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| **Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Signed:** | **Officer:** |  | | | | **Date:** |  | **Manager:** | |  | | **Date:** |  |
| **Site Notice displayed** |  | **Photos uploaded** | | | |  |  | | | | | | |
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| **Application Ref:** | | | 3/2021/0278 | | | | | |  | | | | |
| **Date Inspected:** | | | 10/9/2021 and 8/10/2021 | | | | | |
| **Officer:** | | | **AD** | | | | | |
| **DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:** | | | | | | | | | **Decision** | | **Approve** | | |
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| **Development Description:** | | | | | Ground mounted installation of solar array for energy generation. | | | | | | | | |
| **Site Address/Location:** | | | | | **Dudland Hollins Gisburn Road Gisburn BB7 4HL** | | | | | | | | |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:** | | | | | **Parish/Town Council** | | | | | | | | |
| No comments received. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:** | | | | | **Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies** | | | | | | | | |
| **LCC Highways:** | | | | |  | | | | | | | | |
| No objection subject to conditions. The solar array is a significant distance away from the public highway and is sheltered by trees at the site and in the surrounding fields. Therefore, even if the solar panels reflect, they are unlikely to impact on the public highway. Conditions – (i) PP not authorisation for stopping up; closure; obstruction or diversion of a Public Right of Way (ii) measures to ensure that users of the Public Right of Way are not exposed to any elements of danger. Informative – Public Right of Way.  **Sabic:**  Same land parcel as Trans-Pennine Ethylene Pipeline. Advice that the fenced area is kept outside the pipeline 6m easement.  Pipeline safety and engineering integrity – developer needs to submit design drawings for approval (concern re: location of metallic structures/routing of electrical cables and impact on land drainage).  Advice that Sabic be consulted on all work within 50m either side pipeline.  (7/10/2021) Site visit with developer. Fenced area is outside the pipeline 6m easement requested. Developer has contacted Sabic to obtain approval to work within 50m of pipeline. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **CONSULTATIONS:** | | | | | **Additional Representations.** | | | | | | | | |
| None received. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| **RELEVANT POLICIES:** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**  Key Statement DS2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development  Key Statement EN2: Landscape  Policy DMG1: General Considerations  Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations  Policy DME1: Protecting Trees and Woodlands  Policy DME2: Landscape and Townscape Protection  Policy DME5: Renewable Energy | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Relevant Planning History:**  3/2009/0051 - Proposed replacement dwelling (following demolition of the existing house). | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| **ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Site Description and Surrounding Area:**  The site is on the brow of a hillside within the narrow strip of open countryside between the main area of the Forest of Bowland AONB and the Pendle Hill outlier. It is removed from the Dudland Hollins farmstead.  The site is very visible from public rights of way which follow the main Dudland Hollins access and the southern boundary of the field in which the solar array is proposed.  Topography and trees/hedgerow screen the site from most views from the north and east. However, the site has reciprocal views with Pendle Hill to the south.  TheTrans-Pennine Ethylene Pipeline runs immediately to the south of the site. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**  Planning permission is sought for a ground-mounted installation of solar array for energy generation in the field to the north of Dudland Hollins.  The application form suggests (Q10) that there are no trees or hedges on land adjacent which could influence the development or might be important to local landscape character.  Plans submitted 16 September 2021 show the proposed array of 48 photo-voltaic modules to be arranged in two rows (each 24.77m). The modules are 2.03 m in height and orientated at 30 degrees to the south-east. The array is enclosed within timber fencing 28.4m x 8.5m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Impact upon the setting of the Forest of Bowland AONB:**  Renewable energy schemes are to be welcomed in principle (carbon footprint reduction) – this scheme will avoid 8,698 kg of CO2 emissions a year (90% for Dudland Hollins power consumption; surplus to the grid). However, Core Strategy policies require consideration to landscape impacts in the open countryside areas adjoining (and forming the setting of) the AONB. Policy DMG2 requires the AONB Management Plan to be considered:  “the duty, for all public bodies and statutory undertakers, to ‘have regard’ … to consider any detrimental impacts of their policies and activities outside as well as within the boundaries of any AONB” (page 11).  “The area was designated … The serenity and tranquillity of the area” (page 13).  The associated Landscape Character Assessment does not refer specifically to solar arrays (although there is discussion of tall structures and light pollution and impacts on tranquility).  The Forest of Bowland AONB Renewable Energy Position Statement from 2014 identifies (re: c. 22 kW ‘Medium scale’, removed from the farmsteading and exports some energy to the grid):  “3.3 The Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee considers that medium and large scale renewable energy development is not appropriate within the Forest of Bowland AONB (or in locations beyond the boundary where development would affect its setting and character) as it has significant potential to adversely affect the natural beauty of the AONB and to compromise the purpose of the statutory designation”.  The proposed array is not within a built -up area or group of buildings and is not adequately screened to the south (inter-visibility with Pendle Hill and potential impact to the ‘serenity and tranquility’ of the AONB – views from Pendle Hill considered 8/10/2021). Re-siting the array closer to the house (tree screening of Pendle Hill) would not present technical issues in respect to renewable energy generation (agent). However, re-siting is not proposed because this would impact use of the field and field access.  However, the agent confirms that panels have an anti-reflection coating. The Head of Planning has assessed the site and advises that there is no reason to object or ask for more information. It does not have an impact on the trees and Sabic are satisfied and no harmful  visual impact. Therefore, the proposals have an acceptable impact upon the open countryside adjoining the Forest of Bowland AONB and are in accordance with Core Strategy Key Statement EN2 and EN3 and Policy DMG2, DMG1 and DME5. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Residential Amenity:**  There is no harmful impact to residential amenity. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Sabic pipeline** **safety and engineering integrity:**  The applicant is in communication with SABIC. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Highways:**  The comments of LCC Highways have been considered and suggested conditions/informatives are necessary.  **Trees and Hedgerows:**  The impact on trees and hedgerows has been considered. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**  The proposals have been considered in respect to Core Strategy Key Statement EN2 and EN3 and Policy DMG2, DMG1 and DME5, NPPG (Renewable and Low Carbon Energy’ paragraph 12), the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan and The Forest of Bowland AONB Renewable Energy Position Statement 2014). | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **RECOMMENDATION**: | | | | That planning permission be approved subject to conditions. | | | | | | | | | |