

Hello, I am a Councillor for Frodsham Town Council, and Resident of Frodsham. These comments are my own, and do not necessarily reflect the official position of FTC.

Broadly speaking, I am in favour of more solar powered energy generation, and whilst I can think of better places for a solar farm (I.e on every roof and over every carpark in the land for a start!) than Frodsham Marsh, but if it must be built here then it's impact on the local residents and their lives should not be adverse.

Many of the points I will present here have already been raised with the solar farm representatives, by myself and others already, however the resulting responses have not been entirely satisfactory.

Firstly, access to the site. By law the developers are required to enhance active travel opportunities on their development sites. Currently the marshes are already a popular destination of walkers, bird watchers and cyclists. Cubico earlier this year told us they might create a network of paths, with hides for bird watching, but I would like to see greater commitment to this idea than was forthcoming at the time. I would also like to see commitment to a range of access ways suitable not just for pedestrians but those who might want to cycle, riding or wheeling. I would also like to see how these active travel routes would be maintained and managed.

I am also glad that Axis/cubico were able to do some more testing on possible chemical contamination of the site.

However I believe they can and must do more in this regard. Several locals have expressed concern that over the last century, large amounts of dangerous chemicals were dumped in the marshes and that disturbing this could be disastrous. After being pushed at the meetings last January, axis/cubico arranged for a few more tests. But these seem to have been highly selective and limited to one small part of the site. I would like to see greater commitment to the safety of the public and their own workers by conducting tests over a wider area, before work begins.

The suggested community benefit fund of £60k seems disproportionately low given the size and yield of the solar farm site. The adjacent wind farm CBF is twice that! I believe that this is insufficient when compared to the significant visual and practical impact the solar farm will have on the local residents, the damage done to the local ecosystem, and effects on tourism in the area. I would also like to propose that local councillors or similar from the area be appointed to help determine what be done with such a fund, as happens with the Protos CBF currently.

The greatest impact of the Solar farm will be visual. Its going to be huge, and visible for miles around. This will ruin the view over the marshes, and as Frodsham attracts walkers and tourists for whom that view is an attraction, businesses in Frodsham will directly suffer, to say naught of the eyesore inflicted on residents who will be afflicted with it daily!

The Axis/Cubico position appears to be that something that big can't be hidden entirely so there is no point even trying. When they were questioned on their plans for mitigation the response was almost apathetic. I am not at all satisfied with this given the problem could be solved with things that are found naturally on our planet in huge numbers: trees!

Strategically placed rows of trees between the solar panels and the town could easily mitigate the visual impact and prevent the landscape looking completely industrial! One of my colleagues has already sent you their response with a cery detailed explanation of why this wouldn't even adversely impact the effectiveness of the solar panels.

I think that covers the main issues. I hope you can give them due consideration and look forward to seeing how this project progresses.

Thank you!

Cllr Aidan Holman