

Appendix 3 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment

Introduction

1. This Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) has been in accordance with Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 2/19: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (15 March 2019). The TGN states that:
"The purpose of carrying out a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) is to form a judgement, to assist decision makers, on whether a proposed development is likely to change the visual amenity of a residential property to such an extent that it becomes a matter of 'Residential Amenity'."
2. And further that:
*"Changes in views and visual amenity are considered in the planning process. In respect of private views and visual amenity, it is widely known that, no one has 'a right to a view.' ...
It is not uncommon for significant adverse effects on views and visual amenity to be experienced by people at their place of residence as a result of introducing a new development into the landscape. In itself this does not necessarily cause particular planning concern. However, there are situations where the effect on the outlook / visual amenity of a residential property is so great that it is not generally considered to be in the public interest to permit such conditions to occur where they did not exist before."*
3. This assessment considers only what the resident may see from a property. Views or 'visual amenity' are just one component of residential amenity and the two should not be confused. The latter is a planning matter and may also include aspects such as noise, air quality, traffic, etc., in addition to residential visual amenity. This RVAA considers the visual amenity aspects of residential amenity. Where necessary, other aspects are considered in other relevant reports accompanying the planning application and it is for decision makers to weigh all these aspects, and documents/assessments relating to them, in determining the acceptability of a proposal.
4. Overall residential amenity, considering other factors such as noise, is discussed within the planning statement accompanying the application for the proposed development.
5. This assessment, and the process of RVAA, seeks to identify where effects on residential visual amenity are of such a nature or magnitude that they may need to be considered in the overall balance of 'Residential Amenity' or 'Living Conditions'. The point at which this happens is referred to as the Residential Visual Amenity (RVA) Threshold.

Methodology

Study Area

6. There are no standard criteria for defining the RVAA study area and this is determined on a case by case basis. The guidance note identifies that for large structures, such as wind turbines, a preliminary study area of 1.5-2km radius may be appropriate to begin identifying properties for inclusion within RVAA, but for other developments the study area would be much reduced in proportion to their size. In this case, a study area of 300m has been considered appropriate.
7. Properties are usually assessed individually but may be considered in groups where the outlook or views are essentially the same; for example, a row of houses that all share an open outlook towards the site. Where properties are grouped for assessment, this will be clearly identified and reasons for grouping described.

Approach

8. TGN 2/19 advocates a four-step process to RVAA with the first three falling broadly within the scope of LVIA where the magnitude and significance of visual effects is assessed. It follows the same general approach as that of the LVA and may draw on its findings, supplemented by other information (ZTVs, visualisations, fieldwork) as required. The first three steps of the process can be summarised as:
 - Preliminary review

- Evaluation of baseline visual amenity
 - Assessment of the likely change to visual amenity
9. The fourth step involves a further assessment of the change to visual amenity of individual properties identified as *“having the greatest magnitude of change”* (i.e. Large magnitude within this assessment) and identifying whether the RVA threshold is reached. Where a magnitude of change is identified that is less than Large, this final step is not required as the effects would not reach the RVA threshold.

Preliminary Review and Evaluation of Baseline Visual Amenity

10. The first step considers whether a property requires more detailed assessment or if effects are *“judged unlikely to occur or so insignificant that it is not essential to consider them further”* (GLVIA3, para. 3.19), for example, where properties are outside of the ZTV or would experience such limited views that the change to the outlook would be negligible. These properties are identified, and a brief summary is provided but no further consideration is given to these within the assessment. Properties that are financially involved with the proposed development are also identified at this stage as, typically, it is understood that those with such a vested interest would be content with any consequential change to their living conditions.
11. Where it is identified that notable effects may arise at a property, the existing baseline visual amenity is described. This is done ‘in the round’ and considers both views from the dwelling itself, garden areas and driveways and views experienced when arriving or leaving the property. This step is informed by desk study and field surveys from nearby publicly accessible locations.

