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| **Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.** |
| **Signed:** | **Officer:** | **LW** | **Date:** | **02/10/24** | **Manager:** | **LH** | **Date:** | **4/10/24** |
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| **Application Ref:** | 3/2024/0575 |  |
| **Date Inspected:** | 12/09/24 | **Site Notice:** | 12/09/24 |
| **Officer:** | LW |
| **DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:**  | **APPROVAL** |
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| **Development Description:** | Proposed installation of photo voltaic panels to south and east-facing roof slopes.  |
| **Site Address/Location:** | Chipping and District Memorial Hall, Garstang Road, Chipping, PR3 2QH.  |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Parish/Town Council** |
| No comments received in respect of the proposed development.  |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies** |
| **LCC Highways:** | N/A |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Additional Representations.** |
| No representations received. |
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| **RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:** |
| **Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**Key Statement DS1: Development StrategyKey Statement DS2: Sustainable DevelopmentKey Statement EN3: Sustainable Development and Climate ChangeKey Statement EN5: Heritage AssetsPolicy DMG1: General ConsiderationsPolicy DMG2: Strategic ConsiderationsPolicy DME2: Landscape & Townscape ProtectionPolicy DME3: Site and Species Protection and ConservationPolicy DME4: Protecting Heritage AssetsPolicy DME5: Renewable EnergyPlanning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) ActNational Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) |
| **Relevant Planning History:**3/2024/0691: Proposed installation of two ball stop nets (one behind each goal). To consist of five removeable poles (each end) sitting in sleeves concreted into the ground, with green mesh netting 6m high. 3/2022/0217: Proposed up to 40 2500mm x 750mm aluminium/ composite boards to surround a football pitch on two adjacent sides (Approved).  |
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| **ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:** |
| **Site Description and Surrounding Area:**The application relates to the Chipping and District Memorial Hall located on Garstang Road within the defined settlement area of Chipping. The building is located within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape and just outside the designated Chipping Conservation Area which terminates at the eastern boundary of the site. The building is also situated within and is considered to affect the setting of the Grade II Listed Chipping Congregational Church which is located to the opposite side of Garstang Road.  |
| **Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**The application seeks consent for the installation of 44 solar panels to be accommodated in mounted arrays on the south-western and south-eastern roof slopes of the Chipping and District Memorial Hall. The individual panels will measure approximately 1.72m by 1.13m, being mounted on a raised bracket system which will result in the panels being raised approximately 95mm above the existing roof surface.  |
| **Principle of Development:**The proposal seeks consent for the installation of solar renewable technologies upon an existing building. As such, consideration must be given in respect of the compatibility of the proposal with that of the climate change and energy consumption reduction aspirations within the borough as embodied within the currently adopted development strategy. In relation to matters of climate change and sustainable forms of development, both Key Statement EN3 and Policy DME5 are primarily engaged for the purposes of assessment. Key Statement EN3 requires that ‘*all development will be required to demonstrate how it will contribute towards reducing the Borough’s carbon footprint’,* and further stating that ‘*all development should optimise energy efficiency by using new technologies and minimising the use of energy’.* Policy DME5 reads as follows: *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.* In respect of the above policy considerations, the application relates to the installation of renewable technologies that will contribute to the reduction of the Boroughs Carbon Footprint with the information submitted in support of the application stating that ‘*the array is estimated to generate over 15,000kWH of electricity per year’.* The information goes to state that the ‘*the installation also includes a 30kWH battery storage facility which will be located within the main hall. It is estimated that up to 85% (13,300kWH/yr) of the electricity generated by the solar panels will be used by the village hall [which] equates to around 50% of the village hall’s historical consumption’* and ‘*around 15% (2,300Kwh/yr) of the electricity generated by the solar panels is expected to be exported to the grid.’* As such, the proposal would align with the overall strategic aims of Key Statement EN3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. The proposed development would further align with the aim and objectives of Policy DME5 insofar that it would provide demonstratable benefits in relation to the reduction of the carbon footprint in the operation(s) and performance of the existing building. As such and taking account of the above matters, the proposal is considered acceptable in principle subject to an assessment of the other material planning considerations.  |
| **Visual Amenity, External Appearance and Impact upon Character/appearance of Conservations Area:**The application building is located within and affecting the setting of the designated Clitheroe Conservation Area and the Grade II Listed Chipping Congregational Church. As such, in assessing the proposal, regard must be given to the statutory duties imposed on the authority in respect to the preservation and enhancement of such assets. In this respect, at a local level, Key Statement EN5 and Policy DME4 are primarily, but not solely, engaged for the purposes of assessing likely impacts upon designated heritage assets resultant from the proposed development. Key Statement EN5 states that ‘*there will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their settings’.* Policy DME4 states that development within Conservation Area or those affecting Listed Buildings or their setting, will be assessed on the following basis: *1: CONSERVATION AREAS* *Proposals within, or affecting views into and out of, or affecting the setting of a conservation area will be required to conserve and where appropriate enhance its character and appearance and those elements which contribute towards its significance. This should include considerations as to whether it conserves and enhances the special architectural and historic character of the area as set out in the relevant conservation area appraisal. development which makes a positive contribution and conserves and enhances the character, appearance and significance of the area in terms of its location, scale, size, design and materials and existing buildings, structures, trees and open spaces will be supported.* *In the conservation areas there will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of elements that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.* *2: LISTED BUILDINGS AND OTHER BUILDINGS OF SIGNIFICANT HERITAGE INTEREST* *Alterations or extensions to listed buildings or buildings of local heritage interest, or development proposals on sites within their setting which cause harm to the significance of the heritage asset will not be supported. Any proposals involving the demolition or loss of important historic fabric from listed buildings will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that exceptional circumstances exist.* The proposal site also lies within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape. With regards to development in the National Landscape, Key Statement EN2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that ‘*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.’* Policy DMG1 is also engaged in concert with the above, insofar that the policy sets out general Development Management considerations which state: *In determining planning applications, all development must:* *DESIGN* 1. *Be of a high standard of building design which considers the 8 building in context principles (from the CABE/English Heritage building on context toolkit.*
2. *Be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials.*
3. *Consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance. particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character, as well as the effects of development on existing amenities.*

