in poor condition, that is simply not suitable for anything more than a small occasional maintenance vehicle accessing the site from that direction.</p>
No
<p>Why why why???</p> <p>If you can't be bothered to farm your land , you don't have the right to to be landowners/farmers!</p>
I thoroughly concur to the finding that all all construction traffic avoid must avoid local villages and minimise disruption to local communities. Access via the current proposal (via Childerley farmyard seems most appropriate).
My only concern is the loss of footpaths and bridle paths in this area.
I am concerned that the proposed site is accross a footpath/bridleway that i often walk along, what are the plans to accomodate this?
<p>More thought needed. Firstly, It will disturb the already busy rush hours (in normal times). Secondly, what method of control will be in place to actually make sure construction traffic will avoid the village? It was clear from the experience of the A14 that assurance and promises are not enough. What enforcing actions will be in place to make sure construction traffic will not go through the village? There also needs to be a clear way for residents to report the transgression of any construction traffic via photos for example. There also need to be a clear feedback of what action were taken as a result of the transgression and the consequences for the transgressor.</p>
<p>Based on the recent improvements to the A14 road, the main concerns for local residents like me are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noise, especially early mornings and evenings, from traffic movements and from on-site works such as earthworks, any hammering/piling operations etc</li> <li>- Dirt, ie dust or mud, on the roads leading to the site</li> </ul> <p>Please take measures to control these and make it visible to locals. A website or similar that is dedicated to this works and which allows rapid correspondence to report problems and to see responses from the contractors is a major benefit.</p>

NEEDS MUST
Although local villages may not be significantly affected, the increased traffic will potentially worsen the impact of other major developments in the area and so displace some additional traffic into villages.
No
Battlegate Road is a small single track country road, in poor condition, regularly used by a large number of riders, walkers and cyclists. It will not support heavy construction or maintenance traffic. The public path to Childerley from Battlegate Road, which I walk every day, is a mud track that will quickly be cut to pieces by any heavy traffic. The area is also a home to many species of bird including kestrels, buzzards and kites, whose interests must be protected.
It is curious that a company that promotes itself as being environmentally friendly has not addressed transport and access by foot or bicycle, especially in the longer term. The proposed site includes some popular walking and dog-walking routes. As a local resident I am primarily concerned that our ability to walk around the area is not constricted.
The access arrangements for site construction traffic from the south appear satisfactory but what will happen about the footpath that traverses the site ?
Development will be interesting to see. It looks quite rural but no doubt safe access without causing major long term ecological damage will be considered.
As the disruption will be short lived I don't see this as being a big issue. I live in Bar Hill and the A14 construction has taken any years and is much more significant than this solar energy farm construction.
This is currently one of the few bridle paths that we can use in this region. The bridle path runs right through the site. Will the path be diverted in a safe manner for horses and will it be safe to use whilst building work is going ahead.  Given how busy the roads are and with more walkers out on tracks, it is increasingly important to ensure we have safe off road riding and that pathways aren't destroyed.
Yes, yes and yes! I love the idea of this happening, and the location seems good to me too. We've got several solar farms in and around Cambridge already and I support the building of more.
While the transport plans on paper may seem sensible, the critical success factor is actually abiding to the proposal. Having recently experienced the complete non-compliance of transportation requirements in Dry Drayton to lorries as part of the A14 works it is essential that (a) the development actually administers the transport proposals and (b) responds and acts to local complaints.