Assessment of the Likely Change to Visual Amenity

12. The change views and visual amenity as a result of the proposed development is described for each property and a judgement on the magnitude of change and level of effect¹ likely to be experienced is provided. This involves consideration of the following factors:
- Distance between the property and proposed development and their relative locations (e.g. up/down hill);
 - Nature of available views (e.g. panoramic, enclosed) and the effect of daily or seasonal variations;
 - Direction of view or aspect of property affected;
 - Extent to which the proposed development may be visible from various parts of the property (e.g. dwelling, rooms, access, garden);
 - Scale of change to views, including the proportion of view occupied by the proposed development;
 - Compositional changes (e.g. loss/addition of landscape features such as woodland);
 - Contrast or integration of new features with the existing views;
 - Any uncertainties inherent to the design of the proposed development (e.g. micro-siting allowances); and
 - Duration and nature of changes (e.g. temporary/permanent, intermittent/continuous).
13. This stage may be supported by a range of visual aids as required including maps, ZTV studies, photography and visualisations. The choice of visual aids is determined on a case by case basis and may be informed by consultation. In line with best practice guidance² the type of visualisation should be proportionate to the nature of the proposed development and assessment stage.

RVAA Judgement

14. This final stage is concerned with identifying *“whether the predicted effects on visual amenity and views at the property are such that it has reached the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold, therefore potentially becoming a matter of Residential Amenity”*. This is the key concern of RVAA and judgements on the RVA threshold are set out clearly and unambiguously for those properties where detailed assessment has identified the property or

¹ Note that in considering the level of effect, all residential receptors are treated as being of High sensitivity (high susceptibility and high value) as directed by TGN 02/19 para. 4.23

² Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19: Visual Representation of Development Proposals

group of properties as likely to experience the greatest magnitude of change (Large) 'such that the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold may be engaged'³.

Cumulative Developments

15. The RVAA is undertaken against the baseline as set out within the LVA and includes consideration of any pertinent consented developments unless there is clear reason to believe that they would not be built. Future, unconsented, cumulative development is generally not a RVAA consideration and is not included within this assessment.

Distances/Directions

16. Where distances and directions are given within the assessment, these are distances between the nearest part of the property (including garden and driveway areas) and the nearest mast, unless explicitly stated otherwise. Distances given are rounded to the nearest 10m to account for the level of accuracy available in techniques used to measure (usually based on aerial photography within a GIS).

Assessment

17. RVAA Figure 1, included within Annex A, illustrates the location of individual and groups of properties within the 300m RVAA study area. The assessment is provided in the table overpage and is supported by further detailed illustrations and visualisations for individual properties/groups, as required, in Annex A.
18. The following properties are not considered in detail, for the reasons set out below:
 - P1 Magpies, P2 Abbotts Lodge, P3 Blackthorns, P4 Dunelm, P12 Heriots – would have no visibility of the proposed masts due to enclosure of the properties, including their gardens, by dense vegetation, as shown on Figure 1.

³ TGN 02/19 – *Figure 1 RVAA Process*

Ref	Property	Distance to nearest mast	Magnitude of Change	Level of Effect	Assessment
P5	Nelson's Orchard	c. 195m (main garden)	Large	Major	This property is currently undergoing building works, having been recently extended southwards and had the roof raised to create first floor rooms, as shown in the photographs of the property but not yet captured on the aerial photograph or TrueView Visualisation. The rear garden contains mature trees in the north and west. The south west boundary of the property is partially open. From the planning application drawings, there appear to be seven first floor windows in the west elevation that will potentially have views towards the proposed masts, with only the southern most of those potentially having open views that are not interrupted by the mature trees. Large scale changes to views would arise from a Limited extent of the property. Due to the filtered nature of most views, with more limited views from within the house and during summer, the Proposed Development would not be overbearing and the RVA threshold would not be exceeded.
P6	Grange Farm Bungalow	c. 175m (main garden)	Medium	Major/ moderate	This property is a bungalow of 1.5 storeys and faces south east on to Nelson's Lane. It has a small garden that wraps round the property and includes mature trees in the rear garden to the north west. It is not possible to establish if there are any windows that look towards the Site from publicly accessible locations nearby. However, there is an electricity pylon located on the garden boundary of the property, dominating views to the north west. Medium scale changes to views would arise from a Localised extent of the property. As the magnitude of effects is below Large, there is no potential for the RVA threshold to be exceeded at this property.

