

Planning Supporting Statement of Case

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This Planning Supporting Statement accompanies a formal planning application following the withdrawal of the pre-application enquiry to Ribble Valley Borough Council for the siting of a proposed field mounted PV array on land within the overall curtilage of Lower barn farm, Whalley Road, Sabden. BB7 9DT. This statement, together with plans and a full architectural appraisal prepared by Peter Hitchen Architects sitting alongside a personal statement from the applicant, forms the complete pre-application enquiry.

1 Site Location

- 1.1 The application site comprises a substantial detached former farmhouse. The site chosen for the PV Array is on an adjacent field to the south of the existing residential curtilage close to an existing stable building and riding arena and is all within the applicant's overall ownership.
- 1.2 The land around and within the curtilage is gently undulating. There is a public right of way cutting through part of the curtilage but the location of the panels means that this is not affected by the proposal.

2 The Proposal

- 2.1 The applicant enquires as to whether or not there is planning policy support at both the national and local level, for the erection of an array of frame mounted PV cells within part of the field identified in the site location plan. The area of land required for the panel array is approximately 200sq m.
- 2.2 Peter Hitchen Architects have produced a detailed set of plans to accompany the pre-application enquiry. Amongst these plans are profiles of the PV array, their setting within the landscape having regard to the fact that they must be south facing, on open land and in direct sunlight whilst at the same time meeting a requirement not to be visually prominent. Peter Hitchen Architects have also produced a design brief which must be read in conjunction with the plans. The applicant has also produced a personal statement which sets out his family's

ambitions to follow the thrust of Government advice with regard to climate change, of becoming carbon neutral and, by doing so, the commitment in overall investment terms.

- 2.3 In the interests of clarity, it is not a purpose of this planning statement to repeat the details contained in the information provided either by the applicant or Peter Hitchen in their respective statements/design brief.

3 The Development Plan

- 3.1 It is respectfully submitted that the key policy within the current development plan, relative to the proposal is Key Statement DME5; that policy, set out below states:

POLICY DME5: RENEWABLE ENERGY

THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY SCHEMES, PROVIDING IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT SUCH DEVELOPMENTS WOULD NOT CAUSE UNACCEPTABLE HARM TO THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT OR LOCAL AMENITY. IN ASSESSING PROPOSALS, THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL HAVE PARTICULAR REGARD TO THE FOLLOWING ISSUES:

1. THE IMMEDIATE AND WIDER IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON THE LANDSCAPE, INCLUDING ITS VISUAL IMPACT AND THE CUMULATIVE IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT.
2. THE MEASURES TAKEN TO MINIMISE THE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY
3. THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS THE PROPOSALS MAY BRING
4. THE VISUAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS, INCLUDING DESIGN, COLOUR AND SCALE

5. THE DEGREE TO WHICH NUISANCE CAUSED BY NOISE AND SHADOW FLICKER TO NEARBY RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES, AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS, RECREATIONAL AREAS OR THE FUNCTION OF THE COUNTRYSIDE CAN BE MINIMISED

6. NATIONAL OR LOCAL TARGETS FOR GENERATING ENERGY FROM RENEWABLE SOURCES AND FOR REDUCING CARBON EMISSIONS AS SPECIFIED WITHIN POLICY DMG1

7. THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON BIODIVERSITY. THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE DECENTRALISED AND RENEWABLE OR LOW CARBON ENERGY IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS TO MEET NATIONAL STANDARDS. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WITHIN OR CLOSE TO THE AONB, SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST, SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION AND SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS, NOTABLE HABITATS AND SPECIES, LOCAL NATURE RESERVES, BIOLOGICAL HERITAGE SITES OR DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS AND THEIR SETTING WILL NOT BE ALLOWED UNLESS:

1. THE PROPOSALS CANNOT BE LOCATED OUTSIDE SUCH STATUTORY DESIGNATED AREAS;

2. IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE OBJECTIVES OF THE DESIGNATION OF THE AREA OR SITE WILL NOT BE COMPROMISED BY THE DEVELOPMENT

3. ANY ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AS FAR AS PRACTICABLE HAVE BEEN MITIGATED.

Outside these areas renewable energy schemes will be considered to be appropriate in principle subject to other policies in the plan.

NOTE THAT ANY DEVELOPMENT THAT IMPACTS A SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENT WILL ALSO REQUIRE SCHEDULED MONUMENT CONSENT – SEE POLICY DME 4 ABOVE.

