

Impact on Residents and Users of Potash Lane

Reference is made to **Core Document A18 – Glint and Glare Assessment**.

This statement considers the impact of the proposed development on both current and future residents of Potash Lane, as well as on the many people who regularly use this rural lane.

While we are current residents, we will not occupy our homes for the full lifespan of the proposed solar park. Many existing residents are older and even less likely to do so. For this reason, this statement reflects not only our own experience, but also that of future residents whose quality of life would be affected by the development over time.

Impact on Residential Amenity

The proposed solar panels are planned to face directly onto Potash Lane. As a result, residents would be confronted by a large expanse of solar panels immediately outside their homes. Even on dull or overcast days, the reflective surfaces of the panels would remain visually prominent. Reflections from the panels, known as glint and glare, would therefore be a regular and unavoidable feature, rather than an occasional occurrence.

There is currently no formal national guidance for assessing glint and glare from solar developments. However, industry specialists commonly rely on guidance published by Pager Power (*Independent Solar Photovoltaic and Building Development Glint and Glare Guidance, 4th Edition, September 2022*). This guidance states that where views of solar panels exist, reflections may occur and can have a harmful impact on residential amenity.

Glint and glare are visual effects caused by sunlight reflecting from the surface of solar panels. Glint refers to a concentrated flash of reflected light, while glare describes a more diffused but sustained reflection. Glare may occur from any point where the panel face is visible, particularly when low sun angles allow reflected light to be directed towards nearby receptors.

The Glint and Glare Assessment identifies that solar reflections are geometrically possible towards 54 of the 139 assessed dwelling receptors. As a single receptor may represent more than one dwelling, this indicates that more than 54 dwellings may potentially be affected.

Given the orientation of the panels towards Potash Lane and nearby residential properties, glint and/or glare would be visible particularly during early morning and late afternoon when the sun is low in the sky. As the panels would remain in place for the lifetime of the development, these reflections would occur repeatedly over extended periods of the year rather than as isolated incidents.

The assessment results indicate that users travelling along Potash Lane would experience glint somewhere on their journey during early morning hours between approximately 05:22 and 06:10, and during the evening between approximately 18:09 and 18:32, from mid-March through to October.

If Dwelling Receptor 132 is considered as an example (photograph below), the results on p40 show that this dwelling would experience approximately 56 minutes of glint per day for around four months of the year. Despite this, the assessment concludes that existing screening would significantly block the reflecting panel area and that no impact is predicted.

However, the diagram (p69) titled *Impact Significance Determination for Dwelling Receptors* identifies two key criteria for determination of impact.

- solar reflection lasting more than three months of the year
- solar reflection lasting more than 60 minutes per day

Applying these criteria, Dwelling Receptor 132 falls within the medium impact category and close to the high-impact threshold. Despite these results and having no screening the report concludes that there would be no impact. Considering the permeable nature of the hedgerows along the lane other dwellings would also experience medium impact glint and glare, albeit to a lesser degree than this example I've given.

Yet the report (p47) says 'Existing screening is predicted to significantly reduce the visibility of the reflective area for all 54 dwelling receptors. Therefore, no impact is predicted and no mitigation is required.'

Given the predicted frequency, duration, and repetition of glint and glare events, the conclusion of "no impact" for all dwellings is not supported by the evidence presented. These repeated and prolonged periods of solar reflection would result in a significant and unacceptable impact on residential amenity, particularly for the most directly affected properties, and more generally for all along Potash Lane.

Impact on Lane Users and Rural Enjoyment

Potash Lane is heavily used by walkers, dog walkers, and horse riders, as evidenced by the presence and regular use of facilities such as the dog waste bin along the route. It is a valued rural lane enjoyed by both local residents and the wider community.

The proposed development would result in the full length of the lane facing the solar array, replacing open countryside views with an industrial landscape. This would introduce a visual impact that would significantly reduce the enjoyment of the lane for users, both people and animals.

Although landscaping and screening are proposed, these measures would not adequately mitigate the scale or nature of the development. Screening would be ineffective during winter months, uncertain in terms of long-term growth and maintenance, and incapable of addressing the loss of openness or the sense of enclosure created by the installation. As a result, the harm experienced by residents and lane users would remain substantial.

Conclusion

Taken together, the scale, siting, and duration of the proposal would cause lasting harm to the character, tranquillity, and amenity of Potash Lane. A rural landscape that has been valued and protected for generations would be fundamentally altered, resulting in a loss that cannot be justified or adequately mitigated.