Ref	Property	Distance to nearest mast	Magnitude of Change	Level of Effect	Assessment
P7	Nicholas House	c. 160m (main garden)	Large	Major	This two storey property has been relatively recently built, replacing a previous industrial unit on the site. The property faces south east on to Nelson's Lane and has largely open views in this direction, with some enclosure provided by conifers along the front garden boundary. It is not possible to establish if there are any windows that look towards the Site from publicly accessible locations nearby. However, from the planning application drawings, there appear to be three first floor windows and five ground floor windows in the west elevation that would have views towards the proposed masts. The rear garden of the property contains very little vegetation, and both the rear garden and the property currently have open views towards the Site. The existing pylon to the north of the property is currently visible in views from the property, in a separate area of the view to the proposed masts, but with the overhead lines crossing the views. Large scale changes to views would arise from an Intermediate extent of the property. Although there are open views from the rear of the property and its garden, they would be oblique towards the closest proposed mast and views towards the second proposed mast would be across the rear garden of Knowlands and through mature trees in that garden. Given the presence of the existing row of pylons closer to the property, the oblique views and the filtering of views to the second proposed mast, the Proposed Development would not be overbearing and the RVA threshold would not be exceeded.

Ref	Property	Distance to nearest mast	Magnitude of Change	Level of Effect	Assessment
P8	Knowlands	c. 120m (main garden)	Large	Major	This two storey property has been relatively recently extended, adding side and rear extensions. The property faces south east on to Nelson's Lane and has largely open views in this direction, with some enclosure provided by conifers along the front garden boundary. In views from Nelson's Lane to the north east, there appear to be three first floor windows in the west elevation that would have views towards the proposed masts. The ground floor windows were not visible from this location, but the planning application drawings indicate large windows to living rooms on the ground floor. The rear garden of the property contains mature trees along the south west boundary, which screen views to the west, and single storey garden buildings on the north west boundary. The existing pylon to the north of the property is currently visible in views from the property, in a separate area of the view to the proposed masts, but with the overhead lines crossing the views. Large scale changes to views would arise from an Localised extent of the property. Although there are open views from the rear of the property and its garden, they would be oblique and filtered by the mature trees along the south west boundary of the garden from most locations within both the house and garden. Given the additional presence of the existing row of pylons closer to the property, the Proposed Development would not be overbearing and the RVA threshold would not be exceeded.
P9	Grange Farm	c. 210m (main garden)	Small	Moderate	This two storey property faces north west toward Nelson's Lane, but is set back from the road with a large front garden containing mature trees. These form a belt along Nelson's Road and along part of the south western boundary of the garden. Vegetation along Nelson's Lane adds further screening in views towards the Site. A large area of the front garden is used for parking. The property has open views to the south east over agricultural land. Although there are both ground and first floor windows on the front of the property, any views from the property and front garden towards the Site are heavily filtered by the mature trees. Small scale changes to views would arise from a Localised extent of the property. As the magnitude of effects is below Large, there is no potential for the RVA threshold to be exceeded at this property.

Ref	Property	Distance to nearest mast	Magnitude of Change	Level of Effect	Assessment
P10	Stable View	c. 225m (main garden)	Small/ negligible	Minor	This single storey property is almost entirely screened from view from Nelson's Lane by a hedgerow and scattered trees around the property and Grange Farm. Vegetation along Nelson's Lane adds further screening in views towards the Site. Any views of the proposed masts would be filtered during the winter and heavily filtered in the summer. As the magnitude of effects is below Large, there is no potential for the RVA threshold to be exceeded at this property.
P11	The Phoenix	c. 155m (main garden)	Large	Major	This property is a single storey bungalow and faces south east on to Nelson's Lane. It has a small garden that wraps round the property and includes mature trees in the front garden and to the north east of the property. The property is surrounded by Phoenix Park to the north and east, and an animal rescue centre to the west. There are further trees within the grounds of Phoenix Park that filter views towards the Site. There is an existing pylon to the north west of the property that is currently visible in views from the property, in a separate area of the view to the proposed masts, and there are overhead lines crossing the views. The pylon is located closer to the properties than the proposed masts. It is not possible to establish if there are any windows that look towards the Site from publicly accessible locations nearby. Large scale changes to views would arise from a Localised extent of the property. Views from the rear of the property and its garden towards the proposed masts would be oblique. Given the presence of the existing row of pylons closer to the property, the Proposed Development would not be overbearing and the RVA threshold would not be exceeded.