The delivery of renewable energy contributes to measures in support of climate change adaptation and securing sustainable development. It is important that renewable energy is facilitated in a way that protects the quality of the local area yet recognises the need to support climate change adaptation. This policy serves to identify where such schemes are likely to be considered acceptable.

- 3.2 Peter Hitchen Architects have produced a site plan showing this boundary very clearly. It is the case, set down very clearly in both Peter Hitchen Architects statement and that from the applicant, that the PV panel array has been located in a position to minimize any impact on The open countryside. This position allows for the maximum exposure to the sun without any risk of the site being overshadowed and the fact that this site is the least visible when viewed from the wider area. It is the case that if the site were moved elsewhere in the client's ownership on the other side of the house, the PV cells would be extremely visible in the wider landscape. For these reasons it is respectfully submitted that the proposal is considered acceptable within the context of the overall siting.

4 National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 It is considered that the most relevant current policy is set out in chapter 14 of the NPPF; this chapter relates to meeting the challenge of climate change, Flooding and Coastal Change.
- 4.2 Paragraph 152 states: The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.
- 4.3 Paragraph 153 states: Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for

flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure.

- 4.4 Whilst it is accepted that the Framework is not a *carte blanche* free for all in putting climate change measures anywhere and everywhere, it is reasonable to conclude that there must be tacit support for a proposal that is extremely low key, essentially for private domestic use and will, as a matter of fact; contribute to the battle against climate change

Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to National Planning Policy

- 4.5 The Planning Authority may be aware that there will be a revised and amended National Planning Policy Framework issued in 2023 [expected in the first half of the year]. Whilst the devil will be in the detail, this will cover a range of planning focused issues not least of all polices related specifically to tackling climate change. The review indicates that Better environmental outcomes: Planning can make an important contribution to conserving and enhancing the natural environment, and the vitally important task of mitigating and adapting to climate change. We committed in the government's Net Zero Strategy, published in October 2021, to review the National Planning Policy Framework to make sure it contributes to climate change mitigation and adaptation as fully as possible. In advance of next year's wider review, which will consider the issue further, we are exploring how to do more through planning to measure and reduce emissions in the built environment. We also propose to do more to support environmental enhancement, nature recovery and climate change adaptation; to mitigate the effects of pollution; and to embed the important reforms introduced by the Environment Act.

Leaving the environment in a better state and tackling climate change are two of the greatest long-term challenges facing the world today. The government is committed to ensuring that the town and country planning and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project regimes contribute to addressing both of these challenges. The planning system should, as a whole, reflect the government's ambition to help business and communities protect and enhance the environment for future generations, build a net zero carbon future, and adapt to the impacts of climate change. National planning policies and guidance, spatial development strategies and local plans should all contribute to this core objective of planning.

The National Planning Policy Framework already places environmental objectives at the heart of the planning system, making clear that planning should protect and enhance our natural environment, mitigate and adapt to climate change, support the transition to a low carbon future and take full account of flood risk and coastal change. The Environment Act has further strengthened the role of the planning system, through mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Recovery Strategies, setting the foundations for planning to have a more proactive role in promoting nature's recovery. Government is setting targets under the Environment Act, which will also drive action across government including through the proposed changes to the planning system to deliver environmental improvement. The changes we have committed to are designed to support more holistic place making – through application of the National Design Guide, National Model Design Code and local design codes – will also contribute to these objectives.

- 4.6 With the emphasis in the review very clearly focusing on climate change issues, it is considered that the principle of what is being proposed in the pre-application enquiry is entirely in accord with the aims and objectives of national policy.

5 Site Visit protocol

- 5.1 The applicant and his agent, Peter Hitchen Architects, wish for a site meeting with the case officer; this will enable a fruitful and beneficial discussion to take place

with regard to the proposal particularly in regard to the siting of the array. If this cannot take place then after the case officer has undertaken a site visit, a meeting is requested to discuss the proposal; this can, of course, be done by online by Zoom. In this regard, the case officer is expected to make direct contact with peter Hitchen Architects.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 The details contained in the pre application submission relate to the provision of a PV array to be located close to the house and it's associated buildings on the edge of the AONB. The array is for purely private and domestic use and forms an integral part of the applicant's intentions to invest in the overall drive to become carbon neutral and to contribute, in some small way, to the overall Government initiatives in tackling climate change.
- 6.2 It is considered that planning policies at the national and local level lend support to the proposal.