

Planning Committee (Additional)



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Thursday, 23 January 2025 at 1.00 pm
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House,
St. Peter's Hill, Grantham. NG31 6PZ

Committee Members: Councillor Charmaine Morgan (Chairman)
Councillor Penny Milnes (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor David Bellamy, Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing, Councillor Pam Byrd,
Councillor Helen Crawford, Councillor Patsy Ellis, Councillor Paul Fellows,
Councillor Tim Harrison, Councillor Gloria Johnson, Councillor Vanessa Smith,
Councillor Sarah Trotter and Councillor Paul Wood

Agenda

This meeting can be watched as a live stream, or at a
later date, [via the SKDC Public-I Channel](#)

1. **Register of attendance and apologies for absence**
2. **Disclosure of interests**
Members are asked to disclose any interests in matters for
consideration at the meeting
3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2025** (To Follow)

Planning matters

To consider applications received for the grant of
planning permission – reports prepared by the
Case Officer.

*The anticipated order of consideration is as shown on
the agenda, but this may be subject to change, at the
discretion of the Chairman of the Committee.*

- 4. Application S24/0568** (Pages 3 - 86)
- Proposal:** Erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure.
- Location:** Development East of Sewstern Industrial Estate, South of Sewstern Road, Gunby, Lincolnshire NG33 5RD
- Recommendation:** To authorise the Assistant Director – Planning & Growth to GRANT planning permission, subject to conditions.
- 5. Application S24/1418** (Pages 87 - 125)
- Proposal:** Erection of a single dwelling with associated access, landscaping and engineering works
- Location:** Fulbeck Heights, Pottergate Road, Fulbeck
- Recommendation:** To authorise the Assistant Director – Planning and Growth to GRANT planning permission, subject to conditions.
- 6. Application S24/1707** (Pages 127 - 192)
- Proposal:** Change of use from dwelling (C3) to children's home (C2) for up to 2 young people
- Location:** The Lodge, Main Street, Hougham
- Recommendation:** To authorise the Assistant Director Planning & Growth to GRANT planning permission subject to conditions
- 7. Any other business, which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent**



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Planning Committee

9 January 2025

S24/0568

Proposal:	Erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure.
Location:	Development East of Sewstern Industrial Estate, South of Sewstern Road, Gunby, Lincolnshire NG33 5RD
Applicant:	Ironstone Energy Limited
Agent:	Mr Sam Salt, Heatons
Application Type:	Full Planning Permission with EIA
Reason for Referral to Committee:	Called in by Ward Councillor David Bellamy citing the following matters: • Transport issues and transport planning issues • Environmental issues regarding odour, noise, light, water / traffic noise 24/7 • Not appropriate location for development in open countryside plus having to construct a road across open countryside • Employment sites and appropriate location for industrial complex
Key Issues:	Character and Appearance Residential Amenities Transport Impact
Technical Documents:	Design and Access Statement (Heatons) Mineral Resource Assessment (Heatons) Ground Investigation report (AF Howland) Statement of Community Involvement (Heatons) Arboricultural Planning Statement (ADAS) Geophysical Survey (Archaeological Project Services) Greenhouse Gas Report (Future Biogas) Non-Technical Summary: Planning and Environmental Statement (Heatons, Rev A) Environmental Statement Chapters 1 to 5 (including Planning Statement) (Heatons, Rev A) Transport Statement / Chapter 6 (Northern Transport Planning) Noise Assessment / Chapter 7 (Sharps Redmore) Air Quality and Odour Environmental Impact Assessment / Chapter 8 (Redmore Environmental)

	Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy / Chapter 9 (Plandescil Consulting Engineers) Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment / Chapter 10 (Broome Lynne) Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Report / Chapter 11 (Heatons) Heritage Impact Assessment / Chapter 12 (Archaeological Project Services) Agricultural Quality of Land report / Chapter 13 (Land Research Associates, Rev B)
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Report Author

Venezia Ross-Gilmore, Senior Planning Officer



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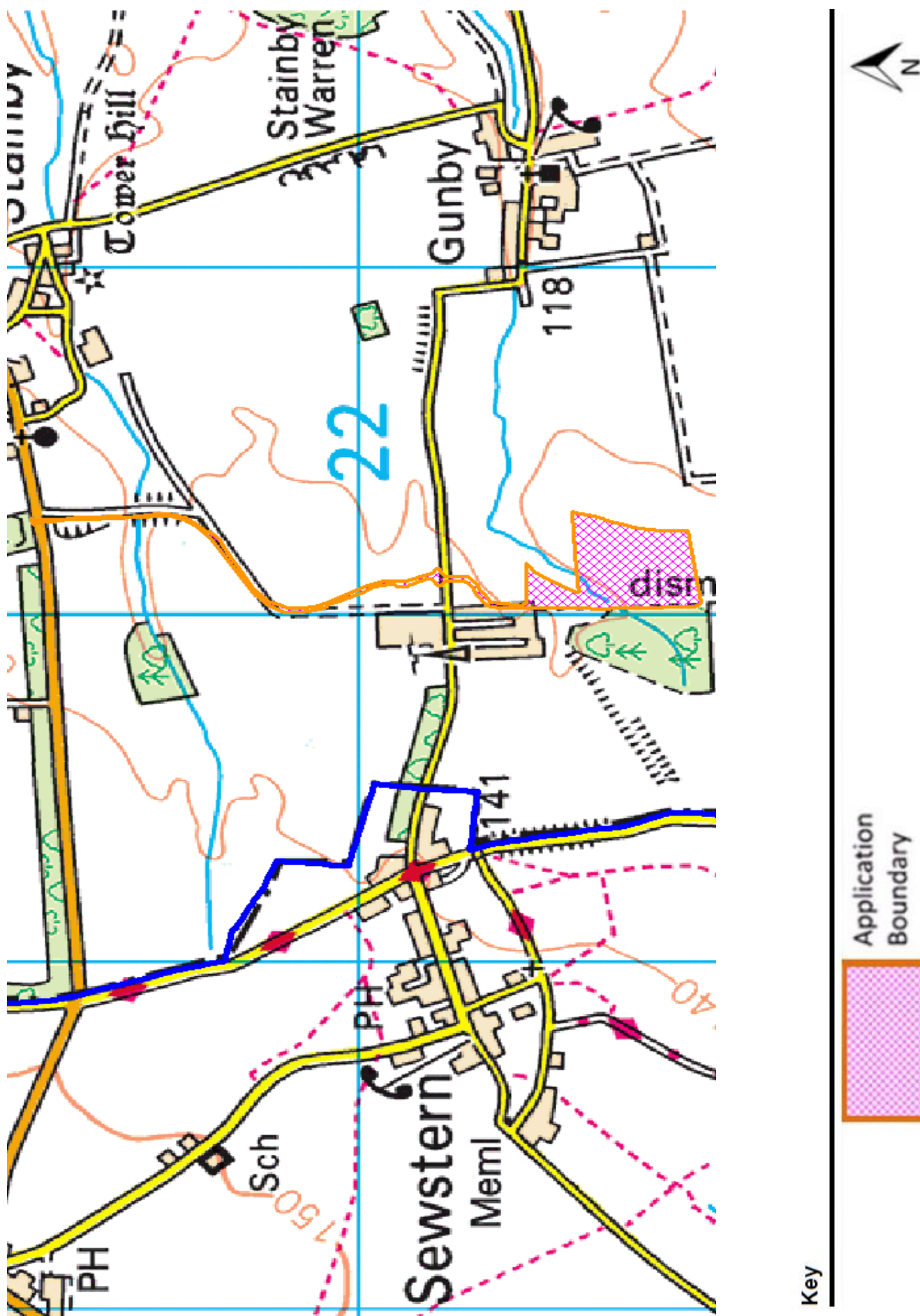


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Corporate Priority:	Decision type:	Wards:
Growth	Regulatory	Isaac Newton
Reviewed by:	Adam Murray, Principal Development Management Planner	18 December 2024

Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

To authorise the Assistant Director – Planning & Growth to GRANT planning permission, subject to conditions



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The application site comprises an area of approximately 7.1 hectares of land situated to the south of Sewstern Road and southeast of the Sewstern Industrial Estate.

The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of a new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure. The AD plant would be fed by energy crops (maize, grass, rye) provided by the Buckminster Estate and neighbouring farms within a 10–15-mile radius. The site would produce an estimated 150 Gigawatt-Hour per year (GWh/yr) of gas which is enough to serve approximately 13,000 homes.

It is the Case Officer's assessment that sufficient evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that the proposed development would be a rural diversification project for the operations and farms of the Buckminster Estate and farms within the AD plant catchment, albeit with the construction of an AD plant. The proposal would additionally be for renewable energy generation meeting Policy RE1. This is a significant public benefit, which Officer's would attribute significant weight.

The proposed development would result in a degree of impact on the landscape character of the area and would be visible to neighbouring dwellings and from the public highway. The AD plant consists of a number of buildings for the processing of the materials, which would represent an incongruous feature in the landscape and thus causing harm. However, this could be reduced through the proposed mitigation submitted, including the landscaping and planting scheme. The SKDC Design Officer commented that the Design and Access statement should have demonstrated more clearly how the design responds to the site context and provide further details on building colours and landscaping. This information has not been provided, but it is the Case Officer's assessment that this could be addressed through the imposition of an appropriate planning condition for a detailed specification of materials for the AD plant, should planning permission be granted. Nonetheless, the application would still result in a moderate adverse impact on the landscape character, contrary to Policies EN1 (Landscape Character) and DE1 (Promoting Good Quality Design) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan, Appendix 3 Criteria 1, and Section 12 of the NPPF.

The development would achieve the statutory requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain onsite. It is the Case Officer's assessment that the improved ecology and gain in BNG would be of benefit to the site.

The impacts that could result from the AD plant include heritage, noise, odour, ecology, drainage, and traffic. The applicant provided supporting documentation for each of the potential impacts and concluded that there would not be any significant adverse impacts. There were no objections raised by the following statutory consultees; Lincolnshire County Council Highways, Anglian Water, Environmental Protection, Cadent Gas, Natural England, Leicestershire County Council Highways, and the SKDC Conservation Officer, and the objection from the Environment Agency was removed following additional information.

It is the Case Officer's assessment that the biogas generated by the proposed development would contribute towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions and this is a significant benefit, attributing significant weight to this as well as the growing of crops for the AD plant, and job creation with limited weight.

Taking all the above into account, it is the Case Officer's assessment that the application scheme accords with the adopted Development Plan as a whole, and the material considerations in this case also weigh in favour of granting planning permission.

Therefore, the Planning Committee are recommended to authorise **the Assistant Director – Planning and Growth to GRANT planning permission, subject to conditions.**

1 Description of Site

- 1.1 The site is situated to the south of Sewstern Road and southeast of the Sewstern Industrial Estate. The site is broadly rectangular and approximately 7.1 hectares. There is no existing access to the site. The nearest village is the village of Gunby to the east (1.1km), and there is also the village of Sewstern to the west (1.2km), Stainby to the northeast (1.6km), Buckminster to the northwest (2.5km), and North Witham to the east (2.5km).
- 1.2 The application site is an undeveloped agricultural field, surrounded by open countryside with further agricultural fields to the north, east, and south, and a small area of mature woodland to the west on the opposite side of the former railway. To the northwest of the site is the Sewstern Industrial Estate which is occupied by various commercial and industrial uses. The neighbouring authority of Melton Borough Council in Leicestershire is 670m to the west of the site, and Rutland County Council is 2.7km to the south of the site.
- 1.3 The proposed development site lies outside of the main built-up area of any defined settlement within the District and, therefore, falls to be defined as being located within the Open Countryside. The site is identified as being within Flood Zone 1, however a small part of the site proposed for access is identified as being at high risk of surface water flooding. Furthermore, the Natural England Provisional Agricultural Land Classification Maps identify the site as being Grade 3 agricultural land value; and the site also falls within a Minerals Safeguarding Area (limestone) as designated in the Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (Adopted June 2016). The site is located within the Kesteven Uplands Character Area (South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment, 2007).

2 Description of Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal seeks full planning permission for the erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of a new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure. The site is located to enable the biomethane produced at the plant to be directly injected into the national gas grid.
- 2.2 AD is a method of renewable energy production whereby organic materials are broken down to produce biogas. This process takes place in an enclosed environment in the absence of oxygen. The biogas generated will be mixed, cleaned and injected directly into the national gas grid. The site would produce an estimated 150 Gigawatt-Hour per year (GWh/yr) of gas which is enough to serve approximately 13,000 homes. The process produces two by-products: CO₂ and digestate. There would be approximately 20,000t/yr of liquified CO₂. Digestate can be used as an organic fertiliser. The CO₂ would be captured and stored beneath the North Sea.
- 2.3 The AD plant would be fed by energy crops (maize, grass, rye) provided by the Buckminster Estate and neighbouring farms within a 10–15-mile radius. The Buckminster Estate would provide 50,000 tonnes of crops annually. The AD plant would require 130,000 tonnes per annum of energy crops, and this would be stored within silage clamps on the site. There will be additional silage clamps at satellite locations within 10-15 miles of the plant (to be determined via a further planning application). Digestate will be stored in an on-site lagoon with surplus stored at the satellite locations.
- 2.4 The AD plant would consist of the following:

- Five digester tanks; three primary, one secondary, and one tertiary
- Digestate storage lagoon
- Four Silage Clamps (35m x 110m; 35m x 100m; 35m x 90m; 35m x 90m)
- Six Feed hoppers (4.25m high)
- Tanks;
 - Three Fermenter (26.5m diameter x 11m high)
 - Tow post fermenter (32.5m diameter x 19m high)
 - oxygen (9m high)
 - carbon (6.3m high)
 - propane (2.75m high)
 - surface water (5m high)
 - transfer / reception (3m high)
- Boiler system
- Flare (9m high)
- Site office 12m x 20m providing 240sqm
- Storage building 15m x 22m providing 330sqm
- Upgrader and CO2 Liquification System building 30m x 40m providing 1,200sqm
- Weighbridge and cabin
- Car parking area with provision for 6 vehicles.