Summary and Conclusions

19. The aim of the RVAA seeks to identify where effects on residential visual amenity are of such a nature or magnitude that *"the effect on the outlook / visual amenity of a residential property is so great that it is not generally considered to be in the public interest to permit such conditions to occur where they did not exist before."*
20. There are 12 residential properties within the 300m RVAA study area, as illustrated on Figure 1 in Annex A, that are shown by the ZTV study to have potential visibility of the Proposed Development.
21. Four of these, P5 Nelson's Orchard, P7 Nicholas House, P8 Knowlands and P11 The Phoenix, would experience the highest magnitude effects although in none of these cases is it considered that the RVA threshold would be reached due to there being some degree of screening, the presence of existing pylons closer to the properties than the proposed masts, physical separation or only limited parts of the property being more notably impacted. The proposed masts would not appear to be overbearing or overwhelming at these properties.
22. The assessment concludes that in no case would effects be of such nature and / or magnitude that it potentially affects living conditions at any property to the point it becomes an unattractive place to live, when judged objectively in the public interest.

Annex A – Plans and Visualisations

- Figure 1 Properties within 300m study area
- P5 Nelson's Orchard (aerial view)
- P5 Nelson's Orchard (photographs)
- P5 Nelson's Orchard (TrueView visualisation)
- P6 Grange Farm Bungalow (aerial view)
- P6 Grange Farm Bungalow (photographs)
- P6 Grange Farm Bungalow (TrueView visualisation)
- P7 Nicholas House (aerial view)
- P7 Nicholas House (photographs)
- P7 Nicholas House (TrueView visualisation)
- P8 Knowlands (aerial view)
- P8 Knowlands (photographs)
- P8 Knowlands (TrueView visualisation)
- P9 Grange Farm and P10 Stable View (aerial view)
- P9 Grange Farm and P10 Stable View (photographs)
- P9 Grange Farm and P10 Stable View (TrueView visualisation)
- P11 The Phoenix (aerial view)
- P11 The Phoenix (TrueView visualisation)

Inset plans – key

Legend	
	Nearest mast
	Furthest mast



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PHOENIX PARK

Residential Visual Amenity Assessment
Figure 1
Residential Properties

- Masts
- Distance from masts (300m)
- Residential properties



Drawing No: ABS-0066-RVAA1	Drawn By: RK	QA: MF	Date: 2025-05-22
Scale: 1:2,500	Drawing Size: A3	Revision: 01	

