

Redgrave Neighbourhood Plan

Call for Sites October – November 2019

Site Submission Form for Godfathers Meadow, The Green, Redgrave. IP22 1RR
Supplementary Statement

Question 5d

The main part of the proposal is for a solar farm. One of the principle local benefits is the opportunity this would present for improving the overall biodiversity of Godfathers Meadow. Establishing natural hedgerows around the site, linked with the existing hedgerow along its southern boundary and the woodland to the west would provide an increased network of wildlife habitat. Wildflower meadow strips within the farm would add a new habitat to the area. The success of these new habitats would be dependent on appropriate management practices, including the use of hand-held tools only, and no application of non-organic pesticides and fertilisers.

Adjoining residential properties could be concerned about the farm's visual impact, but a properly designed scheme would include landscaping to shelter the farm from its surroundings, and screen the photovoltaic panels from view.

Once built, a solar farm is virtually silent in operation and requires a minimum of human activity for its running and maintenance. The effect on neighbouring dwellings' amenities would be negligible. The farm would generate very little vehicular traffic to disturb the locality, and would not add noticeably to existing traffic levels on surrounding roads.

The solar farm could also be an opportunity for further community enterprise in Redgrave, which is discussed in more detail in our answers to questions 7I, 7K and 12e.

Question 7a

There are no site features that would constrain its development for the purposes set out in our answer to Questions 5a, 5b, 5c and 5d.

Question 7b

There are two potential access points. The first, and preferred, is from The Green (Redgrave Footpath 15), but it is not in Ms. Chappell's and Mr Holt-Wilson's ownership. At present that part of the footpath adjoining the site is a broad swathe of grass, running southwards from the metalled part of the Green which ends just north of the site and bends eastwards. There is an entrance into the site from a point just south of Oak House.

The second could be taken from land that adjoins the site to the west, which is in Ms. Chappell's and Mr Holt-Wilson's ownership. It would run south from The Green, past Sunny View and into Godfathers Meadow.

Question 7c

The site is essentially flat. There are no topographic features, including trees and hedges crossing the site, that would act as constraints on the site's development. There is a mature hedge, including a number of specimen trees, that marks the site's southern boundary.

Question 7d

There is no evidence of ground instability or ground contamination issues.

Question 7e

There are two ponds, one adjoining the site's south-west corner, the other within its southern boundary. These ponds and others in the area suggest that there was, at one time, a watercourse that ran around the west of Redgrave and along the site's southern boundary. However, no such water course is shown on the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning. The whole site lies within Flood Zone 1. A Zone 1 location means that the land has a less than 0.1% risk of flooding from rivers in any one year.

The Green has limited stretches which have a low risk of surface water flooding. Low risk means that each year there is a chance of flooding of between 0.1% and 1%. The same level of surface water flood risk applies to a small area around the ponds on the site's southern boundary.

Question 7f

As far as we are aware, there are no legal charges on the land that would prevent the type of development we are considering. However, the potential access point does not lie within the site ownership. Some form of agreement with the existing owner(s) will be necessary to allow any development of the site.

Question 7g

There are no known features of specific ecological or geological importance either on or adjacent to the site. There are no significant trees or hedgerows that run across the site. The site's southern boundary is marked by a substantial mature hedgerow incorporating two ponds and some specimen trees. These trees together with one close to the south-western corner of Oak House are mapped in the Redgrave Conservation Area Appraisal 2011.

The northern and eastern boundaries are marked mainly by domestic fencing and vegetation. Along the site's western boundary is a mature hedgerow with a small woodland beyond the site's south-western corner.

Question 7h

There are no sites of archaeological interest, as recorded in the Suffolk County Sites and Monuments Record, on or adjacent to the site.

Two listed buildings adjoin the site. Sunny View lies to the north, fronting The Green. It is a Grade II building and is described in the list as follows:-

REDGRAVE THE GREEN (WEST SIDE) TM 0477 5/70 - Sunny View -- II House, latterly 2 dwellings. c.1600, altered and extended C20. Timber frame, plastered. Thatched roof. 3 bays with end stack. 1 storey and attic. Entrance towards left, originally probably towards right, C20 3-light casements, two 2-light eyebrow thatched dormers. To right roof hipped with an internal end stack. Left end C19 extruded stack in a C20 extension. Interior: frame largely concealed, some close studding, stop chamfered cross axial binding beams. First floor opposed base cruck blades up to collar to right of centre, reverse cranked and reverse curved arched braces in walling, edge halved scarf joints.

Bridge House adjoins the site to the east. Listed as a Grade II building, it is described as:-

REDGRAVE THE GREEN (SOUTH SIDE) TM 0477 5/71 - Bridge House -- II House, latterly 2 dwellings. Late C16, altered and part rebuilt C20. Timber frame, plastered. Steeply pitched pantiled roof. 3 cell cross entry plan. 2 storeys. Entrance into hall to left of original entrance, 2-light glazing bar casements, C20 gabled dormers. Lean-to in front of rebuilt parlour bay, rebuilt ridge stack between hall and parlour. To right a C20 porch and external C19 kitchen stack in a lean-to outshut. Interior: much of

frame concealed, 4 bays survive, hall has jowled storey posts to a stop chamfered cross axial binding beam. First floor had large 5-light diamond mullioned windows, reverse cranked arched braces in walling, edge halved scarf joint, a sharply cambered tie beam, clasped purlin roof, originally hipped to service end

The site is not in the Redgrave Conservation Area, but the Conservation Area's boundary runs along the site's northern and eastern boundaries.

Question 7i

To the north are a number of substantial detached properties in large plots. Eastwards, fronting the Green (Redgrave Footpath 15) are three detached properties again in substantial sized plots and then a number of cottage properties fronting onto an eastward extension of The Green leading towards End Cottage. To the south is open agricultural land, and westwards agricultural land and a woodland copse.

There should be no implications for the agricultural land to the south. There would clearly be visual implications for the residential properties to the north and east, and in particular to the settings of the two listed buildings. However the site is relatively flat and any visual effect can be mitigated if not eliminated by appropriate landscaping.

Solar farms are virtually silent in operation. They have a number of advantages compared to traditional farming landscapes. Once constructed, they are secure sites with little disturbance from associated human activity and machinery. Indeed, solar farms have no moving parts. Properly designed landscaping can provide specific wildlife habitats. A network of habitats will be created across the site, connecting with the existing hedgerows along its southern and western boundaries, and beyond.

Redgrave Footpath 015 will be affected, and any development will need to preserve the public right of way along this footpath.

Question 7j

There are no existing buildings or uses that will require relocation before the site could be developed.

Question 7k

Given its location on the southern edge of the village, away from most of Redgrave's commercial and community facilities, a solar farm seemed an obvious use for this particular site.

A solar farm sits lightly on the ground, and requires little continuing maintenance. Current farms of the type proposed have a lifetime of about 20 to 25 years and, ultimately, it is usually a totally reversible land use.

Most new solar farms now include some form of battery storage to maintain a continuity of supply throughout the year. Battery storage is very compact and would take up little space on site.

Redgrave already has considerable experience and expertise in running community enterprises. The solar farm could be an opportunity to further this community enterprise, provided it can produce a viable return for all parties concerned.

Our plan includes two plots, facing Redgrave Footpath 015, for houses to match the type and size of neighbouring properties. In keeping with the solar farm, our vision is of houses built to the highest possible energy efficiency standards, which would themselves be self-sufficient in energy generation. These plots would probably be most suited for self builders who share this vision.

Cecil Elliston Ball

on behalf of Ms. Sophie Chappell and Mr Ben Holt-Wilson

11 November 2019