



Frodsham Solar
Pre-Examination Project Update Newsletter

July 2025

Introduction

Frodsham Solar Limited, a Cubico Sustainable Investments entity, is proposing Frodsham Solar, a solar farm with energy storage, situated north of Frodsham in Cheshire.

This newsletter follows the submission of our Development Consent Order (DCO) application, which has now been accepted for examination. Read on for an update on the latest proposals, details of how to find out more information, and an explanation of the next steps.

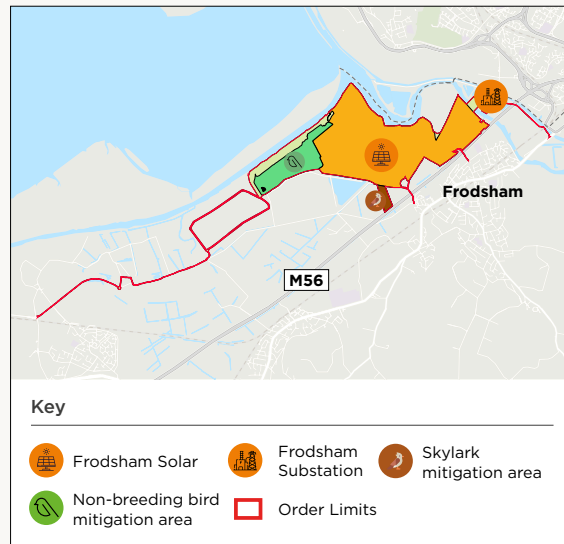
About the project

Frodsham Solar is a solar farm which would generate electricity from a renewable source through ground-mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, generating enough electricity to power approximately 40,000 homes. The proposals also include energy storage – often referred to as a Battery Energy Storage System (or 'BESS') – to store and reliably supply electricity when it is needed.

The project design includes the necessary infrastructure to connect the electricity into the regional distribution network at the existing Frodsham Substation, to provide opportunities for future direct connections to local industry, and also includes provision for mitigation and enhancement in terms of landscaping, biodiversity and permissive paths.

The site is north of Frodsham in Cheshire, close to Frodsham Substation. Part of the solar farm site would be shared with the existing Frodsham Wind Farm. Protos, an important energy and resource hub, neighbours the site. The project sits in an area of industry looking to lead the way in the deployment of low carbon infrastructure. It supports Cheshire West and Chester's ambitions to become net zero by 2045 and Net Zero North West's vision to become the world's first net zero industrial cluster by 2040.

Frodsham Solar is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) given the amount of renewable electricity it could generate. This means that a final decision on whether the project is able to proceed will be made by the Secretary of State. If the project is granted consent, it will be given a Development Consent Order (DCO).










Where we are now

We submitted a DCO application for Frodsham Solar in May 2025. The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) has reviewed the materials and accepted this application for examination, which is a statutory part of the process for nationally significant infrastructure projects. The examination of the DCO application will commence later this year and will be held for up to six months. More details will be publicised once they are confirmed.

Between Thursday 17th July and Thursday 28th August 2025, you will be able to register as an Interested Party in the application. Interested Parties may participate in the Examination of the application and will receive formal notifications as the Examination progresses. You can do this by visiting the PINS project website: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010153>

The opportunity

Frodsham Solar is being designed to:

-  Export up to **100 MW of clean, reliable, home-grown electricity** to SP Energy Networks, who are responsible for distributing electricity across Cheshire and Merseyside. This is equivalent to **powering approximately 40,000 homes**.
-  **Directly supply local industry with clean power** (subject to agreement). The site sits centrally within the Energy Innovation District, enabling Frodsham Solar to **produce power in an area that currently consumes around 5% of the UK's energy**.
-  Bolster UK energy security with the use of a battery energy storage system (BESS) to **store and reliably supply electricity when it is needed**.
-  Provide opportunities for **improved public access and recreation** by adding **5.1km of new permissive routes** that will connect up existing underused public rights of way to provide a series of more accessible routes and loops through the area. The enhanced access network will benefit from new waymarking signage and interpretation panels describing the site's natural and industrial heritage.
-  **Boost biodiversity**, achieving a net gain in habitat and hedgerow units such as through retaining and planting trees, native woodland, shrubs and scrub planting, hedgerows, wetland scrapes and ponds, and species-rich grassland.
-  Be accompanied by a **community benefit fund scheme**.
-  Create over **100 full time (or equivalent) jobs** over the construction period, as well as creating opportunities for the local supply chain.