Coordinate System:
OSGB36 / British National Grid

P5 Nelson's Orchard – Aerial View



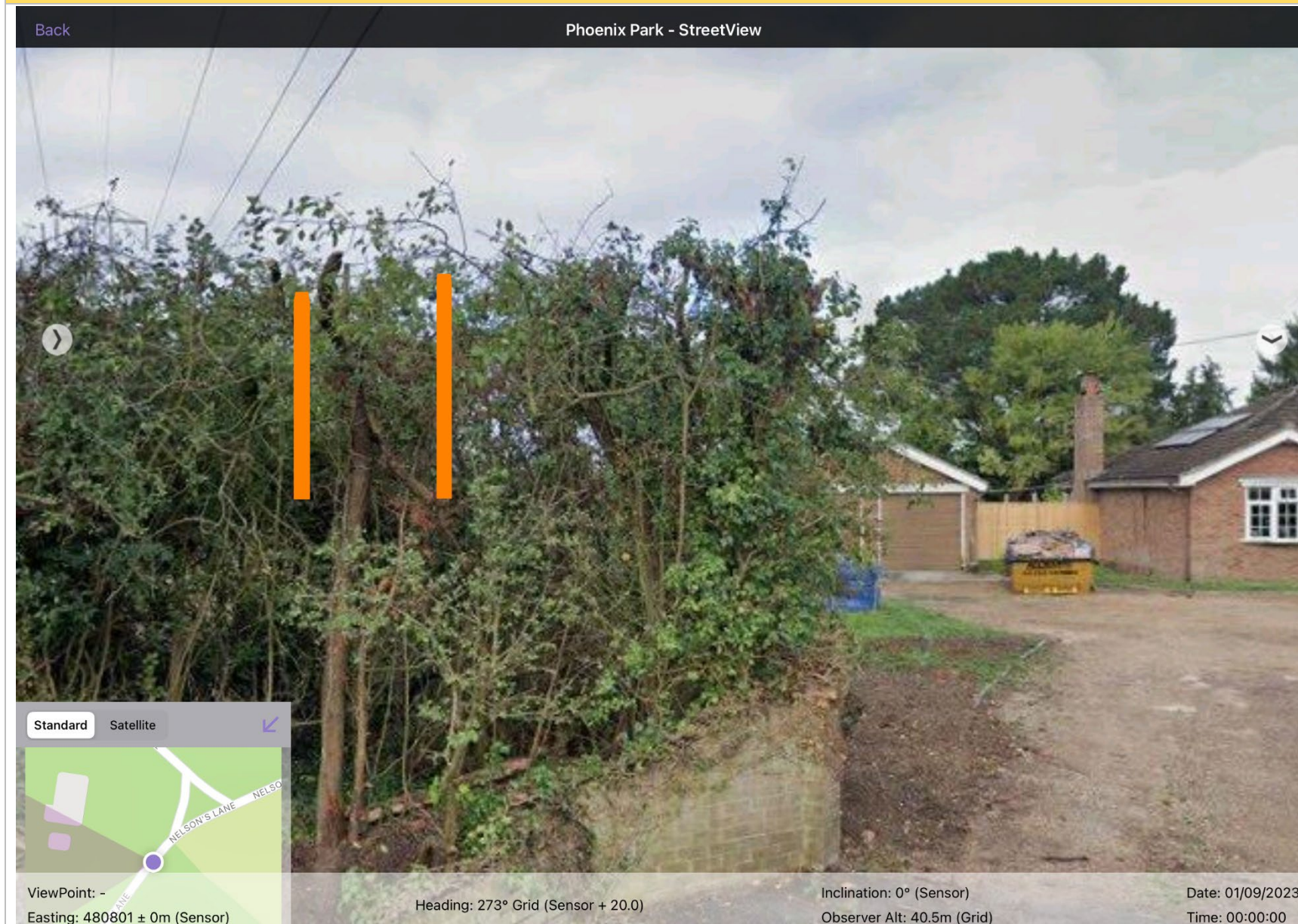
P5 Nelson's Orchard Photo 1 - View north west from main entrance