2.5 The digestate storage lagoon, surface water lagoon and reed bed would occupy the north of the site. The east of the site would see four 3500m² silage clamps erected. The west of the site would house all of the mechanical and critical functional elements on a concrete bund, including the fermenter and post fermenter tanks, the feed hoppers, the oxygen, carbon, ferric chloride and propane tanks, along with the boiler system.

Landscaping

2.6 There would also be associated landscaping including a concrete containment bund and tarmac, tarmac access road, a BNG area located to the north of the site, and tree planting on the north, east and south site boundaries.

Hours of Operation

2.7 The AD plant would result in the creation of 8 full time jobs. The plant would be an automated operation and would operate 24 hours a day except during maintenance periods.

2.8 The delivery of crops will occur between the hours of 07:00 and 19:00, seven days a week. The members of staff will be onsite between 07:00 and 19:00, and the site will be monitored remotely outside of the staffed hours. The exception to this is when the crops are harvested September and October when the delivery of the crops will occur between the hours of 07:00 and 21:00, seven days a week.

3 Planning History

- 3.1 No relevant planning history.

4 Relevant Planning Policies & Documents

4.1 SKDC Local Plan 2011 – 2036 (Adopted January 2020)

Policy SD1 – The Principles of Sustainable Development in South Kesteven

Policy SP1 – Spatial Strategy

Policy SP2 – Settlement Hierarchy

Policy SP5 – Development in the Open Countryside

Policy EN1 – Landscape Character

Policy EN2 – Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Policy EN3 – Green infrastructure

Policy EN4 – Pollution Control

Policy EN5 – Water Environment and Flood Risk Management

Policy EN6 – The Historic Environment

Policy DE1 – Promoting Good Quality Design

Policy RE1 – Renewable Energy Generation

Policy ID1 – Infrastructure for Growth

Policy ID2 – Transport and Strategic Transport Infrastructure

Local Plan Appendix 3 Renewable Energy

Colsterworth and District Neighbourhood Plan (2016-2026)

Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD (Adopted 2016)

- Policy M11: Safeguarding of Minerals Resources

Design Guidelines for Rutland and South Kesteven (Adopted November 2021)

Renewable Energy Appendix 3 (January 2020)

4.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Updated December 2024)

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

4.3 National Policy Statement for Energy (EN1) (November 2023)

National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy (EN-3) (November 2023)

5 Representations Received

5.1 Lincolnshire County Council - Highways

No objections.

The application site falls between Sewstern and Gunby and the proposed access road joins the B676 to the west of Colsterworth and the A1. The site is to be located adjacent to an existing industrial estate. The site will be accessed via a private access road, currently serving Brooks Brothers Timber Yard. The access road will cross Sewstern Road, which has a 7.5t weight limit. The applicant has provided detail of how traffic will be controlled when crossing this road, which has satisfied safety concerns of this crossing point.

The Transport Statement has confirmed that there will be between 6-7 staff working at the site once it has been constructed, they will arrive/depart at various times throughout the day. Materials to be processed at the site will generate HGV movements, during the harvest period the site could see a total of 63 daily two-way HGV movements, outside of the harvest period it is expected there will be 17 daily two-way movements. In addition to these movements, the output of material could see another 11 daily two-way movements. The majority of these movements are from nearby land farmed by Buckminster Estate. Compared to the Annual Average Daily Traffic movements, the proposals are not seen to have a severe impact on the road network.

Having given due regard to the appropriate local and national planning policy guidance (in particular the National Planning Policy Framework), Lincolnshire County Council (as Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority) has concluded that the proposed development would not be expected to have an unacceptable impact upon highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact upon the local highway network or increase surface water flood risk and therefore does not wish to object to this planning application.

Full response appended to this Committee Paper.

5.2 Anglian Water

No comments.

'Thank you for your consultation. Having reviewed the development, it falls out of our Statutory sewage boundary. We therefore have no comments'.

5.3 Environmental Protection

No objection.

'Reference your memorandum dated 2nd May 2024; Environmental Protection has reviewed the documents in respect of the above application and has the following comments to make.

The AD plant would be fed by energy crops only (maize, grass, rye, etc) with the development neither designed nor adaptable to process any form of waste. The proposed facility operating with only crops grown specifically for digestion would not require to be permitted by the Environment Agency.

In review of the environmental assessment completed for the proposed development Environmental protection accept the results and conclusions of the noise impact assessment and the Odour and Air Quality impact reports.

In protection of air quality and mitigating odours the following mitigating measures, as stating in the impact report shall be implemented

- *A 5m tall stack to effectively disperse combustion emissions from the biogas boiler;*
- *Covering of feedstocks, with the exception of the working clamp face, to control odour emissions; and,*
- *Covering of the digestate lagoon to control odour emissions.*

Environmental Protection would recommend that the AD facility produce an odour management plan for the operation of the AD facility. The plan should be submitted to the local planning authority for approval.

Environmental Protection would recommend that the AD facility produce a noise management plan for the operation of the AD facility. The plan should be submitted to the local planning authority for approval.

Environmental Protection would recommend that the applicant produced a containment assessment for the facility to include all tanks, surface run-off and digest containment and that the assessment is submitted to the local planning authority for approval’.

5.4 Cadent Gas

No objection.

‘Regarding planning application S24/0568 at site location ‘Development East Of Sewstern Industrial Estate South Of, Sewstern Road, Gunby, Lincolnshire, NG33 5RD’ there are no National Gas assets affected in this area’.

5.5 Natural England

No objection.

‘Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.

Natural England’s generic advice on other natural environment issues is set out at Annex’.

5.6 Heritage Lincolnshire

No objection, subject to conditions.

Archaeological background:

The proposed development lies within a landscape of some archaeological potential. To the north cropmarks indicative of possible prehistoric origin have been plotted. To the south-east are cropmarks of a possible enclosure of prehistoric date. The Historic Environment Record contains records which indicate that the origins of nearby villages such as Gunby and Stainby lie in the late Saxon or medieval periods.

Chapter 12 of the Environmental Statement submitted in support of the application comprises a desk-based assessment of the archaeological potential of the site, reviewing known archaeological remains located within a 1km assessment area. Insufficient evidence (baseline conditions) is available to make an informed assessment of the potential effects of the proposed development on any archaeological remains which may be present at the site. Therefore, an archaeological evaluation is required to determine the presence, character, date and significance of any remains which may be impacted by the proposal. The archaeological programme of works should include geophysical survey and trial trenching. The results of the evaluation will inform the assessment effects, and any mitigation strategy required.

Recommendation: It is recommended that further information be provided in order to make an assessment of the likely impact of the proposals on any buried archaeological remains and the setting of the heritage assets.

It is considered that the site offers a potential for archaeological remains to be present based on the extent and type of remains recorded in the vicinity. Insufficient information is available at present with which to make any reliable observation regarding the impact of this development upon any archaeological remains.

Therefore, an archaeological evaluation will be required to determine the presence, character and date of any archaeological deposits present at the site. This evaluation should initially consist of geophysical survey followed by trial trenching and should be undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation.

5.7 Leicestershire County Council - Highways

No objection.

The County Council has provided detailed comments, to summarise:

- The application site is within SKDC and Lincolnshire County Council highways jurisdiction - No comment to make on the access arrangements.
- The worst-case scenario in terms of trip generation would be 14 two-way trips; 7 members of staff arriving and departing in separate cars.
- During the harvest period there will be 50,000t an additional 22.9 HGV movements per day, equating to 46 two-way trips per day.
- The 80,000t of material stored in satellite hubs will result in 8.5 HGV movements per day, equating to 17 two-way trips per day.
- The worst-case scenario in terms of harvest trip generation would be 64 two-way HGV trips during the harvest period. During the non-harvest period there would be 17 two-way HGV trips.
- The site would generate 24,000t of carbon dioxide and would result in 7 two-way trips per day.
- The site would generate a further 11,000t liquid biofertilizer and 4,000t solid biofertilizer and would result in 4 two-way trips per day.

The development would generate a total of 50 two-way HGV trips during the harvest period on the Leicestershire highway network. During the non-harvest period the development would generate a total of 21 two-way HGV trips.

The highways authority has noted that not all HGV movements would be carried out during the AM and PM peak periods and the HGV will utilise the B676. Concluding that

‘The number of HGVs associated with this development are negligible when compared against the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT). Therefore, it is not considered that the proposed will have a severe impact on the local highway network, in accordance with Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)’.

Full response appended to this Committee Paper.

5.8 Environment Agency

We have reviewed the proposed drainage plan [Revision D, dated 12 June 2024] and consider that it satisfactorily addresses our earlier concerns.

5.9 Historic England

No comments.

5.10 Melton Borough Council

No comments to make, however we recommend that the Parish Council’s within Melton and close proximity are consulted.

5.11 CPRE Rutland

Initial Consultation May 2024

Objection.

‘I write on behalf the charity’s membership in Lincolnshire and Rutland to submit strong objections to the above Anaerobic Digester proposal. CPRE the countryside charity in principle endorses such development provided it is of an appropriate scale and in an appropriate location, as well as being supported by a substantial majority of the local community impacted by the development. This is clearly not the case with this proposal.

CPRE notes that all of the impacted parish councils do not support the planning proposal and that there is little evidence of positive resident response from any resident or local business without a pecuniary interest. Indeed there are a statistically significant number of community objectors.

The charity’s objections may categorised as follows:

Such a huge development will have an unacceptable impact on the rural countryside close to the development. It will be highly visible for some distance and of a greater scale than any other in the UK.

As greenfield land in agricultural use, the proposed site is clearly unsuitable for such a large scale development. There is little evidence of researched consideration of better alternative

sites such as brown field land, or those located near main roads, as required by planning policy.

The Project's Transport Impact Assessment appears flawed and fails to acknowledge the likely consequences of a significant increase in numbers of HGVs and other vehicles in that location and beyond, along with the impact on road safety for all road users, not just those who drive cars.

The environmental impact of the projected noise levels and degradation of air quality resulting from the ongoing operations of the AD plant can only be detrimental to the quality of life likely to be created for local residents.

This proposal is simply about profit and will not be benefitting the local community in any way as the gas produced is for industry elsewhere in the country. Furthermore, the need for such significant amounts of feedstock, in no way supports UK farms or UK food security.

CPRE therefore urges members of the SKDC Planning Committee to refuse this application'.

5.12 Colsterworth and District Parish Council

Initial Consultation May 2024

Objection.

The Parish Council has provided detailed comments, to summarise:

- Affects the whole Parish including Stainby, Gunby, North Witham, Lobthorpe, Colsterworth and Woolsthorpe by Colsterworth.
- Concerned at number of omissions and inconsistencies and reliance on desktop modelling.

Highways Impact

- Does not comply with Policy ID2. Impact on road network and transport infrastructure with vehicles using the A1, and this is not include in the Transport Statement. Also, not clear whether crops and digestate will be transported on the B6403 or A151.
- No Traffic Management Plan provided.
- No information has been provided regarding the external storage areas.
- Would like an enforcement plan to prevent vehicles diverting through the villages in the event of the A1 being closed.
- Application should be referred to Highways England.
- No information provided of the crop sites or the satellite hubs.
- No clarification on the proposed crop rotation, as this will impact the harvest periods and vehicle movements.
- Not clear about the use of tractors and trailers and the movements of these vehicles.
- There are several roads with 7.5t weight limits in place as environmental protection zones. Concern that HGVs would travel through villages.

- Limited traffic site survey.
- Concern about the single access/exit proposed. There are no footways, narrow verges, a bend in the road and the access is within the 60mph.
- Increased safety risk to walkers, cyclists, horse riders and tourists as a result of the HGV increase.
- Reference to different carriageway widths with reference to the Manual for Streets guidance document. Concern about widths, pinch points, passing traffic, visibility and gradients.
- Ambiguous hours of operation.
- At the public consultation the applicant referred to partner arrangements with contracted hauliers. In sufficient information on this with the planning application.

Site and Type of Development

- Do not believe the application meets Policy E7. Not an appropriate scale for the location. It is an industrial scale development in a rural location. The use does not respect the character and appearance of the local landscape, and will impact residential amenities.
- Do not believe the application meets Policy SP5 for development in the countryside.
- Believe the application is industrial and not agricultural.
- Visual impact concerns. Feels the proposed mitigation will not be adequate
- Other AD plants in the area.

Renewable Energy

- No Land Agricultural Survey submitted with the application.
- Requirement for public support.

Biodiversity

- No Tree Survey submitted with the application.

Odour, noise, Pollution

- The meteorological data is not current.
- Concerns that there will be odours like an energy from waste facility in the district.
- Vehicle movements will cause noise.
- Concerns regarding drainage.

S106 Contribution

- £40,000 per annum community fund is noted. Would like further information.