<p><b>Question: Do you have any suggestions or comments for how we can support the local community as part of this project?</b></p>
<p>I am afraid I do not support the project. Prime agricultural land is already limited and this will only impact on the problem further. There are other ways that should be looked at in the first instance.</p>
<p>The solar farm is being placed next to one of the most popular footpaths for Boxworth residents. Childerley must ensure that other footpaths / bridleways are clearly sign posted and well maintained to allow easy access to all.</p> <p>Boxworth is currently in the process of requesting an additional footpath / cycle way between the village and the A14 cycle bridge. Financial support for this initiative would ensure where one footpath would be lost, another would be gained.</p> <p>Additionally, all biodiversity assessments and monitoring should involve the village community and data available publicly through local conservation organisations.</p>
<p>Support for new cycle routes generally in the area would be of the greatest benefit to the local community. There are plans for a potential cycle path linking Boxworth to the new footbridge over the A14 - this may be a project that the solar farm could beneficially champion.</p>
<p>Suggestion 1) - resurface Broadway with a surface that makes it "walkable" year-round and put in notice boards with info about the site on Broadway. This would turn an "eyesore" into a "destination".</p> <p>2) Actively approach local people and businesses to bid on contracts. 3) Publish (and execute) a really clear bio-diversity plan. Don't leave it to chance / be passive. Make it clear and deliberate - don't act like a "corporation that's doing biodiversity because you have to". Make it clear that you care about biodiversity. 4) Create an opportunity for local communities to "buy discounted electricity from Stargoose". In reality, that probably means some kind of agreement with a retailer who would buy wholesale from Solarcentury and deliver to local residents. I use Bulb, for example, who only supplies renewable energy. Being able to "buy local" would help give local residents a real sense of participation in the Stargoose project.</p>
<p>Why not try farming?</p>
<p>Can local villages (e.g. Lolworth) receive any electricity rebates / discounts by using Solarcentury affiliated organisations as electricity suppliers / providers?</p> <p>Lolworth would benefit from additional tree planting in its community orchard.</p> <p>Existing public footpaths should be retained (and in some cases improved) in the proximity of the development.</p>
<p>Footpaths and bridle paths.</p>
<p>during lockdown many people in bar hill have been walking a lot to get out of the house. this has been really positive, there is not a continuous path around the village, if funding could go towards this, that would be very positive. Also any funding for private residents to get rooftop solar panels would be good, as I would like to get these, but there is not the economy of scale seen on a large site, making it hard to afford.</p>
<p>Wildlife needs to be protected and stricter guidelines need to be put into place regarding future development be it for energy or housing.</p>
<p>I believe it will be very helpful if you avoid the site becoming a fenced off no-go area of mystery.</p> <p>Providing tours and education on a regular basis such as by inviting local schools and residents for special events, open days etc will make people feel that they are involved with "their" solar farm.</p>



If we have sustainable, reliable, affordable energy we will be very happy. I'm sure the schools and others will be able to make use of this project to educate and inform.
No
If the site could be landscaped in such a way as to encourage the biodiversity of the local wildlife, this would be of great benefit to local residents and all who enjoy the area for recreation.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide workshops on the basics of using solar panels and storage batteries.</li> <li>2. Invite people to become part of the grid by installing solar panels and batteries at home. (My [REDACTED] has had this for years).</li> <li>3. Include hazel and willow as part of the hedgerows and ecological development, and put on workshops for those wanting to learn how to weave. Sell hazel, willow and other raw products for people to make their own fences or garden ornaments at home.</li> <li>4. Install cameras near bird boxes and animal tracks and allow people to watch nature. Maybe do a spring watch event? Hibernation event?</li> <li>5. Teach people about low-power domestic appliances and how to reduce the demand for power in their home; i.e. let's test how Green you are or if you're just in it for the money and want people to use more power than is strictly necessary.</li> </ol>
Offers of financial support to the local parish councils would be helpful and also arranging visits for local people to better understand the principles and working of a solar farm once established would be another way of engaging local support.
Keep us up to date - and let us benefit from it too. Discounted energy costs because of being able to take advantage of the local resources would be good, even if it means signing up to a particular company to get this benefit.
I'd be interested in in the local biodiversity and habitat management efforts that will go on assuming the project gets the go ahead.
I think the long-term habitat management is a big selling-point. As such, I would like to see "Consideration is also being given to planting a new woodland" firmed up into a definite commitment. At present, it gives the distinct impression of being a non-promise that will be quietly brushed under the table as soon as approval is gained; I hope this isn't the case.
Ensure the bridle path is re-routed. Horses will be difficult to ride past a solar panels as they will find it spooky, resulting in it being hazardous to use.
I am [REDACTED]. The solar farm is due to be built over a footpath that we sometimes use for hikes around the local area. Is there any chance we could bring [REDACTED] to the site at some point and be shown around, educating them about solar energy and letting them ask questions? I know it's still early days, but thought I'd put the request in anyway!
While local residents be able to have cheaper power generated from the site?