Our proposals

The proposals for Frodsham Solar have been developed through extensive assessment work and informed by the feedback we have received through consultation and engagement.

Educational and community visits: designated seating and interpretation areas are included to support school and community visits.

Increasing public access: 5.1 km of permissive paths have been proposed across the site, with provision made for walkers, cyclists, and for equestrian use.

Protecting and enhancing habitats for wildlife: the proposals are designed to increase the level of biodiversity across the site. This will be achieved through measures such as retaining trees and grassland alongside and underneath the panels, planting new native woodland and scrub planting, enhancing hedgerows, wetland scrapes and ponds, and establishing new species-rich grassland.

Supporting birdlife: over 80 hectares of new and enhanced habitat have been designed to support wetland birds and skylarks.

Managing flood risk: solar panels and other equipment have been appropriately raised in the more flood-sensitive areas of the site. This is to ensure they stay above predicted flood levels for the full 40-year operational lifespan, taking into account the potential increased flooding levels from the effects of climate change.

Opportunity to directly supply local industry: the proposals have been designed to allow for future connections to be developed to directly supply renewable electricity to local industrial businesses that have high energy demand.

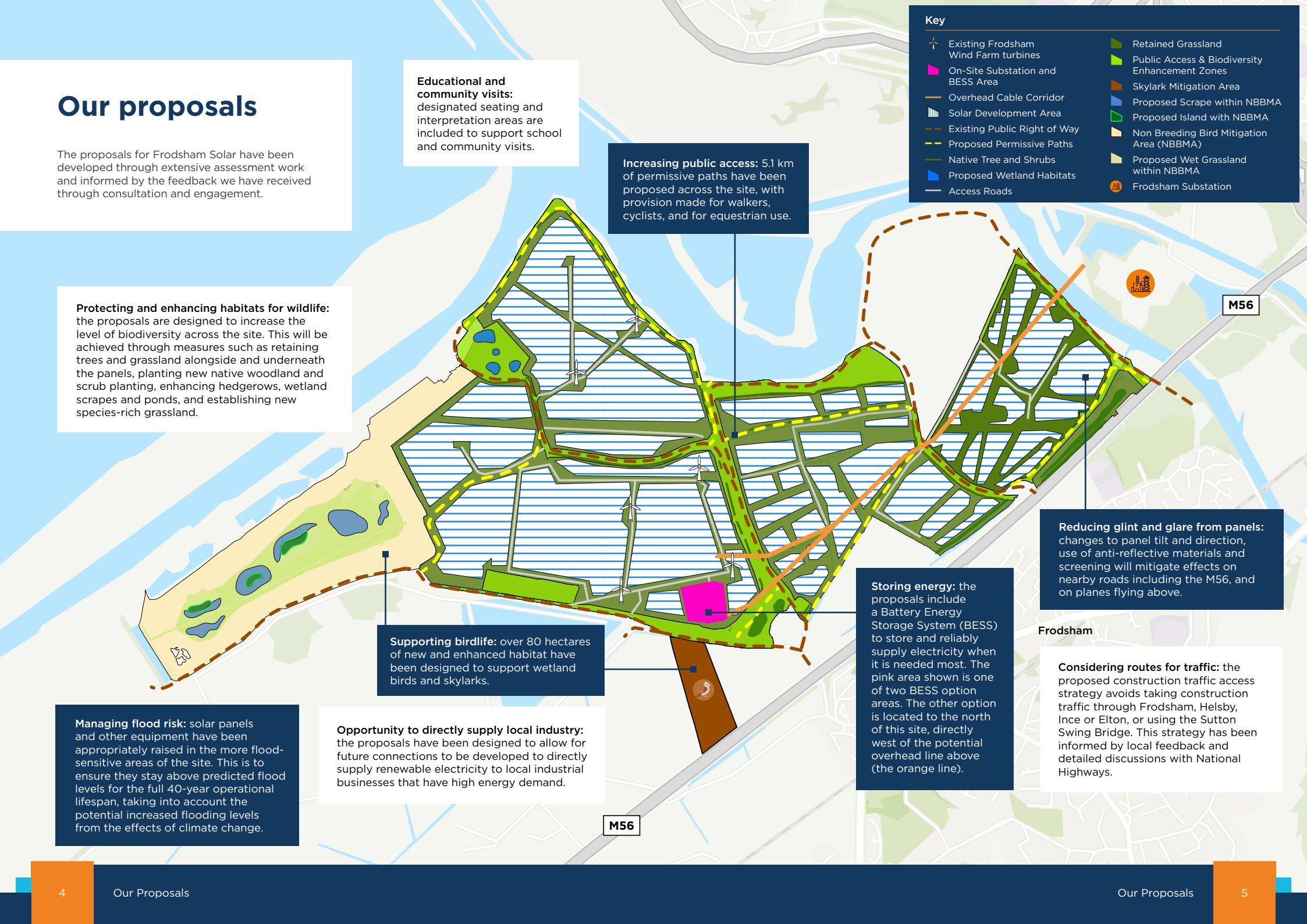
Storing energy: the proposals include a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) to store and reliably supply electricity when it is needed most. The pink area shown is one of two BESS option areas. The other option is located to the north of this site, directly west of the potential overhead line above (the orange line).

