



Frodsham Solar
Environmental Statement: Volume 2 Appendix 6-4
Residential Properties

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Appendix 6-4

Residential Properties

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 The purpose of this Appendix to the Environmental Statement ('ES') is to support the exclusion of a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment ('RVAA') from the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment ('LVIA') set out in **ES Volume 1 Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Amenity [EN010153/DR/6/1]**.

1.1.2 Paragraphs 7.5.6-7.5.12 and Table 7.4 of the Scoping Report (**ES Volume 2 Appendix 4-1 [EN010153/DR/6/2]**) proposed that RVAA be scoped out of the LVIA, with the rationale for this summarised in Table 7.4 as follows:

"The Proposed Development would comprise structures that are relatively low height, and which are not located in close proximity to residential properties. The nearest properties are separated from the Site by the M56. Views of solar panels and associated infrastructure would not result in visual change that would materially affect residential amenity".

1.1.3 In the Scoping Opinion (**ES Volume 2 Appendix 4-2 [EN010153/DR/6/2]**) a request was made by both PINS and CWaCC that RVAA should be included in the LVIA. CWaCC's comment was based upon potential glint and glare effects, reflecting the initial Glint and Glare Assessment that formed part of the Scoping Report (**ES Volume 2 Appendix 4-1 [EN010153/DR/6/2]**). This preliminary assessment was based on geometric modelling, i.e. *"is solar reflection from the panels to identified receptors geometrically possible?"* and concluded that a moderate glint and glare effect would be experienced at 24 dwellings, with mitigation recommended to reduce this.

- 1.1.4 In relation to RVAA, as part of post-scoping consultation held with CWaCC, it was agreed that the LVIA should provide justification as to why this should be scoped out of the assessment.
- 1.1.5 **ES Volume 2 Appendix 4-3 [EN010153/DR/6/2]** includes the detailed Glint and Glare Assessment. This was undertaken reflecting changes to the configuration of the Solar PV Panels that would change the “*geometric relationship between the sun, solar panels, and observer such that the solar reflections will no longer be possible or will be significantly reduced*”, and the use of antireflective coating, and also took account of the duration of glint and glare effects at each property and the circumstances of each property (including the presence of screening features).
- 1.1.6 This concluded that no property would experience a moderate effect, but that low glint and glare effects would be experienced at 31 properties located at the northern edge of Frodsham. No glint and glare effects were identified at either of the residential caravan sites located off Brook Lane.

2.0 RESIDENTIAL VISUAL AMENITY ASSESSMENT

- 2.1.1 The purpose of RVAA is to consider how the change in view resulting from the presence of the Proposed Development would impact upon the visual component of residential amenity (as distinct from other aspects such as noise) of nearby properties and whether the predicted effects would affect living conditions.
- 2.1.2 Paragraph 6.17 of *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*¹ (‘GLVIA’) is clear that:

“...Effects of development on private property are frequently dealt with mainly through ‘residential amenity assessments’. These are separate from LVIA although visual effects assessments may sometimes be carried out as part of a residential amenity assessment in which case this will supplement and form part of the normal LVIA for a project...”

¹ Landscape Institute and Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment (3rd edition 2013). *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*. Abingdon: Routledge

2.1.3 The key consideration in relation to RVAA is set out in paragraph 2.1 of *Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) Technical Guidance Note 2/19*² ('TGN 02/19'), reflecting the findings made at a number of public inquiries, and reflects the factors need to be weighed in the planning balance when considering the difference between significant visual effects and unacceptable effects on residential amenity. The key consideration is:

"Is the effect of the development on Residential Visual Amenity of such nature and/or magnitude that it potentially affects living conditions' or Residential Amenity?"

2.1.4 This is referred to as the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold ('RVAT').

2.1.5 The relevant consideration for the LVIA is whether or not the RVAT would be exceeded at any property as a result of the Proposed Development.

2.1.6 In relation to the Proposed Development, the new structures proposed would be relatively low in height, would be separated from most of the nearby residential properties south of the M56 (which are approximately 150m from the Solar Array Development Area) by the motorway, by a line of electricity pylons and by vegetation cover which runs (with gaps) through the land between the motorway and the edge of Frodsham.

2.1.7 Two residential caravan sites are also located off Brook Furlong to the north-west of Frodsham (north of the M56). These lie adjacent to the Order Limits. Both sites have been developed without planning permission. In September 2022 CWaCC took enforcement action against the southerly of the two sites, requiring the cessation of the residential use of the Site, and that all unauthorised development is removed and the area restored to grassland. At the same time planning applications for the two sites were submitted to CWaCC (ref 22/03308/FUL & 22/02292/FUL) for change of use of the land to a residential caravan site. An appeal against the enforcement notice was submitted by the occupants of the Site. On 26th July 2024 the Inspector appointed for the appeal upheld the enforcement notice and planning permission 22/03308/FUL was refused. At the time of writing, both of the caravan sites remain

² Landscape Institute (2019). *Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) Technical Guidance Note 2/19*

in use. As a precautionary approach, both sites have been considered as visual receptors in the LVIA.

- 2.1.8 **Images 1 to 5** overleaf include plans and photographs illustrating the disposition of nearby properties, and/or the existing visual relationship between these and the Solar Array Development Area, and the limited potential for change in view to result in effects on amenity.

Image 1 – Location Plan



Image 2 – Caravan Sites



Image 3 – View from properties where ‘moderate’ Glint and Glare effects were predicted by the preliminary assessment included in the Scoping Report, but where ‘low’ Glint and Glare effects are predicted following the detailed assessment included in the Environmental Statement (LVIA Viewpoint 3)



Image 4 – View from public footpath adjacent to properties at the northern edge of Frodsham



Image 5 – View from Ship Street, Frodsham, north of public open space and properties



- 2.1.9 Any view of the Proposed Development from any nearby property south of the M56 would occur in the context where existing pylons and motorway traffic are already visible, and where some degree of screening by vegetation is typically present. Potential effects arising from glint and glare would be mitigated via the changes to the arrangement of the Solar PV Modules and the use of antireflective coating, the presence of vegetation cover, and the particular circumstances of the properties affected which are set out in **ES Volume 2 Appendix 4-3 [EN010153/DR/6/2]** (e.g. effects occurring for less than 60 minutes per day, views from upper windows only, effects only occurring in periods of direct sunlight, distance from Solar PV Modules etc).
- 2.1.10 The residential caravans on the northern side of the motorway would be located between the pylons and the road and would benefit from screening provided by landform, existing vegetation, and proposed planting.
- 2.1.11 In this context, whilst there may be views of the Proposed Development from some properties, it is clear that visual change would not occur to such a degree that the living conditions of residents would be affected to the degree that any property would become an unattractive and unsatisfactory place (but not necessarily uninhabitable) place to live. The RVAT would not therefore be breached.
- 2.1.12 As such, it is justifiable and reasonable that RVAA be scoped out of the LVIA, as proposed in the Scoping Report.