<p><b>Question: Do you have any further comments on the proposals?</b></p>
<p>Where will this end? When all agricultural and pasture land has been built on? We have to look to other sustainable means. Does every house have solar panels on? Are new houses being built with sustainable energy solutions as a prerequisite? Walle will become a reality if we continue in the same vein!!</p>
<p>At this stage, any community benefits are far too intangible. If there were any concrete proposals as to how locals might benefit, I could be more supportive of this project.</p>
<p>I think I covered it all above...</p>
<p>Agricultural land is for farming !!!</p>
<p>As a nation we produce less than 70% of our food. Taking prime agricultural land and converting it to a solar farm is not sensible and can only make us less sustainable as a nation. Further, the loss of food production can only add to the burden of "food miles" and subtract from the carbon benefit you will be claiming from the project. Solar farms are only economically viable due to large government subsidies. As a nation we should focus on off shore wind farms, and leave solar farms to nations that have higher solar resources than the UK such as Spain and Greece.</p>
<p>The land is high quality agricultural land and to use it for a solar farm is in my opinion a wasteful use of a precious resource. As a country we need to be producing more food, not less. Such change of use of a precious resource that is high quality agricultural land will lead to increasing reliance on food imports, and increased "food miles".</p> <p>I believe as a nation we should focus on wind power as a renewable energy source, preferably offshore, and leave solar power to countries where the economics work better and do not require subsidies from the government.</p>
<p>No. Thank you.</p>
<p>There are far too many developments being planned currently in the village. The village will not be a village anymore and the surrounding area where there is so much wildlife will see its ecosystem destroyed with so much happening. To preserve the village and wildlife LESS development needs to happen. The proposed sites altogether would cover several times over the current area of the village. If this development happens there needs to be a guarantee that others will not be allowed.</p> <p>The whole picture needs to be taken into consideration (with all the development planned) rather than looking at each development in isolation, irrelevant whether there are other developments elsewhere. If all those developments happen, Dry Drayton will not be Dry Drayton anymore losing its village identity and surrounding landscape.</p> <p>The solar farm development will destroy the beautiful view that is left. I also have a concern with regard to access to the well used footpath. That would limit the walks network around the village which are used not just for leisure but also for on-foot commute.</p>
<p>It will help if locals get regular updates on the ACTUAL generation of power at the farm, and of any upgrades that you carry out such as increasing or improving battery storage facilities.</p> <p>I would like to see data on the lifetime impact of the solar power components, such as the energy required to mine and refine the materials used in the cells and batteries, and the equivalent for their de-commissioning and recycling. Similarly the environmental impact of these stages of the manufacture.</p>
<p>Very excited! However, as a community, we need to know of any potential harmful risks to be aware of, (eg: toxic chemical release, toxic waste disposal) and would be grateful for any information regarding this.</p>

The production of solar photovoltaic cells and all other equipment for renewable energy conversion uses a colossal amount of fossil fuel derived energy, especially in relation to the mining and extraction of the rare chemical elements used in their fabrication. This must be included in the equation if a balanced view is to be reached.

The synchronous inverters on your proposed site will generate conducted and radiated EMI, and even if the levels fall within relevant emission standards it will increase the noise floor on LF and VLF bands such that there will be an impediment to use of the relevant amateur bands in those frequency ranges, or of any radio astronomy or ionospheric measurements. This happened when the solar farms near Wimpole and Royston became operational.

The listed 'consequences within 80years' on your website does not match even the rate or severity indicated in the IPCC's most recent climate report, or in any or the associated scientific reports from referreed journals. If you want people who do know something about climate science to accept your message, a good place to start is by telling the truth about all relevant aspects of the issue which your proposed solution attempts to address and the solution itself.