P5 Nelson's Orchard Photo 2 - View north towards southern elevation



P5 Nelson's Orchard – TrueView Visualisation



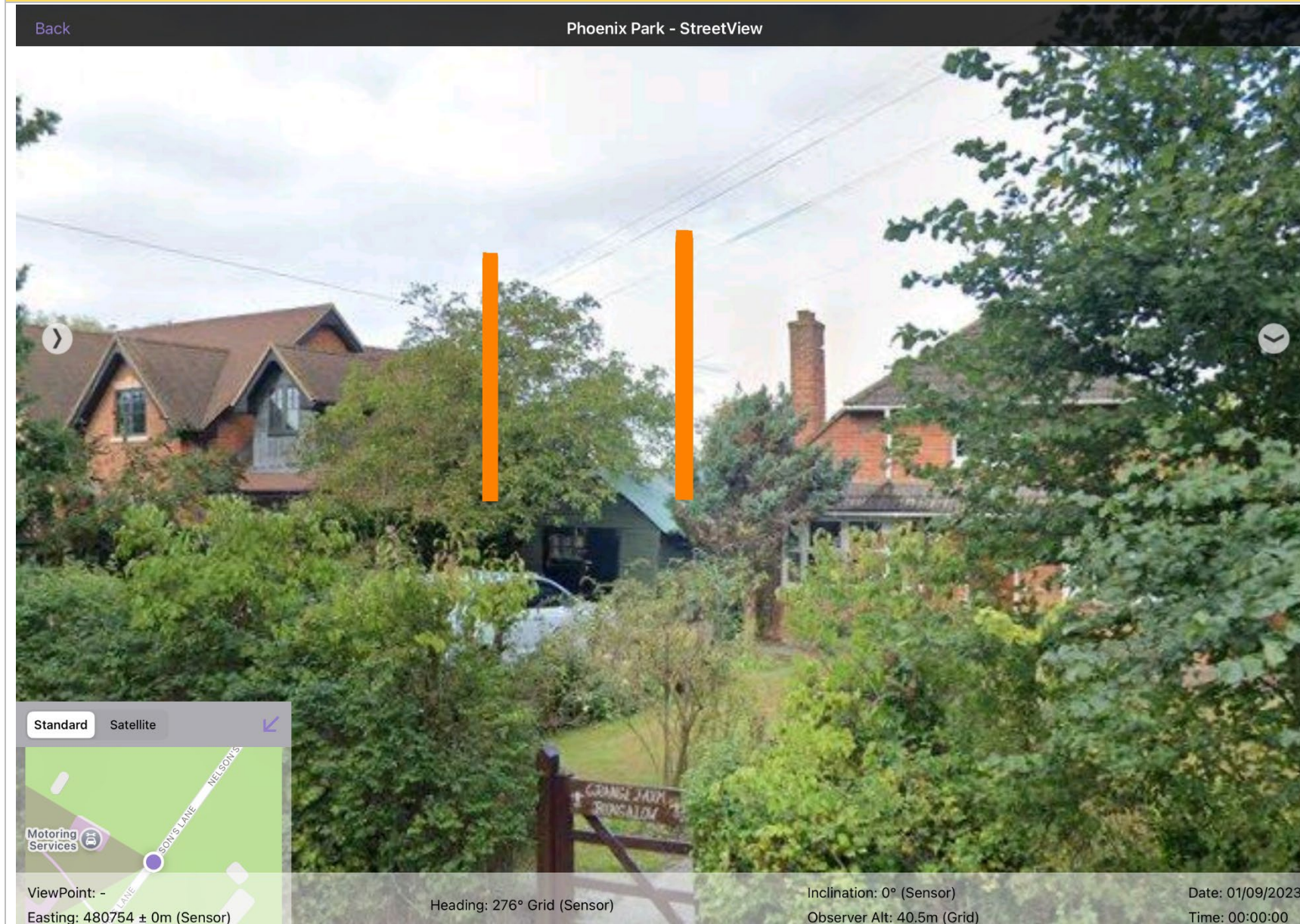
P6 Grange Farm Bungalow – Aerial View