- Expect Highways national and county to request a contribution for road repairs, maintenance and enforcement.
- Query the plans for restoration of the site should the operation cease.

Full response appended to this Committee Paper.

Re-consultation September 2024 – following receipt of additional drawings/information.

Objection.

The Parish Council has provided detailed comments, to summarise:

1. The traffic objections are all still valid
2. The application does not conform with Local Plan Policy SP5, being built in open countryside
3. The planning application clearly has no support from the local community
4. The planning application is still incomplete.

S106 Agreement

Should planning permission be granted, the Parish requests that the S106 agreement includes an assessment of the road network in the vicinity of the development, which includes road safety of pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians. The Parish Council seek a contribution which could include the cost of

- Additional vehicle activated signs/speed cameras x3 (B676, Stamford Road Colsterworth, Woolsthorpe Road).
- Review and upgrading of all the road signs; particularly the 7.5t restrictions.
- Review of the road safety issues on the High Street Colsterworth and reported to LCC.

Full response appended to this Committee Paper.

5.13 SKDC Conservation Officer

No objection.

The proposed Anaerobic Digestion facility comprises a large parcel of land set between Sewstern and Gunby, and its associated infrastructure, with the principal road leading from Buckminster Road to the proposed site. The site is approximately 7.1ha, covering existing agricultural land. A number of structures are proposed to be built upon the site, with a height of up to 19m. This would be a significant development within the landscape.

This has the potential to impact upon the setting of a number of designated heritage assets within the wider landscape, the closest of which would be the Church of St Peter (NHLE 1147921) and The Old Rectory (NHLE 1062351), adjacent to the access road, and the Church of St Nicholas (NHLE 1147928) and Barn at Glebe Farm (NHLE 1062311) closest to the principal site at just over 1km distance.

A number of further designated heritage assets, ranging from Scheduled Monuments to Grade II listed structures. An Archaeology and Heritage Assessment has been produced by the applicant, investigating the potential impact upon their heritage significance. A potential

intervisibility and impact had been identified for the setting of the Old Rectory (NHLE 1062351), the setting of the Scheduled Monument of the Knights Templar Preceptory at Temple Hill (NHLE 1007688) and the setting of the Buckminster Conservation Area.

The wider landscape comprised undulating agricultural land which wide open views towards the various nucleated settlements. This can be considered to contribute to the wider setting of the heritage assets. The proposed development would present some loss of this agricultural landscape, however this is not considered to result in harm to the setting of the various heritage assets. The greater part of the structures is to be screened with trees. These will take some time to mature, so there would be a temporary visual impact. This is considered to be very minor, however, due to the distance of the principal site and the heritage assets. It is not considered to result in harm to the significance of the heritage assets.

Overall, there is only a minor potential for indirect impact upon the setting of the heritage assets within the wider proximity of the site. This is not considered to cause harm to their setting.

5.14 Rutland County Council - Highways

No comment.

5.15 Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

No comments.

After examining the ecological documents and our own records we find there are no designated sites that are likely to be impacted by the development and nor are there any floral and faunal features of interest identified. We are encouraged to see the applicant has undertaken a BNG assessment and expect a habitat management and monitoring plan be submitted following any planning permission being granted.

5.16 SKDC Tree Officer

There are trees at and around the site. Trees are a material consideration in the planning application process. No arboricultural data is provided with this application. Without a tree survey it is difficult to comment in any detail on the application.

I would recommend that a tree survey and report is carried out in this case which should have regard to the BS5837 (2012) Trees in Relation to Design Demolition and Construction Recommendations. The tree survey should accurately demonstrate the arboricultural constraints at the site which will help guide the layout. A tree constraints plan should be provided.

An arboricultural impact assessment report should also be carried out. It should consider whether the proposal is feasible from an arboricultural perspective and highlight what if any mitigating measures may be required e.g. no-dig surfacing, special foundations, pruning, tree protection fencing etc. New/replacement tree planting data and tree protection methodology and plan should also be provided. The tree protection plan should be to scale and reflect the site layout in the context of the retained trees.

5.17 Councillor Ben Green

Re-consultation June 2024 – following receipt of additional drawings/information.

Objection.

Introduction

I, Cllr Ben Green, voice my fervent objection to the proposed development east of Sewstern Industrial Estate. The gravity of this proposal necessitates its review by the full Planning Committee, acknowledging the widespread implications across our District.

Road Safety and Traffic Impact

The proposed development will unleash a torrent of traffic upon our already strained roads. The application lacks a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan, vital for ensuring the safety and efficiency of our transport infrastructure. The projected 130,000 tonnes of crops and 70,000 tonnes of digestate will result in an estimated 24,080 HGV trips per year, a catastrophic increase for our narrow, restricted roads. The absence of detailed information regarding routes and specific traffic management measures casts a shadow over the feasibility and safety of this proposal.

The B676, a critical artery, is ill-prepared for such an onslaught, with its narrow lanes and lack of footpaths posing a dire threat to pedestrians and cyclists. The proposed access from the B676, situated dangerously close to Stainby's 30mph zone, further exacerbates these concerns. The Planning Authority must ensure a thorough evaluation of the potential hazards this development poses to all road users.

Selection of Site and Nature of Development

The erection of this facility on pristine greenfield land, within the heart of our countryside, violates policies E7 and SP5 of our Local Plan:

- E7, Rural Economy: This policy supports small business schemes that are appropriately scaled and necessary for a rural location, respecting the character and appearance of the landscape and avoiding harm to wildlife and biodiversity. The proposed AD facility, being large-scale and industrial, does not meet these criteria. It fails to respect the local landscape and poses significant risks to the surrounding environment.

- SP5, Development in the Open Countryside: This policy limits development in open countryside to those with an essential need to be located outside existing settlements. The AD facility, with its industrial nature and extensive land requirements, does not constitute a development with such an essential need and should not be sited on greenfield land.

The site selection appears narrowly confined to the vicinity of Gunby and Sewstern, disregarding potential brownfield alternatives. The visual impact will be stark and unmitigated, affecting views from a significant cluster of local villages.

Renewable Energy Generation

While renewable energy is a noble pursuit, this proposal's reliance on purpose grown crops rather than waste undermines its environmental credentials. The absence of a Land Agricultural Survey to determine the grade of land being sacrificed for this facility raises significant concerns about food security and land use policy. The proposal contradicts the principle of sustainability and efficient land use as emphasised in policies E7 and SP5.

Biodiversity

The impact on local wildlife and habitats has not been adequately assessed. The absence of up-to-date meteorological data and comprehensive biodiversity surveys undermines the application's credibility. The Planning Authority must demand rigorous environmental assessments to safeguard our natural heritage, as stipulated in policy E7, which requires avoiding harm to important wildlife and biodiversity.

Smell, Noise, and Pollution

The community's lived experiences of pervasive odours from existing facilities underscore the potential for similar nuisances here. The 24/7 operation of this facility threatens to inundate our peaceful villages with relentless noise, pollution, and light, deteriorating the quality of life for all residents. The drainage and longterm land impact have also not been properly addressed. The proposed development does not align with policy E7's criteria for respecting the character and appearance of the local landscape and avoiding negative impacts on neighbouring uses.

Conclusion

This proposed development, with its significant flaws and detrimental impacts, demands rigorous scrutiny. The lack of detailed plans, the potential devastation to our road network, the threat to our countryside, and the inadequately assessed environmental consequences compel me to reject this application. Let us defend our land, our community, and our future from this ill-conceived endeavour.

5.18 SKDC Design Officer

Re-consultation September 2024 – following receipt of additional drawings/information.

Comments to make:

'Proposals for development are expected to follow The Design Guidelines for Rutland and South Kesteven (SPD, 2021). Section 1.5 (p9) of this document sets out a design process that should be followed.

The design process begins with a thorough site and contextual analysis, followed by the next stage that requires applicants to clearly show how this context has been responded to (p22).

It is this response to context stage that requires further clarification – illustrating with plans and diagrams how the LVIA has been responded to – for example through landscape proposals.

“the Council will expect to see how the design of proposals in planning applications have been crafted in response to their context.”

(Design Guidelines for Rutland and South Kesteven SPD, 2021 – Chapter 3 introduction)

This approach to designing buildings and new places is also supported by the National Design Guide, with both the Context and Identity chapters making it clear that development proposals should respond positively to local context, character and identity.

“Well-designed new development responds positively to the features of the site itself and the surrounding context beyond the site boundary. It enhances positive qualities and improves negative ones.”

(National Design Guide, 2021 - paragraph 41)

The Design and Access statement should demonstrate more clearly how the design responds to context. Whilst recessive building colours and landscape to soften views are promised – details of these elements are not present or illustrated’.

6 Representations as a Result of Publicity

6.1 This application has been advertised in accordance with the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement and 367 letters of representation have been received, with 330 objections and 0 in support of the proposed development. The planning officer has also been made aware that there is an online petition with 1,207 signatures (www.change.org/p/block-industrial-biogas-plant-in-rural-lincolnshire) (on 18th December 2024).

6.2 The points raised can be summarised as follows:

Objection

- Development on a greenfield site, but the proposals are considered industrial and should be accommodated within an industrial estate.
- Effects on the residential amenity of neighbouring residential dwellings / villages e.g. noise, smells.
- Potential impact on the UKs food security of using fields to grow energy crops instead of food crops.
- The AD plant should be smaller and/or located close to or off a motorway or A road.
- No community benefit as the gas will not be used to heat local homes or power local businesses. Reference to Energy UK conference 2024: keynote speech by Ed Miliband.
- Impact on the rural landscape as the site is open countryside and consider the development industrial and not related to agriculture.
- Whether the development consists sustainable / renewable (clean) energy as it involves energy crops and the need to transport these to the site. There is also the CO2 biproduct which is a greenhouse gas.
- Proposals do not include the CO2 from the construction process, access roads etc.
- Proposals do not include the customers new carbon emissions related to biomethane. Reference to The Finch vs Surrey CC supreme court judgement.
- Impact on the local highways network from the proposed HGV movements. Do not want any further HGV movements accessing the villages.
- The local highways network is currently quiet and used by vulnerable road users for walking, walking dogs, bicycles, running, horse riding, children playing.
- Agricultural Land Classification and importance of retaining land for growing food and feed crops.

- Impact on wildlife as the agricultural fields will be replaced with concrete hard standing, structures and a new access road.
- Concerns regarding the safety of the development. Particularly in relation to the risk of fire or explosion. The site is a distance from a fire station.
- Concerns regarding the cumulative impacts of other similar types of the development in the local area. There are two other AD plants within proximity of this site.
- Proposals do not adhere with Local Planning Policy SP5 Development in Open Countryside or E7 Rural Economy.
- Requests for further information. Particularly in relation to the location of the secondary storage clamps.
- Missing information including revised visibility splays drawing at the access junction with the B676. Have all the requirements of the Environmental Statement, Transport Statement, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment been met.
- Highlighting that the resident / local community object to the development and are not in support of the proposals. No letters of support.

7 Evaluation

- 7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Council adopted the South Kesteven Local Plan 2011-2036 in January 2020, along with Colsterworth and District Neighbourhood Plan (2016-2026) forms the Development Plan for the District, and is the basis of decision-making for the current application.
- 7.2 The Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD (Adopted June 2016) also forms the development plan for the District in relation to minerals planning.
- 7.3 In addition, the Local Planning Authority have also adopted a Design Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Adopted November 2021) and this document is a material consideration in the determination of planning application.
- 7.4 The policies and provisions set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) ("the Framework") (Published December 2024) and the National Policy Statements for Energy (EN1) and Renewable Energy (EN3) are also a relevant material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Principle of Development

- 7.5 The proposed development is located outside of the main built-up area of an existing settlement within the District; the nearest settlement is the village of Gunby. Therefore, the site falls to be defined as being located within the open countryside.
- 7.6 Policy SP5 is the principal spatial policy for developments in countryside locations, the policy provides exemptions where certain forms of development are considered suitable, including rural diversification projects. The proposed development scheme would involve the diversification of an existing agricultural operations for the Buckminster Estate farming operation and farms within the AD plant catchment. This would therefore be considered a

rural diversification project, albeit with the construction of an AD plant to process the materials, and acceptable within the open countryside location.

- 7.7 Furthermore, Policy RE1 Renewable Energy Generation provides support for renewable energy projects, which includes anaerobic digestion, provided that:
- a) The proposal does not negatively impact the District's agricultural land asset.
 - b) The proposal can demonstrate the support of affected local communities.
 - c) The proposal includes details for the transmission of power produced.
 - d) The proposal details that all apparatus related to renewable energy production will be removed from the site when power production ceases; and
 - e) That the proposal complies with any other relevant Local Plan policy and national planning policy.
- 7.8 Additionally Renewable Energy Appendix 3 contains a Section on Dry biomass and anaerobic digestion facilities with a series of Criterion outlining the factors that will be taken into consideration when assessing proposals in relation to the surrounding landscape and townscape. Noting the individual impacts of a proposal and the cumulative impacts of the proposal, and that proposals should also meet the relevant criteria in Policies EN1 to 5 of the Local Plan.
- 7.9 The proposal is for an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility which includes carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure. The AD plant would require 130,000 tonnes per annum of energy crops to supply the process. Therefore, this would be a solely purpose grown crop-based AD system using agricultural land for the purpose of growing energy crops and not food producing crops.
- 7.10 In assessing the application proposals against the specific policy obligations of Policy RE1
- a) This would be a proposal requiring energy crops grown in place of food producing crops. An Agricultural Land Classification Survey has been provided with the application. The site comprises of two fields of grade 3 land and subgrade grade 3b agricultural land. The soil is poorly drained restricting it to autumn sown crops. 97% of the land is subgrade 3b (6.9 hectares) with 3% other land (0.2 hectares), for reference this is the proposed access track. The survey contained in the submitted Agricultural Land Quality report does not include the land required for the access track. To summarise, the proposed development would not result in any loss of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land.
 - b) The applicant undertook a public consultation exercise last year which is detailed in the submission. This entailed a 2-day public exhibition event, newsletter maildrop, press release, response to enquiries, site visit. There was also an additional letter to members. However, the proposal has demonstrated limited support (feedback from the exhibition and 10 letters of support contained within the Statement of Community Involvement).
- The application has received numerous representations from local residents objecting to the proposal including a petition against the development. There are also objections from Colsterworth and District Parish Council, and Councillor Ben Green. The applicant has sought to respond to concerns raised by local residents with amended plans extending the access road, and a written response. However, further objections were received in response to the applicant's additional information. The council has not received any letters in support of the application.