What are your calculated risks of biological effects in the local area of the low level VLF electromagnetic field strengths (near field zone therefore falling off at 1/d rate) which will emanate from the site?

I would like to see a significant increase in the biodiversity improvements which are offered, as well as better visual screening. The development as proposed will have a significant visual impact on the local environment.

Hope for as many trees and hedgerows around the site as possible; glad to see nesting boxes proposed - different sizes for different birds?; pack in as many different species of (native) wild flowers as possible; beehives? anyone interested in keeping bees? hedgehog/badger runs?

I am in favour of the proposal for a solar farm, indeed some years ago I had an air source heat pump installed in my home (replacing the oil-fired system that is the only other option in my road). But any site must be sympathetically planned, constructed, landscaped and maintained.

One of the benefits of decommissioning agricultural land is that the nitrogen cycle in the local area will be altered. There should be less chemical run-off into the local water courses and generally less pollution. The chemistry of nitrogen in the environment doesn't get anywhere near enough attention and it could be argued to be more serious than the carbon cycle.

Your literature and website give conflicting figures regarding the future generation of energy - figures of both 60 GWh and 47 GWh / year are given in different places - why is this ?

The suggestion that the solar farm may only be temporary is hard to comprehend - given the effort and expense of construction and the important ongoing need for sustainable energy into the future surely must dictate that, once constructed, the farm should be permanent !

On environmental enhancements - overseeding with species-rich wildflowers and grasses of previous agricultural land, rich in fertiliser, is not a recipe for success, since mainly ruderal weeds will ensue. What plans are there for ongoing management and ensuring that a properly biodiverse meadow sward will eventually result (e.g. grazing, cutting, etc)?

It is good to see that there are plans for siting of bird nest boxes on existing mature trees, but it is also important that bat boxes are provided too, as roosting sites for these declining mammals could always be improved and this could be another opportunity to make the solar farm scheme even more environmentally helpful.

It may be worth aligning the 47 GWH and 15,000 homes with the 60GWH and 18000 homes on the front page (<https://www.solarcentury.com/stargoose/>) of your website.

I am somewhat on the fence at the moment but would be strongly behind these proposals if they contained more definite and binding promises to enhance the biodiversity of the local environment, including the suggested woodland.

I would be hoisted by my own petard if I was against the development at Battlegate Road. Therefore, I am a generally supportive on the basis that the construction of the site is done in the manner to which the plans outline, and that the team managing the installation keep close eye on the thundering lorries that threaten drivers, walkers and cyclists that share the roads with these lorries. It was a miracle that no one was killed by the A14 Lorries smashing through Dry Drayton. Let's hope this luck holds.

## APPENDIX 11: EMAILS SUBMITTED VIA CONSULTATION WEBSITE

	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>Transport and Access</b>	How will construction workers access the site during the construction phase.	The access for workers will be the same as that for construction traffic, from the south and via the Childerley estate access road.
	Traffic on Battle Gate Road should be kept to a minimum during the construction phase.	No construction traffic will be routed via Battle Gate Road.
	Traffic should not come through the village of Boxworth.	Agreed.
	How can the traffic impacts be further reduced.	The number of delivery lorries is less than the previous scheme. This is due to the reduction in the number of solar panels required for the solar energy farm.
<b>Footpath and Bridleway</b>	What will be the impact on the footpaths.	There will be no direct long-term impact on the footpaths. Safety of users of the footpaths during construction is a prime consideration. Therefore Solarcentury has prepared a Public Rights of Way Mitigation Plan submitted with the planning application.
	Please clarify the position of the bridleway and footpaths.	The footpaths and bridleway are all immediately adjacent (outside) to the proposed development.
	What steps will be taken during construction and operation to mitigate the impact on the bridleway.	The Public Rights of Way Plan sets out the action Solarcentury will take. If required, the western footpath can be temporarily diverted to the other side of the hedge in the adjacent field.
<b>Land Use</b>	What is the process for evaluating the availability of alternative sites with lower agricultural impact and demonstrating that this is the only suitable site for the solar farm.	An assessment has been made of alternative sites relative to the grid connection. This has been submitted with the planning application - X
	This is good quality agricultural land that should be used to grow food crops rather than higher value maize.	The land is a mix of grades – 2, 3a and 3b. Whilst it is reasonable quality it is not considered to be the best quality land –

Agricultural Land Use Assessment, Bidwells  
January 2021.