*AMENITY* 1. *Not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area.*

*ENVIRONMENT* 1. *All development must protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings.*

The submitted details propose the installation of 44 solar panels to be accommodated on the south-eastern and south-western roof slopes of the Chipping and District Memorial Hall. The proposed installation is likely to be afforded a high degree of visibility from the public realm and adjacent Conservation Area. However, whilst the panels would be visible within the Conservation Area and be read in context with nearby built form associated with the designation, the building upon which the panels are to be mounted is not considered to be part of the historic fabric of the Conservation Area with the Memorial Hall being of a more modern construction and appearance. The modern appearance of the building would therefore act to mitigate the likely perceived visual impact of the panels and their introduction into the area. Taking account of the above, it is not anticipated that the proposed development would significantly detract from the existing visual amenities of the Memorial Hall or surrounding National Landscape, nor would it pose any significant threat to the preservation of Chipping’s historic or architectural character.  |
| **Impact Upon Residential Amenity:**Given the proposal seeks consent for the installation of a significant number of solar panels upon an existing building, consideration must be given in respect to the potential for the proposal to result in undue impacts upon nearby residential amenity. Taking account of the siting of the panels and the absence of any immediate nearby residential receptors that are likely to be directly impacted by the proposed installation, it is not anticipated that the proposal would result in any significant adverse impacts upon nearby residential amenity.   |
| **Highways and Parking:**No highway related issues have been identified with respect to the proposed development.  |
| **Landscape/Ecology:**The application has been accompanied by a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Report dated 12th August 2024. The report concludes that no evidence was recorded to suggest bats were roosting within the building and no bats were observed or recorded using the building for roosting. The property is considered to be of negligible potential for roosting bats and the survey effort is considered to be reasonable to assess the roost potential of the building with no further survey work deemed necessary. However, a Precautionary Method Statement and Reasonable Avoidance Measures have been included within the report in order to minimise or remove any potential disturbance to roosting bats. The measures included within this section of the report have been secured by way of a planning condition.  |
| **Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**As such, for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised, the application is recommended for approval. |
| **RECOMMENDATION**: | That planning consent be granted subject to the imposition of conditions. |