It is noted that the Inspector's appeal decision for the Folkingham solar development (LPA Ref: S23/0511) concluded that Policy RE1 does not make any distinction between different types of renewable energy schemes and, in the absence of Appendix 3 (Renewable Energy) of the adopted Local Plan making any specific reference to requiring community support for dry biomass and anaerobic digestion facilities development proposals, there is no firm basis for requiring such proposals to demonstrate the support of the local community.

It is concluded that the application does not benefit from the support of the affected local community, however this does not constitute a conflict with Policy RE1(b) in this case.

- c) The proposal includes details of the transmission of the power produced - The site would produce an estimated 150GWh/yr of gas for consumption by approximately 13,000 homes. Biogas generated from the development would be transferred to the National Grid via injection directly into the national gas grid in proximity to the site.
- d) The proposal does not include any details of the decommissioning of the site when the activity ceases, however, the agent has confirmed that the development has an assumed plant life of 30 years which matches the operators lease for the site. The decommissioning would take place following the closure of the site within the following 6 months. A planning condition is recommended to require the submission of a decommissioning scheme prior to the expiry of the temporary planning period.
- e) The proposal complies with SP5 as a rural diversification project. Other relevant local and national planning policies and the prospective impacts of the development are discussed in further detail below.

7.11 In addition, the National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (Published November 2023) is identified as being a material consideration for the determination of planning application relating to energy development. The NPS confirms the Government's commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. It also identifies the need to dramatically increase the amount of low carbon energy generated, and to improve energy security and provide economic opportunities.

7.12 Taking the above into account, it is Officers' assessment that the principle of renewable energy generation development is supported by Policy SD1, SP1 and RE1 of the adopted Local Plan, subject to material considerations. These matters are discussed in further detail below.

7.13 Paragraph 7 of the Planning Practice Guidance for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation is clear that in considering planning applications:

- The need for renewable or low carbon energy does not automatically override environmental protections
- Cumulative impacts require particular attention
- Great care should be taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including the impact of proposals on views important to their settings.
- Protecting local amenity is an important consideration which should be given proper weight in planning decisions.

- 7.14 Equally, the NPPF (Updated December 2024) has reinforced the weight that should be given to the benefits of a renewable energy scheme with paragraph 168 stating
- ‘When determining planning applications for all forms of renewable energy and low carbon energy developments and their associated infrastructure, local planning authorities should:*
- a) *Not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposal’s contribution to a net zero future;...*’

- 7.15 The relevant material considerations for the proposed development are considered below, using the 7 criteria set out in the Renewable Energy Appendix and other relevant Local Plan Policy.

Effect of the development on agricultural land

- 7.16 As outlined above, the information provided by the applicant includes the MAFF agricultural grade classification which confirms that the site is not best and most versatile agricultural land. As such, It is not a policy requirement that the applicant need undertake a search or suitable derelict or brownfield sites, and it is not clear whether there were other suitable sites of poorer grade agricultural land available in the local area for the built development.
- 7.17 The submitted report identifies that the two fields concerned are grade 3 land and subgrade grade 3b agricultural land. The soil is poorly drained restricting it to autumn sown crops. 97% of the land is subgrade 3b (6.9 hectares) with 3% other land (0.2 hectares). The survey contained in the submitted Agricultural Land Quality report does not include the land required for the access track.
- 7.18 The development will utilise additional agricultural land for the production of the feedstock crop, however this land will remain in an agricultural use, as there is not a differentiation between crops grown for human consumption, animal consumption, or for feeding the operation of an AD plant. The consideration of the impact of the proposed development on agricultural land is therefore limited to the impact on the land to be used for a built form of the AD plant, associated buildings and access. The use of the agricultural land for the production of the feedstock is not a matter of planning control and therefore cannot be given weight in the decision-making process.
- 7.19 In view of the above, it is the Officer’s assessment that the application proposals would be in accordance with Policy SP1, RE1 and Criteria 7 based on the agricultural land classified as 3b.

Effect of the development on the Character and Appearance of the area

- 7.20 The site is located within the Kesteven Uplands Character Area (South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment, 2007). The character area is a rolling mixed farmland landscape dissected by the Rivers Witham and West Glen, and is a rural landscape with only a small urban area. The geology is varied with a range of soil types, and the well-drained calcareous loam soils support the cultivation of cereals, oilseeds and root crops. Additionally, the wide road verges and hedgerow trees provide woodland character, and there remains areas of important semi-natural and ancient woodlands.
- 7.21 The application was accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact which reached the following key conclusions:
- Landscape Sensitivity is considered to be medium/high

- Visual Sensitivity is considered to be medium/high
- Landscape value is considered to be medium
- The overall Landscape Character Sensitivity of the site is considered to be medium/high and overall landscape capacity to be medium/low.

- 7.22 There would be an impact from construction, and the completed development from the change of land use, buildings and the associated mitigation measures and the impact ranges from minor adverse to moderate adverse. The addition of planting and vegetation would be minor beneficial.
- 7.23 Despite the proposed mitigation, the visual effects and impacts on the landscape character of the area would remain because of the proposed development with the main impact from the buildings and plant related to the processing of materials. There would be views of the site from neighbouring dwellings and the public highway, albeit softened by the proposed landscaping scheme which can be secured by planning condition.
- 7.24 The SKDC Design Officer has commented that proposals for development are expected to follow the council's design guidance and follow a design process with proposals responding to the site and its context. There are no illustrating plans or diagrams clarifying how the proposals respond to their context. Furthermore *'The Design and Access Statement should demonstrate more clearly how the design responds to context. Whilst recessive building colours and landscape to soften views are promised – details of these elements are not present or illustrated'*. With the detail provided it is considered that the design does not currently meet the high standards required by the council's design guidance and the planning officer considers that criteria (c) of the Biomass Energy Criterion 3 (Renewable Energy Appendix 3) has not been met. Conversely, the design could be further addressed using the imposition of an appropriate planning condition requiring further design and materials details should planning permission be granted.
- 7.25 The proposed plant and flare are obtrusive in design terms, introducing prominent features within the local landscape and open countryside. With the topography of the surrounding area, it will be visible and introduce significant large-scale buildings and structures into the local landscape, despite the proposed landscape measures. The site occupies a rural location nonetheless the neighbouring site is industrial, and the plant and flare are designed to meet the requirements of the process that will be undertaken on site. The tallest and most significant elements of the proposal would be the digester and fermenter tanks. They would appear agricultural in design, and viewed in the new context of the Anaerobic Digester plant the design is considered appropriate in terms of size, design and position. Consequently, whilst the development would have an impact on the existing visual appearance of the area, when considered in the context of the AD plant and neighbouring industrial area, the development could be further addressed using the imposition of an appropriate planning condition should planning permission be granted, and with this in mind the planning officer considers that criteria (d) of the Biomass Energy Criterion 3 (Renewable Energy Appendix 3) has been met.
- 7.26 It is the Officer's assessment that the proposed development would result in a minor to moderate adverse impact on the landscape character and the impacts could be partially mitigated through the proposed landscaping scheme. Therefore, this harm remains contrary to Policies EN1 and DE1 of the adopted Local Plan, Appendix 3 Criteria 1, and Section 12

of the NPPF. This policy conflict falls to be assessed within the overall planning balance discussed below.

Impact on Heritage Assets

- 7.27 Policy EN6 (The Historic Environment) is the primary development plan policy through which the Council exercises its statutory responsibilities. This policy states that the Council will seek to protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings in keeping with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework, and proposals will be expected to take Conservation Area Appraisals into account, where these have been adopted by the Council. Development that is likely to cause harm to the significance of a heritage asset or its setting will only be granted permission where the public benefits of the proposal outweigh the potential harm.
- 7.28 In connection with the above, Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities to have special regard for the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings, or any special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Similarly, Section 72 of the Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities to give special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.
- 7.29 The proposed development site does not contain any designated built heritage assets but there are a number of designated built heritage assets located within the surrounding area including; the Church of St Peter NHLE 1147921) and The Old Rectory (NHLE 1062351), adjacent to the access road, and the Church of St Nicholas (NHLE 1147928) and Barn at Glebe Farm (NHLE 1062311) closest to the principal site at just over 1km distance. A number of further designated heritage assets, ranging from Scheduled Monuments to Grade II listed structures.
- 7.30 The proposal was accompanied by an Archaeology and Heritage Assessment which identified potential intervisibility between the setting of the Old Rectory NHLE 1062351), the setting of the Scheduled Monument of the Knights Templar Preceptory at Temple Hill (NHLE 1007688) and the setting of the Buckminster Conservation Area. There is also the wider landscape setting and wide-open views to the nucleated settlements and wider setting of the heritage assets. The proposed development will be mitigated by proposed tree and vegetation planting, and the impact would be temporary until the trees mature.
- 7.31 The Conservation Officer was consulted and commented that there would temporary and minor impact to the wider setting of the heritage assets whilst the proposed landscaping is growing into an effective screen, but the heritage assets are located a distance from the site. The Officer's conclusion was that overall, there would not be harm to the setting or significance of the neighbouring heritage assets.
- 7.32 Historic England were also consulted and commented that it will be for the local planning authority to set heritage impacts against public benefits, deferring to the Conservation Officer and Heritage Lincolnshire.
- 7.33 It is the Officer's conclusion taking the above into account that there would not be harm on the setting or significance of the heritage assets and the minor potential for indirect harm would be temporary while the mitigation planting established. The proposal would be in accordance with Policy EN6 of the adopted Local Plan, and Section 16 of the NPPF.

Impact on Archaeological Assets

- 7.34 The application is accompanied by an Archaeology and Heritage Assessment and Geophysical Survey reports.
- 7.35 The Geophysical Survey has confirmed that the site has strong magnetic bedrock that has affected the survey data, but there are multiple anomalies on the survey results. The report states that most of the anomalies are believed to be modern or natural in origin (agricultural, quarrying), but there is one exception. The archaeological feature identified was an area of possible ridge and furrow cultivation at the south of the southern area.
- 7.36 Heritage Lincolnshire (as Local Archaeological Advisors) have been consulted on the application proposals and reviewed the submitted reports, as well as having discussions with the applicant's Archaeology Consultant. The council's archaeological advisor has commented and advised that the site offers a potential for archaeological remains to be present, and advised regarding the need for trial trenching on the site in order to provide an assessment of potential and likely impact of the proposals on any archaeological deposits. The results of the evaluation should inform the archaeological mitigation strategy.
- 7.37 Taking the above into account, the Officer considers that the employment of a suitably worded pre-commencement planning condition would be appropriate in this case and with the condition to protect for any archaeological remains the proposals would accord with the Policies EN6 of the Local Plan and Section 16 of the NPPF in respect of archaeological matters.

Cumulative Impacts

- 7.38 Utilising the resource the online Biogas Map, developed by the NNFFCC Ltd, as of March 2023 there are three operational farm fed Anaerobic Digesters located at Honeypot Farm near North Witham, and Valley House near Lobthorpe, and waste fed Anaerobic Digesters located at PAS Grantham AD near Easton, and Angel Wells Farm near Castle Bytham. It is considered that all are located an acceptable distance from the proposed development site and there would not result in a cumulative impact.
- 7.39 The Officer has also considered the following sites:
- Burton Lane Easton PL/0022/24 – current planning application for the redevelopment and updating of an existing wastewater treatment facility and the installation of an anaerobic digestion plant with capacity to provide 5MW of renewable energy. (Waste fed).
 - Park House Farm EIA/08/23 – this is an application for a Screening Opinion and a reply has been issued by Leicestershire County Council, but a planning application has not been submitted subsequently.
- 7.40 The Burton Lane Easton application has yet to be determined (as of 18th December 2024), and similarly planning permission has not been granted for a proposal at Park House Farm, therefore both applications do not currently represent a committed / allocated development scheme and cannot be considered as cumulative development.

Effect of the development on Biodiversity, Ecology and Trees

- 7.41 The application was supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, a Biodiversity Net Gain report and metric, and an Arboricultural Planning Statement.
- 7.42 The Ecology report confirms that the site is within the Cribbs Lodge Meadow SSSI impact risk zone. There are also three non-statutory designated sites, Local Wildlife sites, located

within 2km of the site. Skillington to Gunby Road Verges, Stainby Warren and North Witham Road Verges. Stainby Warren is also classed as a priority habitat a deciduous woodland. The site itself is managed agricultural land as well as native hedgerow with trees, native hedgerow, hardstanding, non-cereal crop, modified grassland, other neutral grassland and mixed scrub.