<p>Will a new agricultural land survey be undertaken</p>	<p>No. It is not required as the soil classification remains the same.</p>
<p>Why is the solar farm capacity the same as the previous application but the land area is less</p>	<p>This is due to increases in the efficiency and output of solar panels. Fewer panels and less land are required to deliver 49MW of solar generation.</p>
<p>Is Grade 2 agricultural land being used</p>	<p>Yes. The site does include Grade 2 land. The use of Grade 2 land is not precluded by the NPPF or the 2015 Ministerial Statement</p>
<p>Who owns the land where the solar farm is proposed</p>	<p>The land is owned by two local landowners.</p>
<p>Why isn't the development on marginal land?</p>	<p>There is no land of this quality close to the available grid connection.</p>
<p>The solar farm could cause soil degradation and erosion, but it could also be an opportunity to improve soil fertility</p>	<p>The design of the layout of the solar arrays is key to minimising the potential for soil erosion. The layout therefore follows the topography of the land which significantly reduces the potential for rivulets to form. Vegetation, such as grass, is considered the most sustainable and cost-effective erosion control technique. There are no studies on this aspect of solar farms although as the soil is in effect "resting", the view is that soil organic matter will increase.</p>
<p>What are the drainage plans for the site</p>	<p>The solar farm will not change the historic drainage system of ditches. The frames for the solar panels are pile driven and any runoff will be to the existing ditches.</p>

**Visual Impact**

<p>The development will be an eyesore</p>	<p>The Landscape Plan sets out the planting proposal for screening the development.</p>
<p>There will be a significant change in the views from High Barns Cottages (400 metres away) for the worse. This is not included in the view analysis. There are also 20 residential properties within 1000metres of this site that will be affected.</p>	<p>The LVIA Reports sets out the impact on views from High Barns and Redlands and other residential properties.</p>

The long range views from the footpaths across to the Fens and Ely will be lost due to the new screening and the solar panels

The long range views would still be visible.

**Ecology,  
Landscape and  
Environment**

The proposals for biodiversity and habitat improvement are insufficient

Further habitat and biodiversity proposals have been included in the Ecological Mitigation Plan.

Could fruit trees be included in the planting proposal

What is the height and construction of the deer fence

The deer fence is 2.2metres in height and is comprised of wood and metal.

Could wildflower meadows be included in the habitat plan

Can crops be grown around the panels or the land used for grazing

Crops cannot be grown but grazing is possible.

Is grazing sheep compatible with long grass or wildflower meadows.

Yes, if rotational grazing.

**Waste  
management  
and recycling**

The whole life environmental impact of the development should be addressed from manufacturing to decommissioning.

Studies have shown that the carbon emissions associated with manufacturing and decommissioning are more than offset by the zero carbon energy that the solar farm produces during its lifetime.

**Community  
Benefit**

Will community grants be made available for local projects and what type of projects.

**Grid connection**

The grid connection to a pylon will further spoil the countryside

The grid connection by underground cable will not be visible.

Where will the solar farm connect to the grid

It will connect at a pylon to the north west of the site.

**Energy Storage**

The energy storage element will introduce a further element of industrialisation. Is this essential to the scheme?

Co-locating solar and energy storage is considered best practice because it addresses the intermittent generation from renewable source.

***Planning  
application***

What is the difference between this scheme and the previous Belectric scheme      This scheme has a smaller footprint.

***Construction  
Programme***

If planning permission is granted when will works commence      Spring 2022