P6 Grange Farm Bungalow Photo 1 - View north west from main entrance



P6 Grange Farm Bungalow – TrueView Visualisation



P7 Nicholas House – Aerial View



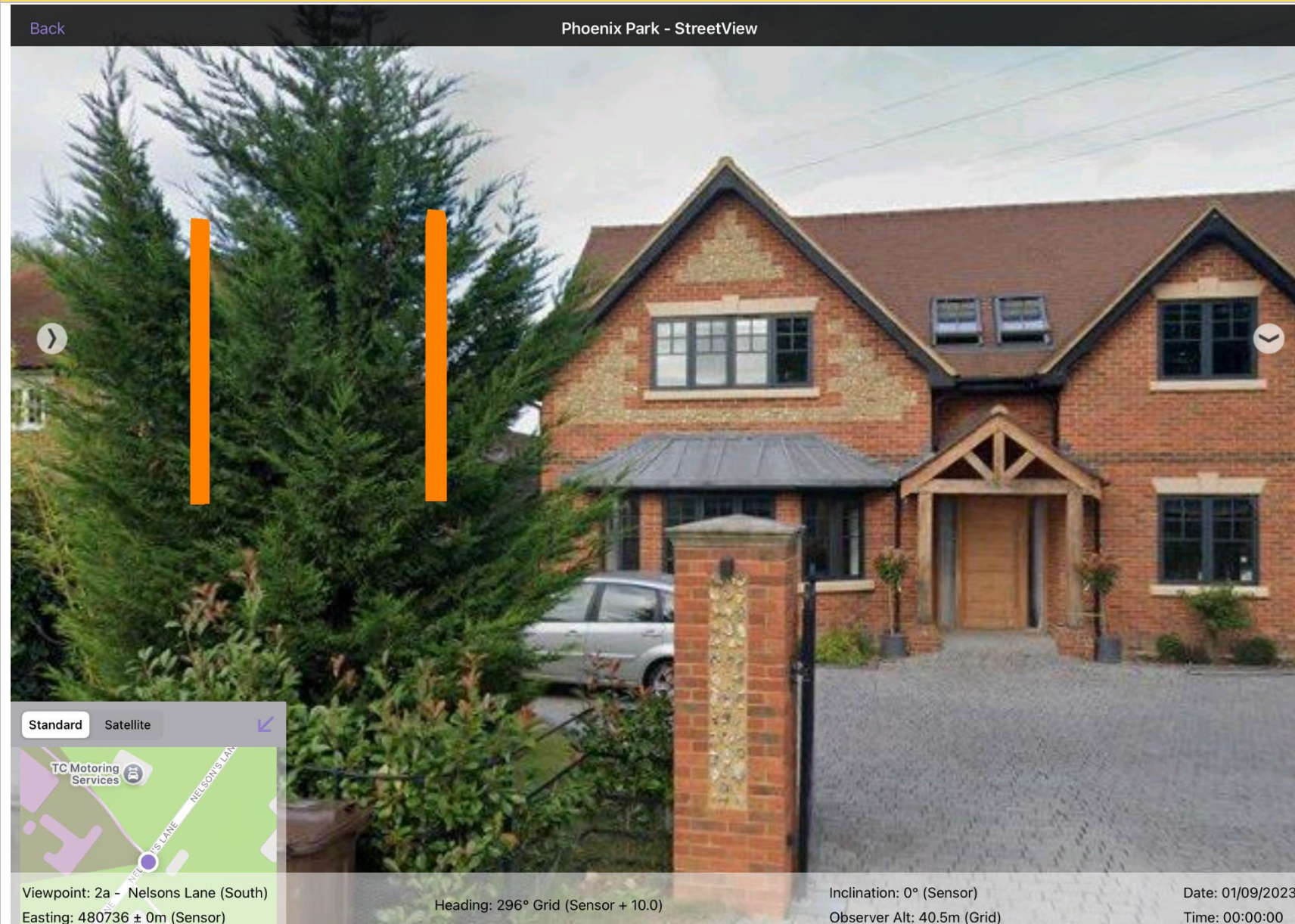
P7 Nicholas House Photo 1 - View north west from main frontage