- 7.43 There are 67 arboricultural features comprising of 26 individual trees, 25 groups of trees, 12 hedgerows and four woodlands within influencing distance of the development. The arboricultural features are classified as moderate or low quality, with one feature unsuitable for retention. The Arboricultural report confirms that four individual trees and two groups of trees will need to be removed to facilitate the development. There would also be partial removal of two groups of trees and four hedgerows.
- 7.44 The development proposals could be mitigated through various measures including a tree and vegetation planting scheme onsite. The statutory Biodiversity Metric concluded that the proposed development will have an overall 12.21% net gain in habitat units and a 28.64% net gain in hedgerow units. The development will have the following habitats created; trees, other neutral grassland, SuDs, mixed scrub, modified grassland, and hard standing. The development would also retain native hedgerow, hedgerow with trees and other neutral grassland. This is illustrated on the submitted Landscaping Plan. The measures could be conditioned for a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan, which would be required by the statutory biodiversity net gain condition.

Impact on the Residential Amenities

- 7.45 The site is located in proximity to an existing industrial estate and there are a number of villages in the locality, with the closest the village of Gunby 1.1km to the east. The application has been supported by a detailed Landscaping scheme to screen the proposed development to meet criteria (a) and (b) of the Biomass Energy Criterion 3 (Renewable Energy Appendix 3).
- 7.46 It is considered that there is sufficient separation distance between residential dwellings, and the proposed development site, that residential amenity will not be adversely impacted in terms of loss of privacy or loss of light. The potential impacts of noise and light are discussed in further detail below. However, the separation distance is considered to ensure that the proposal is in accordance with Policy DE1.
- 7.47 It is the Officer's assessment that the proposed development would not result in any unacceptable adverse impacts on the neighbouring residential dwelling houses or industrial estate, and would not impact on their amenity, in accordance with Local Plan Policy DE1. In relation to potential impacts, conditions are proposed regarding construction management, traffic management, external lighting.

Pollution – Noise, Air Quality and Odours

- 7.48 The proposal was supported by a Noise Assessment and Air Quality and Odour report. The Noise report confirmed that the proposed development would generate potential noise e.g. fixed mechanical plant, onsite activity, HGV movements. There are residential dwelling houses within proximity of the site with the closest between 650m and 700m in the villages of Gunby and Sewstern, and further dwellings in proximity to the proposed new access road. The report contained a noise survey of existing conditions and concluded that although the background noise climate is low/very low the change in road traffic noise would be negligible and the potential noise of the plant and onsite activity would have a low impact on

neighbouring residential dwelling houses as this could be mitigated by the measures proposed in the report.

- 7.49 In regards to dust and smoke, the Odour report identifies potential air quality impacts from vehicle exhaust emissions and the plant emissions. There is the neighbouring industrial estate and residential dwelling houses nearby, and ecological receptors including roadside verges and the Stainby Warren Woodland. The report contained a survey of the existing conditions and modelling to predict pollutant concentrations at the sensitive locations in proximity. The report proposes mitigation in order to disperse the combustion emissions from the biogas boiler, covering the feedstock and the digestate lagoon to control odour emissions. The report concluded that the road vehicle emissions would be negligible, and there would be similarly negligible increases in relation to the combustion plant emissions, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen deposition and acid deposition but these would be not significant. The report confirms that an odour assessment has been undertaken and the significance of odour impacts is predicted to be negligible.
- 7.50 The application was supported by a Greenhouse Gas report and the clarification that the site would continuously monitor the GHG emissions and mitigate emissions. There is further information regarding the process, and the greenhouse gas emissions. The crop-based anaerobic digestion utilises crops which absorb atmospheric carbon dioxide CO₂ during growth and following the anaerobic digestion the stored carbon becomes biogas e.g. methane and CO₂. When combustion takes place, the CO₂ is released, and then captured and stored. It is considered that the development would be in accordance with criteria (e), (f) and (g) of the Biomass Energy Criterion 3 (Renewable Energy Appendix 3).
- 7.51 Information has not been provided regarding the proposed lighting scheme for the development, and as such the development has not met the criteria (h). However, this is something that could be addressed using a planning condition for a detailed lighting scheme, should planning permission be granted.
- 7.52 The Council's Environmental Protection Team has been consulted on the application and have not raised any objections in relation to noise, dust or odour impacts. The Environmental Health Officer has commented that Environmental Protection accept the results and conclusions of the noise impact assessment and the Odour and Air Quality impact reports. The officer has reviewed the mitigation proposed, and this is acceptable. The officer has however also recommended planning conditions for the following additional plans/assessments;
- an odour management plan,
 - a noise management plan and
 - a containment assessment which should be submitted to the local planning authority for approval.

The planning officer considers that the imposition of the proposed planning conditions would be necessary and appropriate should planning permission be granted.

- 7.53 It is the Officer's assessment that the proposed development would not result in any unacceptable pollution impacts regarding noise, air quality or odours, and would not impact on the amenity of neighbouring dwelling houses or the industrial estate. This would be in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN4 and Section 15 of the NPPF. In relation to potential impacts, conditions are proposed regarding construction management, traffic management, external lighting.

Access and Highway Impacts

- 7.54 In reference to the criterion, the development access is proposed adjacent to an existing industrial estate and will serve the proposed use and an existing use. The access is in accordance with criteria (a) and not located in a sensitive area.
- 7.55 The proposed development is designed to allow for the proposed HGV movements, with space onsite for receiving the deliveries and then receiving the byproduct before transporting off site. There is an area of proposed parking provision for staff and visitors onsite. A new access road would be provided to service the proposed HGV movements and remove the HGV impact from unsuitable local roads such as Sewstern Road. This will then provide direct connection to the classified highway, the B676 Buckminster Road to the north. Therefore, the proposal is in accordance with criteria (b) and (e) of the Renewable Energy Criterion.
- 7.56 A Construction Statement has not been provided at this stage of consideration; however, this is something that could be addressed using a suitable planning condition should the development be permitted development, in accordance with criteria (c) of the Renewable Energy Criterion.
- 7.57 The planning application was accompanied by a Transport Statement which details the proposed development and its expected trip generations both during the harvest and the non-harvest periods. The Transport Statement confirms that there would be a negligible number of car trips generated in relation to staff working at the site, and the development would generate HGV trips with movements carried out throughout the day. The HGV movements in the AM and PM peak periods would be minimal. The overall numbers of HGV movements 63 daily two-way movements during the harvest period and 17 daily two-way movements during the non-harvest period, with the additional output movements 11 daily two-way movements. This would be negligible when compared against the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) and not considered to have a severe impact on the local road network. The applicant has offered a detailed traffic management plan, and this can be secured via a suitable planning condition should the development be granted.
- 7.58 The local highway authority, Lincolnshire County Council has been consulted on the application and has not raised any objection in relation to the potential impact on local highways. Lincolnshire CC confirmed the numbers of proposed HGV movements leads the Highways and Lead Flood Authority to not consider that the proposal would result in severe impact on highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact on the local highway network, with regard to the NPPF.
- 7.59 With the site's proximity to neighbouring authority Leicestershire, the local highway authority Leicestershire County Council has also been consulted. Leicestershire County Council has also not raised any objection in relation to the potential impact on local highways. Leicestershire CC noted that not all the HGV movements would be carried out during the AM and PM peak periods and that the HGV will utilise the B676. The number of HGVs associated with the development are negligible when compared against the AADT. Leicestershire CC concluded that it is not considered that the proposal will have a severe impact on the local highway network in accordance with Paragraph 115 of the NPPF.
- 7.60 The proposal would therefore be acceptable and would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on highway safety in accordance with Local Plan Policy ID2 and Section 9 of the NPPF.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.61 The application was accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy, which confirm that the site is within Flood Zone 1 however as the area exceeds 1 hectare assessment was required. The site also contains areas at higher risk of surface water flooding, and the drainage strategy considers appropriate mitigation measures for addressing drainage concerns through SuDs onsite.
- 7.62 The lead flood authority, Lincolnshire County Council has been consulted on the application and has not raised any objection in relation to drainage proposals for the development. Lincolnshire CC confirm that the infiltration for the site is poor, and that the application has included a variety of SuDs techniques to capture, cleanse, store and discharge surface water at a controlled rate. The development would not increase surface water flood risk as a result of the mitigation and utilisation of SuDs onsite.
- 7.63 The Environment Agency initially objected to the development as the proposal was unable to connect to the mains sewer and the application had not shown how foul drainage would be disposed. The applicant provided an updated drainage plan in response to the Environment Agency's objection. The proposed drainage plan (Revision D, dated 12th June 2024) addressed the Environment Agency's concerns, and the objection was removed. No objections or comments have been raised from Anglian Water
- 7.64 On this basis, it is considered that the proposal would be acceptable from a drainage perspective. The proposal would therefore be acceptable and in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN5 and Section 14 of the NPPF.

Other Matters

Mineral Safeguarding

- 7.65 The planning application was accompanied by a Mineral Resource Assessment.
- 7.66 Lincolnshire County Council has been consulted as the Minerals Planning Authority, and no comments have been received.
- 7.67 The planning officer has reviewed the provided information and considers that the proposal has demonstrated that it would be temporary in nature, and it would be feasible to extract the underlying limestone resource in the future when the site is operational and when the site is decommissioned. Consequently, the proposal would be in accordance with Policy M11 (Safeguarding of Mineral Resources) of the Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

8 Crime and Disorder

- 8.1 It is considered that the proposal would not result in any significant crime and disorder implications.

9 Human Rights Implications

- 9.1 Articles 6 (Rights to fair decision making) and Article 8 (Right to private family life and home) of the Human Rights Act have been taken into account in making this recommendation. It is considered that no relevant Article of that act will be breached.

10 Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 10.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 10.2 The application proposals seek planning permission for the erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure.
- 10.3 The proposal is located within the open countryside and development proposals are limited by Policy SP5 (Development in the Open Countryside) to schemes which have an essential need to be located outside of the existing built form of a settlement. Development for rural diversification projects are considered acceptable in policy such as the development proposal for an AD plant related to the surrounding agricultural use. In addition, Policy RE1 (Renewable Energy Generation) advocates a generally permissive approach to renewable energy schemes, subject to a series of criteria which consider the site-specific impacts associated with a particular proposal. As such, the application proposals are acceptable in principle, subject to material planning considerations.
- 10.4 The site would produce an estimated 150 Gigawatt-Hour per year (GWh/yr) of gas which is enough to serve approximately 13,000 homes. The application proposals would make an important contribution towards meeting the national objectives in respect of reducing greenhouse gas emissions as set out in the Climate Change Act 2019. On a local level, South Kesteven District Council have formally declared a climate emergency, and the published Climate Action Strategy identifies increasing the provision of sustainable forms of energy as a key action for achieving net zero. These are significant benefits associated with the proposals that are afforded significant weight as set-out by the NPPF para 168.
- 10.5 In respect of the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, it is Officer's assessment that the proposed development would result in a degree of impact on the landscape character of the area and for visual receptors neighbouring dwellings and the public highway, as a result of the development of the AD plant and its buildings and plant related to the processing of materials. Whilst these landscape and visual impacts can be reduced through the mitigation proposed in the submitted landscaping and planting scheme, the application proposals would still result in a moderate adverse impact on the landscape character, contrary to Policies EN1 (Landscape Character) and DE1 (Promoting Good Quality Design) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan, Appendix 3 Criteria 1, and Section 12 of the NPPF.
- 10.6 There would be further impact on ecology, trees and biodiversity as the development is within a SSSI impact risk zone and within 2km of three local wildlife sites, and proposes the removal of several trees and hedgerow to facilitate the development. Nevertheless, the site is a managed agricultural site currently and suitable mitigation is proposed for tree and vegetation planting onsite. The site would achieve the requirements for statutory Biodiversity Net Gain onsite with 12.21% habitat units and 28.64% hedgerow units.
- 10.7 The impacts that could result from the establishment of an AD plant including heritage, noise, odour, ecology, drainage, and traffic were assessed, and the conclusion was that there would not be any significant adverse impacts, with there being an improved situation in relation to ecological impacts and a resultant gain in BNG.

- 10.8 The officer attributes significant weight to the benefits of the biogas generated by the proposed development and the contribution this would make towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It is acknowledged that the development would provide benefit to the local economy through the growing of crops to feed the AD plant, a limited benefit of jobs during the construction of the scheme, and a limited number of local jobs when the plant is operational. This is attributed limited weight.
- 10.9 All other impacts assessed above are considered to be capable of being mitigated to a position of being in accordance with the development plan. NPPF Paragraph 163 is clear that when determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon development, local planning authorities should (a) not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or local carbon energy... and (b) approve the application if its impacts are or can be made acceptable.
- 10.10 Taking all of the above into account, it is the Case Officer's assessment that the application proposals are in accordance with the adopted Development Plan when taken as a whole, albeit there are conflicts identified in relation to the visual impact of the development. In this case, it is Officer's assessment that the balance of material planning considerations would also weigh in favour of granting planning permission.

11 Recommendation

To authorise the Assistant Director-Planning to GRANT planning permission, subject to the proposed schedule of conditions detailed below.

