

**Proposed development: Full Planning Application (Regulation 3) for Installation of Solor photo voltiac (SPV) arrays to North and South facing roof slopes**

**Site address:  
Whitedove Industrial Unit  
Davyfield Road  
Blackburn  
BB1 2LX**

**Applicant: Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council**

**Ward: Blackburn South & Lower Darwen**

**Councillor Denise Gee  
Councillor Jacqueline Slater  
Councillor John Slater**



## **1.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 APPROVE, subject to recommended conditions

## **2.0 KEY ISSUES/SUMMARY OF PLANNING BALANCE**

- 2.1.1 The Council is seeking planning permission for the installation of a roof mounted solar pv system in accordance with the Council's Climate Change adaptation strategy and action plan which sets out the priority risks associated with climate change and the existing and proposed adaptation measures that should be implemented to ensure that the Council's services continue to operate in a changing climate.
- 2.1.2 The reasons for installing the solar PV arrays are to reduce the building's reliance on grid electricity to save money and to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide. This will contribute towards the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- 2.1.3 Due to the panels being set behind the parapet roof of the building both glare and the design and visual impacts of the proposals are considered to be acceptable.

## **3.0 RATIONALE**

### **3.1 Site and Surroundings**

- 3.1.1 The application site relates to Whitedove Industrial Unit located within the Davyfield Depot site. The site is accessed from Davyfield Road.
- 3.1.2 The application site is within an allocated Primary Employment Area, as defined on the Proposals Map forming part of the Blackburn with Darwen Local Plan Part 2.
- 3.1.3 The surrounding area is commercial in character.

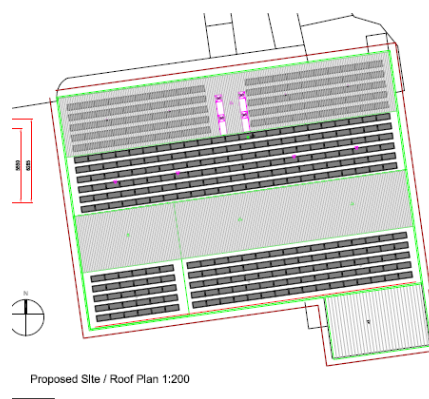
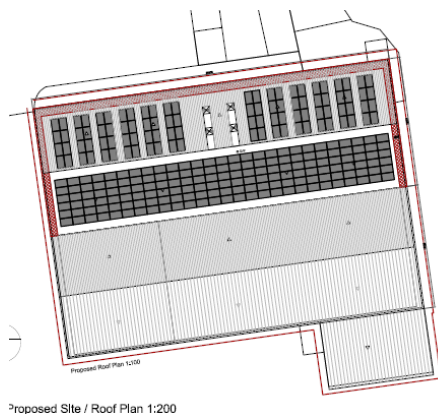
### **3.2 Proposed Development**

- 3.2.1 The Council, the applicant, seeks planning permission for the installation of a roof mounted solar pv system.
- 3.2.2 Technical information has been provided in respect of the design and capacity of the proposals. The proposed development would see the installation of Trina Vertex S Backsheet Monocrystalline Modules. The panels will be fitted to a support framework that angles the solar panels at 5° from the roof (20° from horizontal in total).
- 3.2.3 During the course of the application the proposals have been amended to reduce the extent of the panels proposed by removing the panels from the front block of the building which is closest to the M65 motorway in order to minimise the visual impact of the proposals.

- 3.2.4 All panels are therefore to be sited on the block of the building furthest away from the M65 motorway.
- 3.2.5 The proposed solar array to the North facing slope is to be now laid parallel to the roof slope. This will reduce the height from 700mm (max) to 450mm (max) above the pitch of the roof. The southern slope array is to be laid parallel to the roof and therefore the projection of the proposed solar panels will not exceed 200mm.
- 3.2.6 As a result of the amended plans, there will be 258 Trina Solar TSM-395-DE09.08 VERTEX S panels in total - 162 panels to the South slope (facing South), 96 to the North slope (48 facing East and 48 facing West to receive the most sunlight). The panels to the South slope will be no higher than 200mm above the roof pitch, with those to the North Slope being no more than 450mm. The panels will be set from the roof edges of the building no less than 1.5m.
- 3.2.7 Electricity generated will be 100.33kWp over a PV generator surface of 488.3m<sup>2</sup>

3.2.8 Proposed Roof Plan:

Superseded Plan:



### 3.3 Development Plan

- 3.3.1 Local policy is provided by the Council's Core Strategy, Development Management policies within the Local Plan Part 2 and the Council's Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance, as such the following policy and guidance is considered most relevant:

3.3.2 **Core Strategy (2011)**

Policy CS1: A Targeted Growth Strategy

Policy CS16: Form and Design of New Development

3.3.3 **Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Document (2015)**

Policy 7: Sustainable Development

Policy 8: Development and People

Policy 11: Development and the Environment

Policy 14: Primary Employment Area

## Policy 36: Climate Change

### 3.3.5 **National**

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPF) (2021)  
Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

### 3.4 **Other Material Planning Considerations**

#### 3.4.1 BwD Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan

### 3.5 **Assessment**

#### Principle of Development

- 3.5.1 Policy 9 (2) of the Local Plan Part 2 states planning permission will not be granted for development which would either lead to an unacceptable contribution to climate change by virtue of carbon emissions, be itself at high risk from the effects of climate change, or cause an increase in the level of risk from the effects of climate change in another location.
- 3.5.2 Policy 36 of the Local Plan requires all development to minimise its contribution to carbon emissions and climate change and for the incorporation of measures to reduce the need for artificial heating and cooling of buildings. The solar panels are being installed for this reason.
- 3.5.3 Paragraph 152 of the National Planning Policy Framework (herein after referred to as The Framework) states the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate. It also states the planning system 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.
- 3.5.4 The proposed development supports the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, as required by the Framework. In line with Policy 9 (2) of Local Plan Part 2 (Development and the Environment), the proposal will cut emissions of carbon dioxide and so help to mitigate climate change. The proposal is considered to constitute a small-scale renewable energy scheme, in keeping with the aspirations of Policy 36: Climate Change, of the Local Plan Part 2.

#### Visual Amenity

- 3.5.5 Local Plan Part 2 Policies 8 i) and 11 are applicable to the assessment of this aspect.
- 3.5.6 The extent of the works initially proposed to the front block of the building nearest to the M65 has been removed from the proposals and this is a definite positive to both the impact of the proposals and any glare from them (see section below on this aspect).

- 3.5.7 Any visual impact from the proposals will be mainly within the Davyfield depot site. However, given the M65 motorway runs parallel with the southern boundary of the site at a slightly elevated height, distant views may be possible from the M65. These will now be minimised due to the shielding provided to the rear building, on which the proposed panels are to be placed, by the part of the of the building closest to the motorway.
- 3.5.8 The amendments have also secured that the proposed array to the North-facing slope are now to be laid parallel to the roof slope. The panels on this roofslope will therefore only be visible within the depot.

#### Impact of Glare

- 3.5.9 In relation to the impact of glare on occupiers of neighbouring land, the nature of solar panels is to absorb as much light as possible, and glare would mean they are ineffective. As technology of solar panels advances, glare is further reduced. Glare tends to occur when a neighbouring property or land is set above solar panels.
- 3.5.10 In this case, the panels will be positioned behind the parapet roof so in short range views the proposals will not be visible. The M65 motorway is located to the south of the site and is slightly elevated at this point. The panels will therefore be partially visible, however any glare from the solar panels is considered to not be demonstrable and certainly a refusal of the proposals on this basis could not be substantiated.
- 3.5.11 CONCLUSION
- 3.5.12 The amended proposals under consideration are considered to be acceptable in terms of their impact on the host building, visual amenity and in terms of glare. As a result the proposals accord with Local Plan Part 2 policies 8 i), 10 and 11.
- 3.5.13 The proposed development supports the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, as required by the Framework and in line with the Council's Climate Change Emergency Action Plan.
- 3.5.14 In accordance with Policy 9 (2) of Local Plan Part 2 (Development and the Environment), the proposal will cut emissions of carbon dioxide and so help to mitigate climate change. The proposal is also considered to constitute a small-scale renewable energy scheme, in keeping with the aspirations of Policy 36: Climate Change, of the Local Plan Part 2.
- 3.5.15 For all the above reasons, the proposal is recommended as follows:

## **4.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Planning and Highways Committee **approve** the application subject to the following conditions:

1. The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the requirements of section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Unless explicitly required by condition within this permission, the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the proposals as detailed on drawings:

DD-CAP-00-ZZ-DR-BS-1002 Rev. P3: Proposed Plans & Elevations; and, Trinalsolar TSM-395-DE09.08 VERTEX S Data Sheet: Solar Panels

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to clarify which plans are relevant to the permission.

## **5.0 PLANNING HISTORY**

- 5.1 There is no relevant planning history associated with this site which is considered directly relevant to the determination of this case.

## **6.0 CONSULTATIONS**

- 6.1 The proposals have been advertised by Site Notice. No representations have been received.

**7.0 CONTACT OFFICER:** Claire Booth MRTPI, Senior Planning Officer

**8.0 DATE PREPARED:** 06 August 2021