P7 Nicholas House Photo 2 - View north from main frontage



P7 Nicholas House – TrueView Visualisation



P8 Knowlands – Aerial View



P8 Knowlands Photo 1 - View north from main entrance



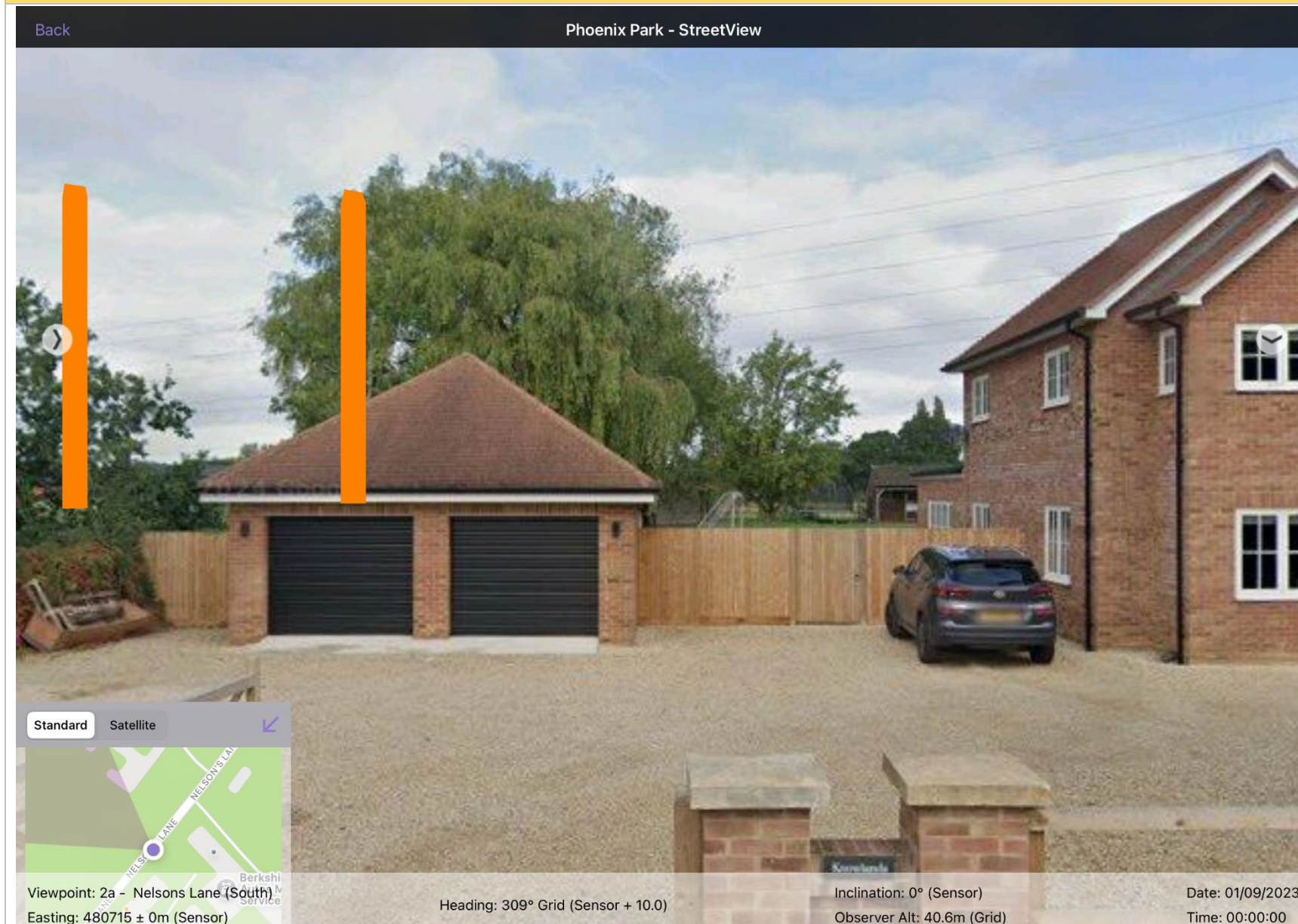
P8 Knowlands Photo 2 - View north west from main entrance



P8 Knowlands Photo 3 - View south towards rear of property



P8 Knowlands – TrueView Visualisation



P9 Grange Farm and P10 Stable View – Aerial View



P9 Grange Farm Photo 1 - View south east from main entrance



P10 Stable View Photo 1 - View north from main entrance



P9 Grange Farm and P10 Stable View – TrueView Visualisation



P11 The Phoenix – Aerial View



P11 The Phoenix – TrueView Visualisation