Schedule of Conditions

Time Limit for Commencement

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In order that the development is commenced in a timely manner, as set out in Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Temporary Permission Limits

- 2) Written confirmation of the first export date shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority no later than 20 days following the event. The development hereby permitted shall cease on or before the expiry of a 30-year period from the date of the first export of biogas from the anaerobic digester to the national grid network; excluding any biogas exported during initial testing and commissioning.

The land shall thereafter be restored to its former condition in accordance with a scheme of decommissioning work ("Decommissioning Scheme") which shall make provision for the removal of the solar panels and all other associated equipment, and the subsequent restoration of the site. The scheme shall include details of:

- (a) The extent of equipment and foundation removal, and the site restoration to be carried out;
- (b) The management and timing of any works;
- (c) A Traffic Management Plan to address the likely traffic impacts arising during the decommissioning period.

- (d) An Environmental Management Plan to include details of measures to be taken during the decommissioning period to protect wildlife, habitat features and trees on the site.
- (e) The location of any temporary compound and parking areas.
- (f) Full details of the removal of the AD plant and associated buildings, and all associated ground restoration.
- (g) Full details of all other works to the land to allow for renewed agricultural production following the removal of structures from the site.
- (h) A programme of implementation.

The Decommissioning Scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, no later than 29 years from the date of the first export of biogas and shall be subsequently implemented as approved.

Reason: The proposed development has a 30-year operational period, and to ensure that the site is fully restored to allow for agricultural use, and to maintain the rural landscape character of the area.

Approved Plans

- 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following list of approved plans:
- Site Location Plan, drawing ref. 27729-150 Rev B (received 28/03/24)
 - Proposed Site Layout Plan, drawing ref. 27729-SK10 Rev H (received 03/04/24)
 - Proposed Plant Elevation 1, drawing ref. 27729-050 Rev E (received 02/05/24)
 - Proposed Plant Elevation 2, drawing ref. 27729-051 Rev D (received 02/05/24)
 - Proposed Plant Elevation 3, drawing ref. 27729-052 Rev A (received 02/05/24)
 - Proposed Floor Plans, drawing ref. 27729-600 Rev 0 (received 02/05/24)
 - Proposed Site Sections, drawing ref. 27729-120 Rev G (received 03/04/24)
 - Site Access Road Location, drawing ref. 27729-600 Rev D (received 18/06/24)
 - Site Access Road 1, drawing ref. 27729-601 Rev C (received 18/06/24)
 - Site Access Road 2, drawing ref. 27729-602 Rev C (received 18/06/24)
 - Site Access Road 3, drawing ref. 27729-603 Rev C (received 18/06/24)
 - Site Access Road 4, drawing ref. 27729-604 Rev C (received 18/06/24)
 - Site Access Road 5, drawing ref. 27729-605 Rev C (received 18/06/24)
 - Site Access Road 6, drawing ref. 27729-606 Rev D (received 18/06/24)
 - Site Access Road 7, drawing ref. 27729-607 Rev C (received 28/03/24)
 - Site Access Road 8, drawing ref. 27729-608 Rev C (received 28/03/24)
 - Site Location Plan Northern Boundary, drawing ref. 27729-152 Rev 0 (received 02/05/24)

- Site Location Plan Southern Boundary, drawing ref. 27729-152 Rev 0 (received 02/05/24)
- Gas Pipeline Indicative Location Plan, drawing ref. 27729-154 Rev 0 (received 02/05/24)
- Site Access Visibility Clearance, drawing ref. 27729-613 Rev C (received 03/04/24)
- Site Access Road Clearance 1, drawing ref. 27729-614 Rev A (received 03/04/24)
- Site Access Road Clearance 2, drawing ref. 27729-615 Rev A (received 03/04/24)
- Site Access Road Clearance 3, drawing ref. 27729-616 Rev A (received 03/04/24)
- Site Access Road Clearance 4, drawing ref. 27729-617 Rev A (received 03/04/24)
- Site Access Road Clearance 5, drawing ref. 27729-618 Rev A (received 03/04/24)
- Site Access Road Clearance 6, drawing ref. 27729-619 Rev A (received 03/04/24)
- Proposed Highway Access Boundary, drawing ref. 27729-SK15 Rev A (received 03/04/24)
- Junction Line and Sign Works, drawing ref. 27729-620 Rev B (received 18/06/24)
- Proposed Site Plan showing SW Drainage, drawing ref. 27729-805 Rev D (received 13/06/24)
- Fire Hydrant Connection, drawing ref. CT-831.idw (received 12/08/24)

Unless otherwise required by another condition of this permission.

Reason: To define the permission and for the avoidance of doubt.

Before the Development is Commenced

Detailed Design

- 4) Notwithstanding the submitted details, prior to any development above damp-proof course, a detailed specification of materials (including the colour of any render, colourwash or paint) to be used in the external materials of all buildings, plant, CCTV cameras and fencing shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Thereafter, the development must be constructed fully in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development, any necessary mitigation measures required by condition references here can be taken into account, and in accordance with Policy DE1 and EN6 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Lighting

- 5) Prior to the commencement of the development, full details of the proposed lighting scheme must be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The scheme shall be installed and be operational prior to operation of the development. The scheme shall be retained for the life of the development.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and in accordance with Policy DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Archaeology

- 6) Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, a Written Scheme of Archaeological Investigation and an Archaeological Mitigation Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details must include:
- a. Details of a programme of trial trenching, which must be first completed and used to inform the mitigation strategy;
 - b. A plan illustrating the location of any archaeological remains on the site;
 - c. Areas which are designated for archaeological monitoring and recording;
 - d. Proposals to ensure that significant archaeological remains are protected or, if appropriate, set out a programme of further archaeological works to ensure that they are recorded in advance of works on site;
 - e. A programme for the implementation of the archaeological mitigation strategy.

Thereafter, all works on site shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Archaeological Mitigation Strategy.

Reason: In order to provide a reasonable opportunity to record the history of the site and in accordance with Policy EN6 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Odour Management Plan

- 7) Before any part of the development is commenced, an Odour Management Plan is required to ensure that odour emissions arising from the development are in line with the levels cited in the application.

Reason: To protect the residential amenity of local residents in accordance with Policy DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Delivery Management Plan

- 8) Before any part of the development is commenced, a Delivery Management Plan is required to ensure the times of deliveries, and that all vehicles are routed an appropriate route to/from the AD plant.

Reason: To protect the residential amenity of local residents in accordance with Policy DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Flood Emergency Plan

- 9) Before any part of the development is commenced, a Flood Emergency Plan covering place of refuge, flood evacuation and safe/escape routes, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The Flood Emergency Plan shall be complied with throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure the safety of the users of the development against the risk of flooding in accordance with Policy EN5 of the South Kesteven Local Plan.

Construction Ecological Management Plan

- 10) Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All works on site shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details throughout the construction period.

Reason: In the interests of safety and free passage of those using the adjacent public highways.

Operational Environmental Management Plan

- 11) Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, an Operational Environmental Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include all details of the proposed development's operation, including delivery vehicles, routing of delivery vehicles, as well as the specifics of the coverings to feedstock and digestate lagoon to control odour emissions.

Reason: To ensure that the traffic movements and odour emissions arising from the development are in line with the levels in the application and to protect the residential amenity of local residents in accordance with Policy DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

During the Building Works

Noise during Construction

- 12) To minimise noise impacts on the existing residential dwellings, 'construction work' shall only be carried out between the hours of 7:30 am to 6:00 pm Monday to Friday and 9:00 am to 1:00 pm on a Saturday. Construction work shall not be carried out on Sundays or Public Holidays. The term 'construction work' shall include mobile and fixed plant/machinery, (e.g. generators) radios and the delivery of construction materials.

To minimise the impact of potential noise on the surrounding area, deliveries of construction materials shall only take place between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday and between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm on a Saturday. No deliveries shall take place on a Sunday or Public Holiday.

Reason: To prevent disturbance to the amenities of residents living in the locality and in accordance with Policies EN4 and DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Ecology

- 13) All works on site during the construction period shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations contained within the Ecological Appraisal, including reasonable avoidance measures for protected species.

Reason: In the interests of best ecological practice and in accordance with Policy EN2 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Before the Development is Operational

Noise Management Plan

- 14) Before any part of the development is brought into use, a Noise Management Plan, based on the recommendations contained within the Noise Impact Assessment submitted with the application, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the residential amenity of local residents in accordance with Policy DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Boundary Treatments

- 15) Before any part of the development hereby permitted is occupied/brought into use, the works to provide the boundary treatments shall have been completed in accordance with the approved boundary treatment scheme.

Reason: To provide a satisfactory appearance to any boundary treatments in accordance with Policy DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Surface and Foul Water Drainage

- 16) Before any part of the development hereby permitted is occupied/brought into use, the works to provide the surface and foul water drainage shall have been completed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the provision of satisfactory surface and foul water drainage is provided in accordance with Policy EN5 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Landscape Management Plan

- 17) Before any part of the development hereby permitted is occupied/brought into use, a landscape management plan shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall include:

- i. long term design objectives,
- ii. management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas.

Reason: Hard and soft landscaping and tree planting make an important contribution to the development and its assimilation with its surroundings and in accordance with Policies DE1, EN3 and OS1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Landscaping Implementation

- 18) Before the end of the first planting / seeding season following the date when electrical power is first exported ("first export date"), all landscaping works shown on the approved Landscape Mitigation Plan required by condition 6 shall have been carried out in full.

Reason: To mitigate the harm to the rural character caused by the proposal and to secure a biodiversity net gain and in accordance with Policy EN1 (Landscape Character) and Policy EN2 (Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Ongoing Conditions

Noise Mitigation

- 19) The development should operate in accordance with the approved Noise Management Plan required by Condition 14 above.

Reason: To ensure there is appropriate mitigation from the impact of noise from the proposed development in the interests of the residential amenities of futures occupiers of the site.

Replacement Planting

- 20) Within a period of five years from the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, any trees or plants provided as part of the approved soft landscaping scheme, that die or become, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced in the first planting season following any such loss with a specimen of the same size and species as was approved in condition above unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a reasonable standard of landscape in accordance with the approved designs and in accordance with Policies DE1, EN3 and OS1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Flood Emergency Plan

- 21) The Flood Emergency Plan covering place of refuge, flood evacuation and safe/escape routes, shall be complied with throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure the safety of the occupiers and users of the development against the risk of flooding in accordance with Policy EN5 of the South Kesteven Local Plan.

Early Decommissioning

- 22) In the event that the site ceases to generate biogas for a period of 12 months prior to the cessation of the 30-year period, a scheme of Decommissioning Works ("Early Decommissioning Scheme") shall be submitted no later than 6 months from the end of the 12-month non-biogas generating period to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. The early decommissioning scheme shall include the same details required under the Decommissioning Scheme set out in Condition 2 of this permission.

Thereafter, the early decommissioning scheme shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the AD plant continues to generate biogas or is otherwise removed to the benefit of the character and appearance, and agricultural productivity of the District; in accordance with Policy EN1 and RE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Remediation Works

- 23) All buildings, structures and hardstanding associated with the development, excluding the access track between Buckminster Road and Sewstern Road, shall have been decommissioned and removed from site by 31.06.2055 or within 12 months of the anaerobic digestion facility ceasing operation, whichever is the sooner. The site shall then be regraded to former levels and appropriately restored to agricultural land within 3 months of the removal of the buildings, structures and hardstanding associated with the development.

This would exclude the northern access track as this serves the timber yard as well.

Reason: To ensure that the AD plant is removed once it ceases to generate biogas, and is removed to the benefit of the character and appearance of the local area, in accordance with Policy EN1 and RE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Standard Note(s) to Applicant:

In reaching the decision the Council has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner by determining the application without undue delay. As such it is considered that the decision is in accordance with paras 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Informatives

Biodiversity Net Gain Informative

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be South Kesteven District Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are listed below.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements listed below are considered to apply.

Highway Informative 02

In accordance with Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, please be considerate of causing damage to the existing highway during construction and implement mitigation measures as necessary. Should extraordinary expenses be incurred by the Highway Authority in maintaining the highway by reason of damage caused by construction traffic, the Highway Authority may seek to recover these expenses from the developer.

Highway Informative 03

The permitted development requires the formation of a new/amended vehicular access. These works will require approval from the Highway Authority in accordance with Section 184 of the Highways Act. Any traffic management required to undertake works within the highway will be subject to agreement. The access must be constructed in accordance with a current specification issued by the Highway Authority. Any requirement to relocate existing apparatus, underground services, or street furniture because of the installation of an access will be the responsibility, and cost, of the applicant and must be agreed prior to a vehicle access application. The application form, costs and guidance documentation can be found on the Highway Authority's website, accessible via the following link: <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/licences-permits/apply-dropped-kerb>.