Reducing glint and glare from panels: changes to panel tilt and direction, use of anti-reflective materials and screening will mitigate effects on nearby roads including the M56, and on planes flying above.

Considering routes for traffic: the proposed construction traffic access strategy avoids taking construction traffic through Frodsham, Helsby, Ince or Elton, or using the Sutton Swing Bridge. This strategy has been informed by local feedback and detailed discussions with National Highways.

Key

- Existing Frodsham Wind Farm turbines
- On-Site Substation and BESS Area
- Overhead Cable Corridor
- Solar Development Area
- Existing Public Right of Way
- Proposed Permissive Paths
- Native Tree and Shrubs
- Proposed Wetland Habitats
- Access Roads
- Retained Grassland
- Public Access & Biodiversity Enhancement Zones
- Skylark Mitigation Area
- Proposed Scrape within NBBMA
- Proposed Island with NBBMA
- Non Breeding Bird Mitigation Area (NBBMA)
- Proposed Wet Grassland within NBBMA
- Frodsham Substation



Key DCO documents and environmental considerations in response to feedback

The DCO application includes an extensive series of documents, such as a draft Development Consent Order describing the powers being sought, an Environmental Statement assessing the potential effects and proposed mitigations associated with the project, and a Consultation Report describing the phases of consultation undertaken and how feedback received has influenced our proposals.

We have published a Guide to the Application ([which can be viewed here](#)). The table below also sets out some of the key documents.

The Planning Inspectorate has published an [Examination Library](#) for the project, providing a unique reference for all application documents. References for some of these documents are set out in the table below.

