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| **Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.** |
| **Signed:** | **Officer:** | BT | **Date:** | 9/4/24 | **Manager:** | **LH** | **Date:** | **9/4/24** |
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| **Application Ref:** | 3/2024/0091 |  |
| **Date Inspected:** | 25/10/23 | **Site Notice:** | 8/4/24 |
| **Officer:** | BT |
| **DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:**  | **APPROVAL** |
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| **Development Description:** | Proposed provision of GPR substation to house ENWL infrastructure and associated alterations to site layout. |
| **Site Address/Location:** | Root Farm, Dunsop Bridge, BB7 3BB. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Parish/Town Council** |
| **Bowland Forest Higher Division Parish Council:** | No objections – supportive of the application. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies** |
| **Environment Agency:** | No objection subject to adherence with standing advice. |
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| **Natural England:** | No objections. |
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| **RVBC Environmental Health:** | No objections subject to conditions. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Additional Representations.** |
| None. |
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| **RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:** |
| **Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy Key Statement DS2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable DevelopmentKey Statement EN2: LandscapeKey Statement EC1: Business And Employment DevelopmentPolicy DMG1: General Considerations Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations Policy DMG3: Transport And MobilityPolicy DME6: Water ManagementPolicy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth And The Local EconomyPolicy DMB5: Footpaths And BridlewaysNational Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) |
| **Relevant Planning History:****3/2023/0817:**Demolition and conversion of farm buildings to employment space (Use Class E) including demolition of agricultural building and new build workshop (pursuant to variation 2 on permission 3/2021/0952 to amend approved plans). (Approved)**3/2023/0800:**Non material amendment to planning permission 3/2021/0952 involving conclusion of phase 2 works prior to occupation instead of prior to commencement (Approved)**3/2023/0586:**Approval of details reserved by conditions 4 (solar panels), 6 (landscaping), 8 (construction management plan/method statement), 11 (highway works) and 16 (service management plan) of planning permission 3/2021/0952 (Approved)**3/2021/0952:**Demolition and conversion of farm buildings to employment space (Use Class E) including demolition of agricultural building and new build workshop (Approved)**3/2012/0003:**Proposed demolition and re-build of the old doctors surgery to create a two-bed self-contained holiday cottage with disabled access (Approved) |
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| **ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:** |
| **Site Description and Surrounding Area:**The application relates to a farmstead in Dunsop Bridge within the Forest Of Bowland National Landscape. The farmstead comprises two stone barns, a farmhouse property, holiday let property and a block of animal stalls. Access to the application site is from Newton Road from the North-west via an access track which also serves as a Public Right Of Way. The surrounding area comprises a mixture of woodland, agricultural land and open countryside. |
| **Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**Planning Consent is sought for the installation of an electricity substation and associated alterations to the site including minor reconfigurations of previously approved soft and hard landscaping arrangements and the relocation of previously approved vehicular parking spaces. |
| **Principle Of Development:**Planning consent was granted as part of application 3/2021/0952 for the demolition and conversion of farm buildings within the application site for the purposes of creating new employment space. The application’s supporting information states that the proposed substation unit would increase the existing electrical supply to both the application site and surrounding area at Dunsop Bridge. As such, the proposed development would serve as essential infrastructure for an approved commercial site and the surrounding locality and is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle subject to an assessment of additional material planning considerations.  |
| **Impact Upon Residential Amenity:**The proposed electricity substation would be sited approximately 50 metres away from the residential property of Root Farm which is sited within the confines of the application site however the proposed infrastructure would be located in close proximity to numerous industrial units within a site approved for commercial use. As such, it is not anticipated that any residual noise emanating from the proposed infrastructure would exceed the noise levels associated with the approved commercial use of the site. In addition, the proposed development has been subject to review from the Council’s Environmental Health team who have raised no issues with respect to nose impacts from the proposed infrastructure. Accordingly, it is not considered that the proposed development would have any undue impacts upon neighbouring amenity. |
| **Visual Amenity/External Appearance:**Paragraph 135 (c) of the NPPF states:*‘Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting’.*Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy provides additional general design guidance as follows: *‘All* *development must* *be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing and style…particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character.’*With respect to development within National Landscapes (previously known as Areas Of Outstanding Natural Beauty) Paragraph 182 of the NPPF states:*‘Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.’*The above is reiterated within Key Statement EN2 of the Core Strategy: ‘*The landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Any development will need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area. As a principle the Council will expect development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials.’*In this instance the proposed electricity substation would be a modest structure in terms of height and footprint and would be sited in close proximity to an approved industrial unit of considerably larger proportions. As such, the proposed infrastructure would not read as an over dominant or isolated addition to the application site. Furthermore, the proposed infrastructure would be predominantly enclosed by timber fencing to match fencing treatments approved for use in the site therefore the visual impact of the proposed infrastructure would be negligible. The proposed amendments to soft and hard landscaping within the site would amount to a minor reduction to the site’s grassed area in order to accommodate the proposed infrastructure and a minor increase in hardstanding to the Southern perimeter of the site in order to accommodate a turning head for fire safety vehicles respectively. As with the proposed infrastructure, these alterations would constitute a minor change to the approved layout of the site therefore the visual impact of these works would be minimal.Taking account of the above, it is not considered that the proposed development would be harmful to the rustic character of the application site or visual amenities of the surrounding National Landscape. The proposal would therefore satisfy the requirements of Paragraph 135 (c) and 182 of the NPPF and Key Statement EN2 and Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy. |
| **Highways and Parking:**The proposed development includes a minor amendment to the location of overspill vehicle parking spaces previously approved for the site whereby the approved overspill vehicle parking spaces would be relocated approximately 3-5 metres further East of their originally proposed position. Lancashire County Council Highways have not been consulted on the application however the relocation of the aforementioned vehicle parking spaces constitutes a minor change to the layout of the site therefore no adverse impacts upon highway safety are anticipated from this minor change to the site’s layout. |
| **Landscape/Ecology:**The application site lies within SSSI Impact Risk Zones pertaining to Bowland Fells Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) with Magic Map analysis showing a requirement to engage in formal consultation with Natural England due to the development category of the proposed development (Pipelines and underground cables, pylons and overhead cables). The proposed development has therefore been subject to formal review by Natural England who have raised no objections to the installation of the proposed infrastructure. No other ecological constraints were identified in relation to the proposal. |
| **Other Matters:**Flood RiskThe application site lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3. A flood risk statement with accompanying mapping analysis has been provided in support of the application which shows only a small portion of the site’s access as lying within Flood Zones 2 and 3, with the proposed location for the infrastructure being sited within Flood Zone 1 approximately 150 metres away from the affected part of the site’s access. Furthermore, formal consultation has been undertaken with the Environment Agency who have raised no objections to the development proposed. Accordingly, no concerns are raised with respect to flood risk. |
| **Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**The proposed development would carry a negligible visual impact and would not unduly impact upon the amenity of any neighbouring residents. As such, for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised that the application is recommended for approval. |
| **RECOMMENDATION**: | That planning consent be granted subject to the imposition of conditions. |