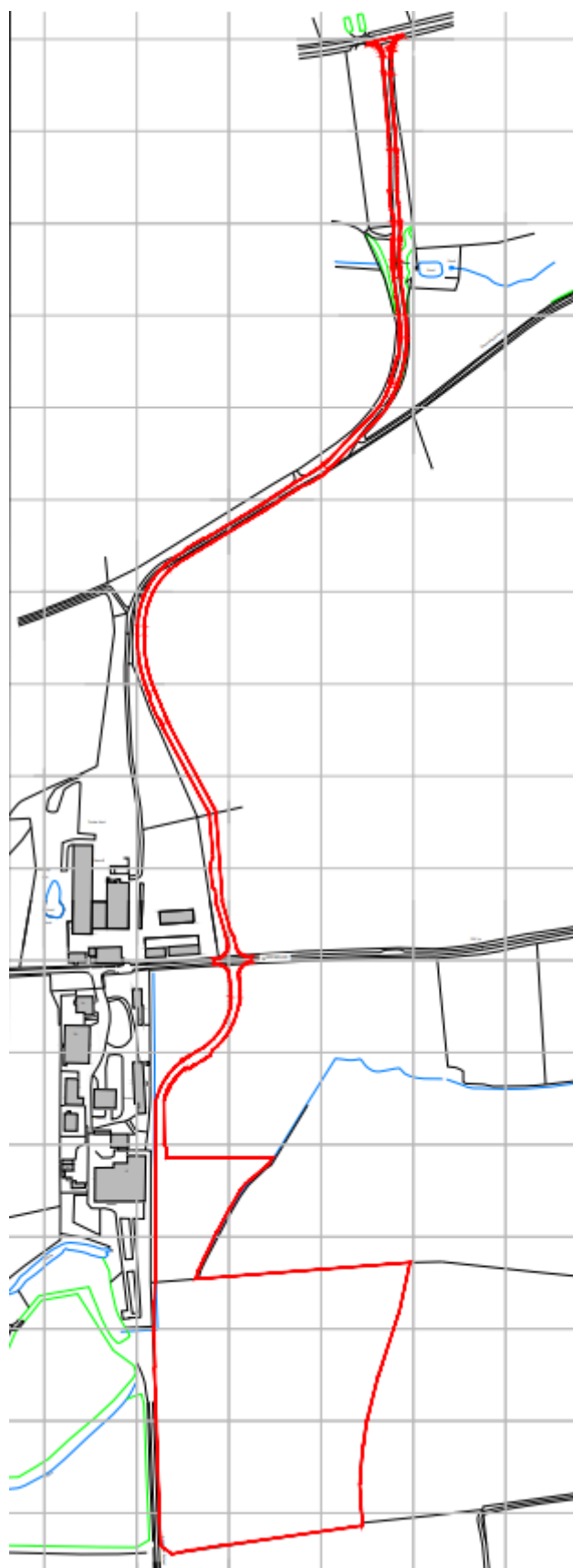
Highway Informative 04

The road serving the permitted development is approved as a private road which will not be adopted as a Highway Maintainable at the Public Expense (under the Highways Act 1980). As such, the liability for the future maintenance of the road will rest with those who gain access to their property from it.

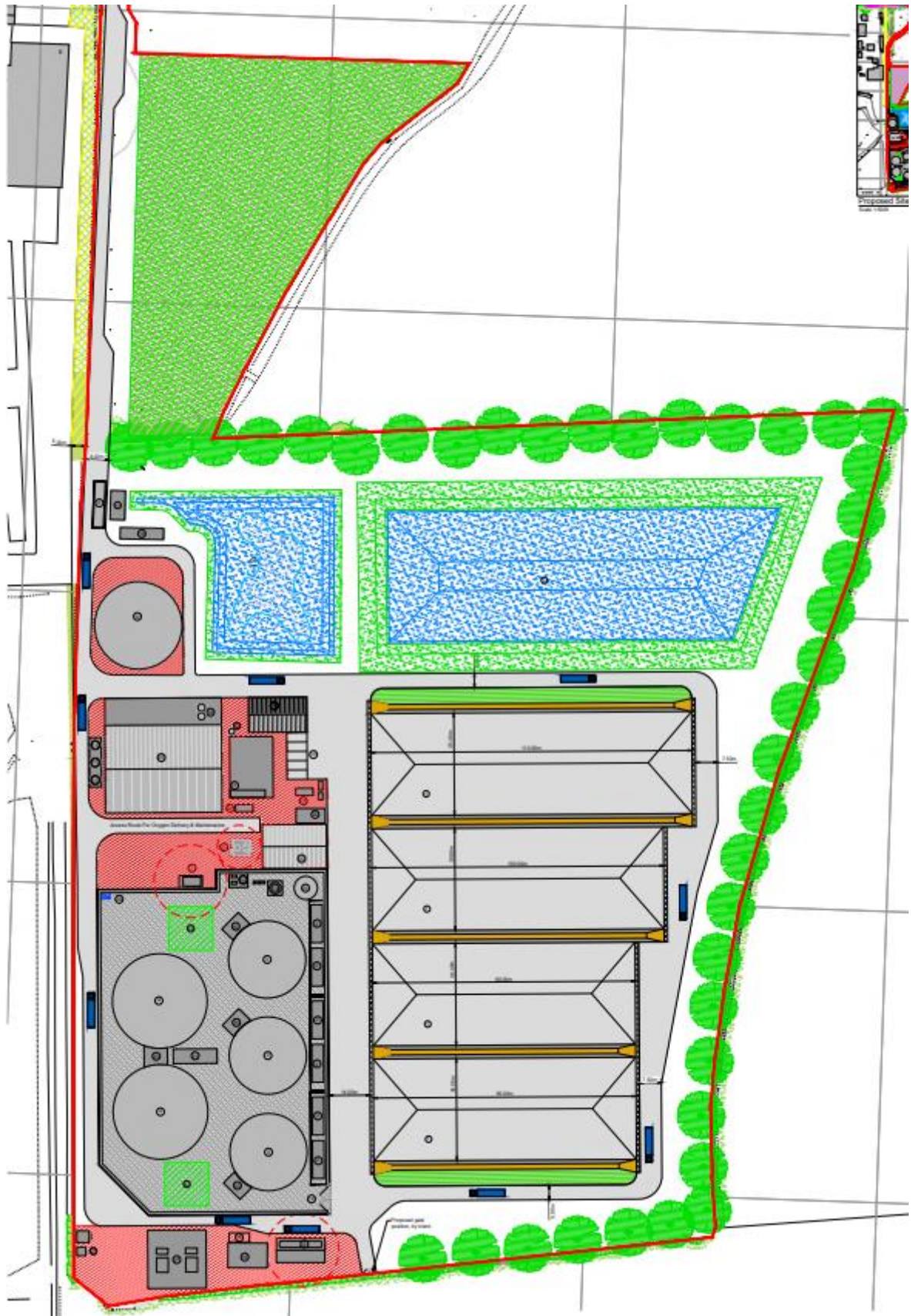
Highway Informative 08

Please contact the Lincolnshire County Council Streetworks and Permitting Team on 01522 782070 to discuss any proposed statutory utility connections, Section 50 licences and any other works which will be required within the public highway in association with the development permitted under this Consent. This will enable Lincolnshire County Council to assist in the coordination and timings of these works. For further guidance please visit the Highway Authority's website via the following link: Traffic Management - <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/traffic-management>

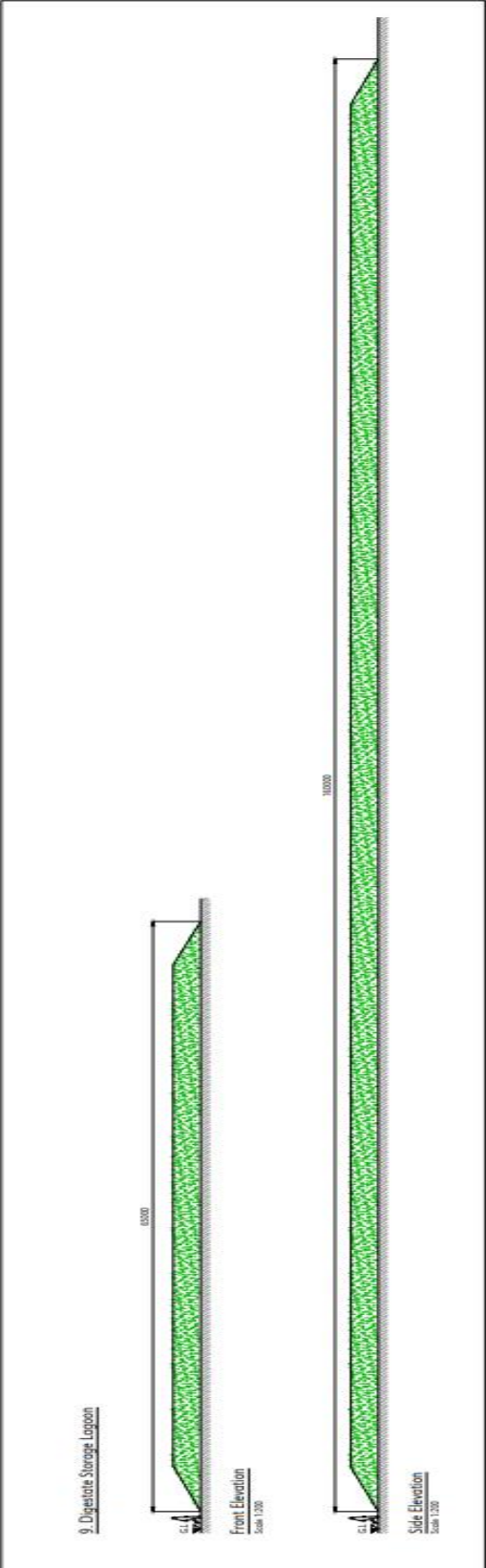
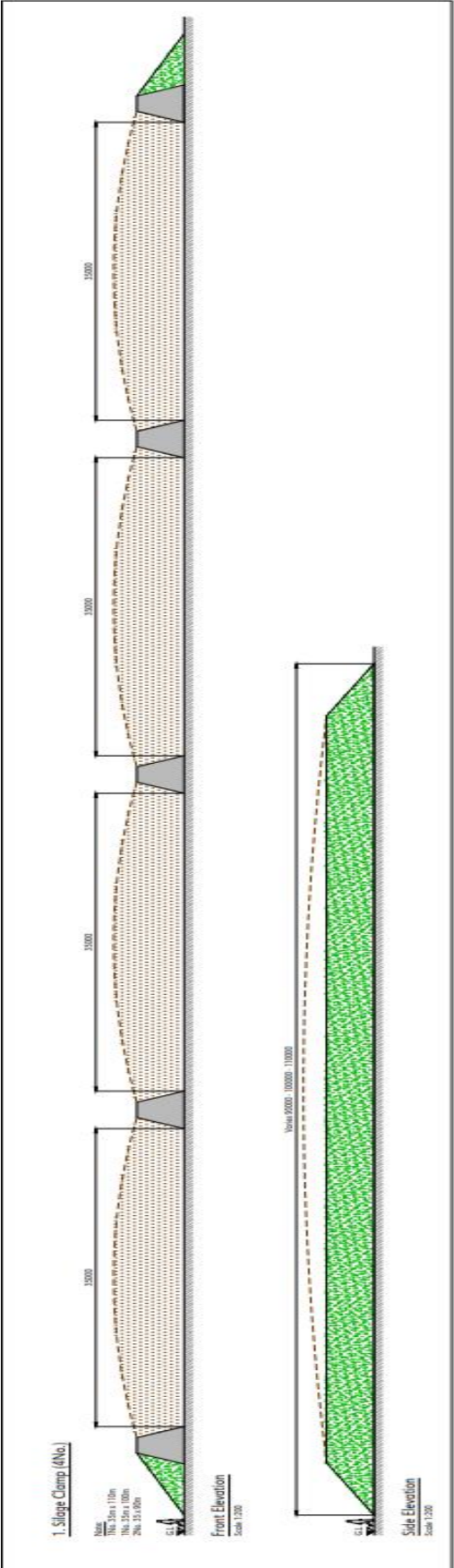
SITE LOCATION PLAN