Area of interest	How we have considered these areas of interest in the application documentation	Document Reference
The consultation undertaken and how we considered feedback received	The Consultation Report, including a series of appendices, documents the pre-application consultation process carried out and sets out how this has complied with relevant legislation and requirements. Importantly, it also describes how the project has been adjusted or influenced in response to feedback. The Consultation Report includes tables of responses and the Applicant's replies, demonstrating a transparent consultation record.	Consultation Report [APP-022]
The powers being sought	The DCO, if granted by the Secretary of State, will be a statutory instrument authorising the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of Frodsham Solar. This document sets out the powers we are seeking and the relevant conditions (known as DCO Requirements).	Draft Development Consent Order (DCO) [APP-015]
Environmental Assessments	The Environmental Statement provides a comprehensive assessment of environmental effects of the project. Readers concerned with specific issues (for example, how the Frodsham Solar might affect local wildlife or traffic or views) can find the relevant chapter and see both the analysis and supporting data. Each topic in the Environmental Statement includes a review of how this project interacts with other developments nearby. Mitigation has been designed accordingly.	Environmental Statement (ES) [APP-033 to APP-124]
Bird Mitigation & Habitats	54 hectares (133 acres) of new/enhanced wetland/grassland + 28 (69 acres) hectares of Skylark bird mitigation has been proposed.	ES Chapter 8: Ornithology [APP-041] and the Outline Landscape and Ecology

Area of interest	How we have considered these areas of interest in the application documentation	Document Reference
Flood Risk Adaptation	We have designed the project to be resilient to existing and predicted risks of flooding across the site, and to avoid increasing the risk of flooding in the wider area in the future.	Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy [APP-084 to APP-088]
Public Access	We are proposing 5.1 km of new accessible permissive routes across the site.	Design Approach Document [APP-130] and Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan [APP-144]
Community Education	We are proposing outdoor learning and interpretation features.	Illustrative Environmental Masterplan [within APP-106]
Glint & Glare	We have adjusted panel angles, applied anti-reflective materials, as well as additional visual screening to mitigate glint and glare.	ES Glint & Glare Assessment Appendix [EN010153/DR/6.1]
Ground Conditions	We have conducted contamination assessment + targeted investigations; and have set out protocols for unexpected contamination.	ES Chapter 10: Ground Conditions [APP-043] , Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [APP-136] , and outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan [APP-138]
Construction Traffic	Construction traffic will avoid key towns and villages including Frodsham and Helsby, and Sutton Bridge, which has been agreed in engaging with National Highways.	Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [APP-135]
Landscape & Visual Impact	We have undertaken assessments from key hills including Frodsham Hill; and have included planting designed for year-round screening in our plans.	ES Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Amenity [APP-039] and Illustrative Environmental Masterplan [within APP-106]
Ecological Surveys	As well as the extensive ecological surveys carried out to date, pre-construction checks for protected species will be carried out	ES Chapter 7: Terrestrial Ecology [APP-040] and Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [APP-138]
Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)	We have set out how we will secure a minimum 10% BNG, which includes mitigating and enhancing trees, wetlands, hedgerows and grassland.	We have set out how we will secure a minimum 10% BNG, which includes mitigating and enhancing trees, wetlands, hedgerows and grassland. Biodiversity Net Gain Report [APP-143] and Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan [APP-144]

Next Steps

Frodsham Solar is now at the 'pre-examination stage' of the DCO process.

During this time, an Examining Authority will be appointed to lead the examination into the proposals.

Between Thursday 17th July and Thursday 28th August 2025, you will be able to register as an Interested Party in the Examination. Interested Parties may participate in the examination of the application and will receive formal notifications as the Examination progresses. Look out for details on the Frodsham Solar website and the Planning Inspectorate's page (<https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010153>).

The pre-examination stage usually takes around three months, after which the Examination will commence. The Examination can take up to six months, following which the Examining Authority will have three months to write and submit a recommendation report to the Secretary of State, to inform their decision on whether to grant consent for the project to be built (which will follow up to three months following his receipt of the recommendation report). A final decision on the plans is expected to be made in late 2026.

In the meantime, you can continue to contact our team with any questions you might have using the details below.

Contact Us

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you would like to find out more information about Frodsham Solar using any of the methods below.



Email: info@frodshamsolar.co.uk



Freephone information line: 0808 175 4004



Freepost: FREEPOST FRODSHAM SOLAR



Website: www.frodshamsolar.co.uk

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