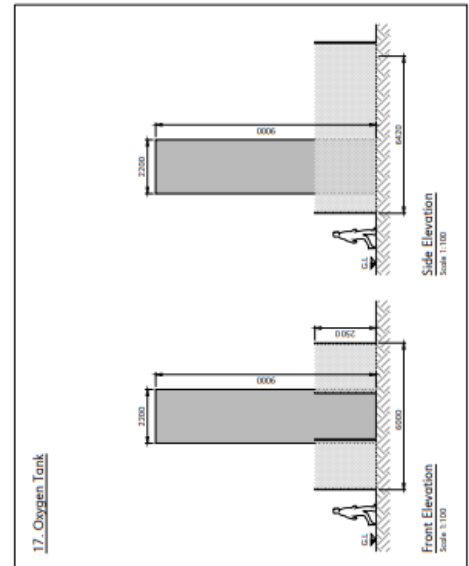
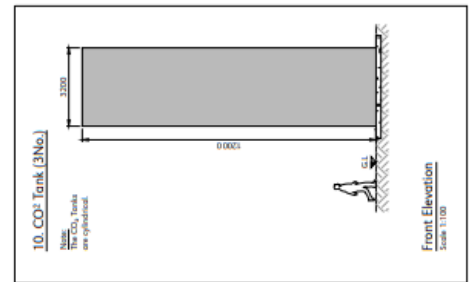
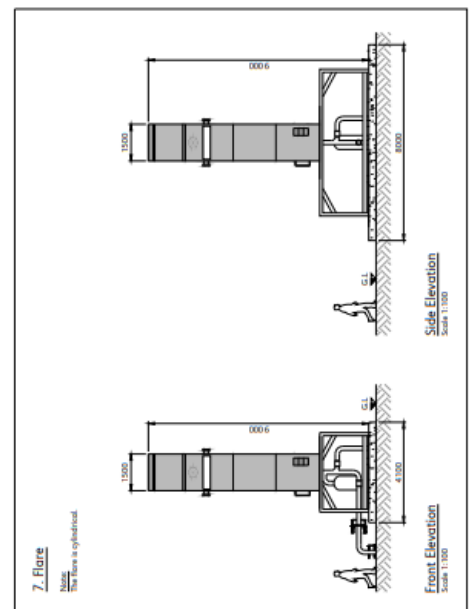
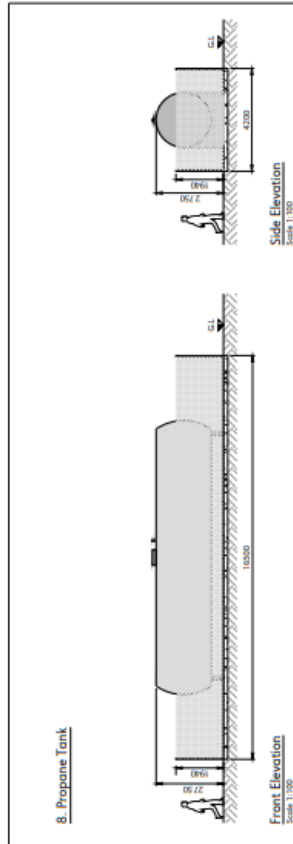
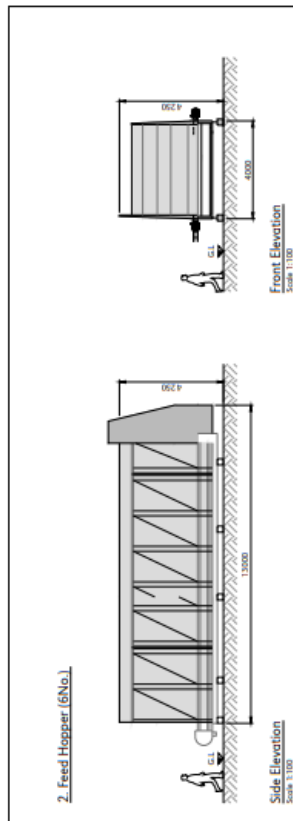
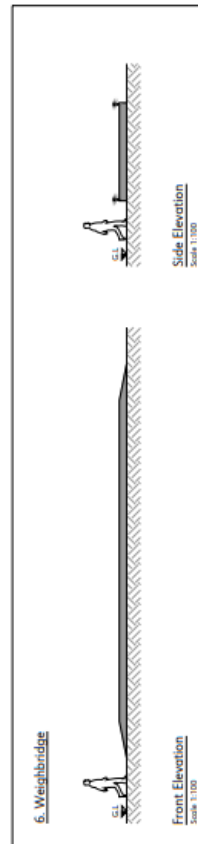
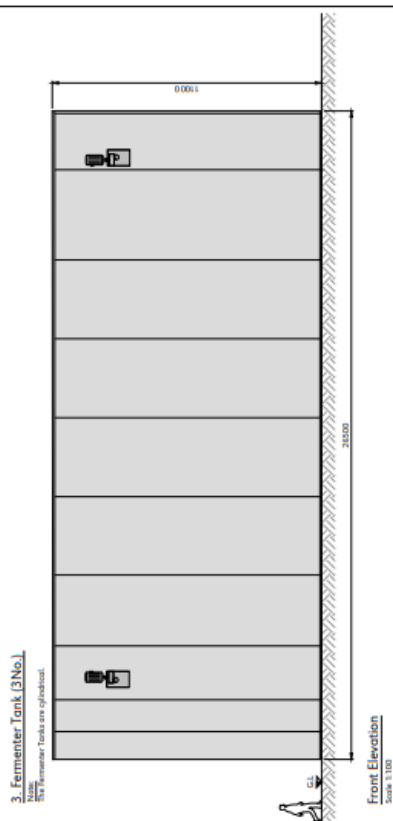
BLOCK PLAN PROPOSED



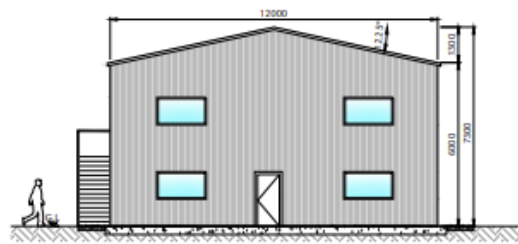
PROPOSED ELEVATIONS



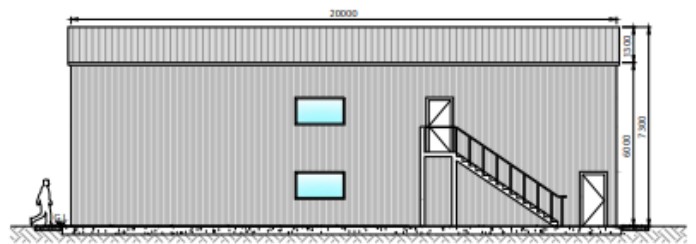
1. The undersigned hereby certifies that he has reviewed the business records listed below.
2. All items to be shown above comply with Ontario defined levels (A.O.D) unless stated otherwise.
3. This document is being drawn up in accordance with our clear shop conditions.
4. This document has been created in accordance with Proxcel Ltd. Terms & Conditions along with the scope of work provided by the client to Proxcel. Any use of this document other than for its original purpose is prohibited. No part of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from Proxcel Ltd. or its immediately related or affiliated companies or subsidiaries.
5. This drawing is to be used in conjunction with all other relevant documents pertaining to the project.
6. This drawing is not intended to be used as a final design.
 2- 217701 001 - Proposed Plant elevations Sheet 2 of 3
 2- 217701 002 - Proposed Plant elevations Sheet 3 of 3



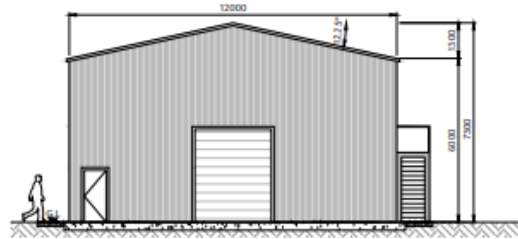
5. Site Office



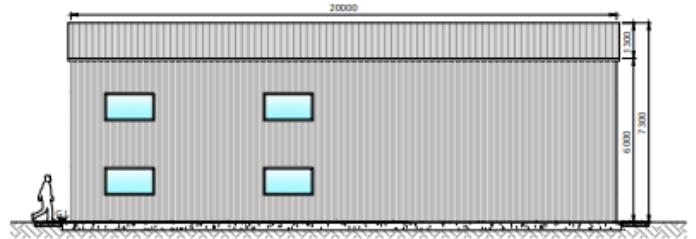
Front Elevation
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Side Elevation
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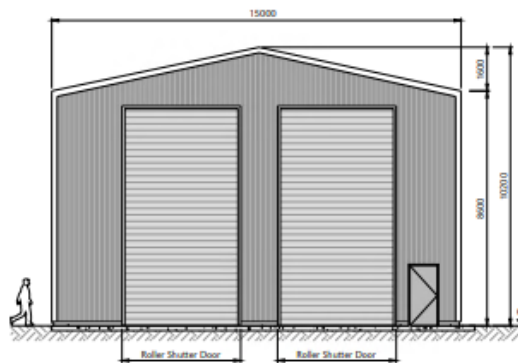


Rear Elevation
Scale 1:100

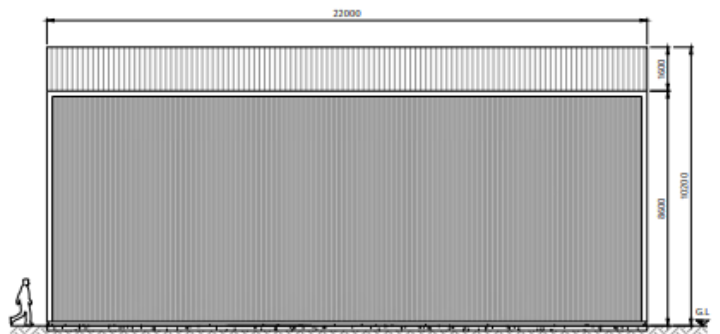


Side Elevation
Scale 1:100

15. Storage Building



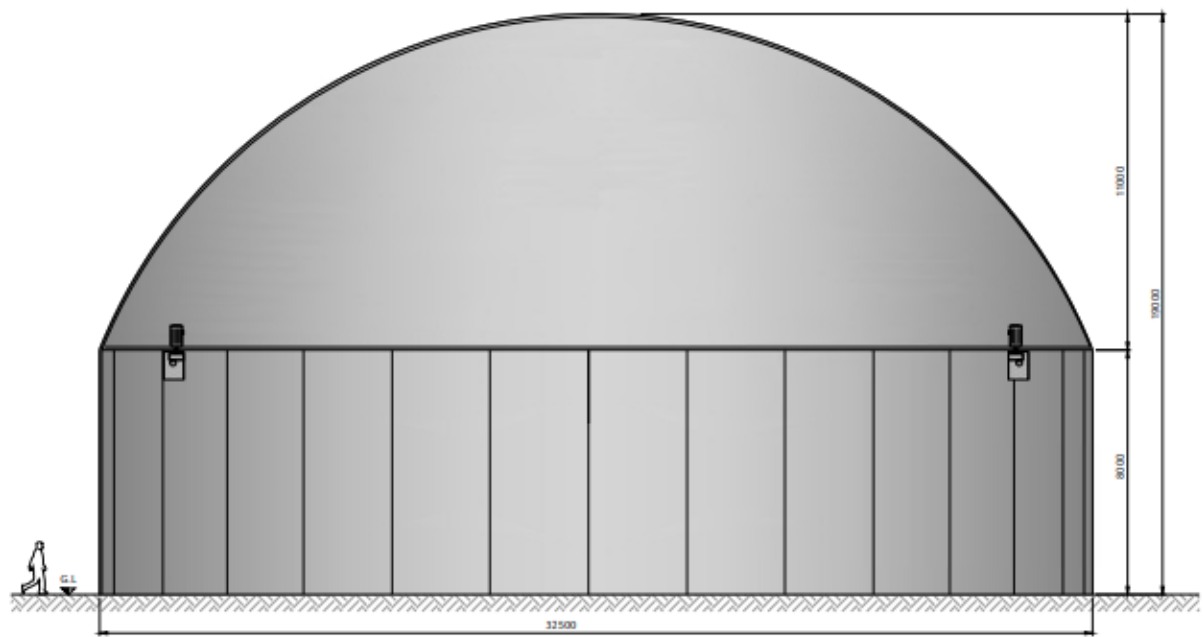
Front Elevation
Scale 1:100



Side Elevation
Scale 1:100

4. Post Fermenter Tank (2No.)

Note:
The Post Fermenter Tanks
are cylindrical.



Front Elevation
Scale 1:100

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Appendix 1 - Environmental Impact Assessment Summary

- 1.1 The application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement which is considered to meet the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2017 (EIA Regulations)).

- Transport
- Noise
- Air Quality and Odour
- Flood Risk
- Landscape and Visual Impact
- Ecology and Biodiversity
- Heritage
- Agricultural Land Quality

- 1.2 A summary of the main finding and conclusions of the submitted information is set out below:

Transport Statement

- 1.3 The proposed AD facility is seeking permission for the importation of 130,000 tonnes per annum of energy crops. The traffic generation exercise was carried out for the AD facility; staff, servicing / maintenance; input material and output material.

Staff

- 1.4 There would be 6-7 members of staff onsite 7 days a week between 07:00 and 19:00, however, staff would arrive and depart at intervals during the day to fulfil operational requirements.
- 1.5 The worst-case scenario would be all 7 members of staff arriving and departing in separate vehicles. This equates to 14 two-way trips per day.

- 1.6 Parking would be provided for staff vehicles

Servicing / Maintenance

- 1.7 The majority of servicing and maintenance would be carried out by the permanent members of staff. However, there would be occasional trips to the site by specialists, but this would not be a significant levels of traffic generation.

Input Material

- 1.8 Approximately 50,000 tonnes of material will be delivered directly from the fields which are part of the Buckminster Estate at harvest time over a 6-week period and stored onsite in silage clamps. The material is likely to comprise of maize (September/October), whole crop cereal (June/July) and grass (3 cuts

over the summer months). Approximately 50% (25,000 tonnes) will be delivered by tractors with trailers. The other 50% (25,000 tonnes) will be delivered from Buckminster Estate fields further away by HGVs carrying 26t loads resulting in 962 vehicles accessing the site during the 6-week gravest period. This equates to 22.9 HGV arrivals per day, and 46 two-way trips.

- 1.9 The remaining 80,000 tonnes of material will be stored at satellite hubs and supplied to the site on a just in time basis at a constant rate throughout the year. This will be by specialist haulage HGVs carrying 26t loads, resulting in 3,077 vehicles per annum. This equates to 8.5 HGV arrivals per day, and 17 two-way trips.

Output Material

- 1.10 The AD plant produces gas that would be injected into the local National Grid gas network. No generation of traffic.
- 1.11 It would also produce approximately 24,000 tonnes per year of carbon dioxide which would be liquified and transported offsite. This would result in 1,200 vehicles per annum and 3.3 vehicle arrivals per day, and 7 two-way trips.
- 1.12 The AD plant would produce approximately 89,000 tonnes of biofertilizer and this would be stored onsite. 20,000 tonnes would be spread on the fields immediately surrounding the site. The remaining 15,000 tonnes would be transported to Buckminster Estate fields further away by HGVs resulting in 577 vehicles over 46 weeks. This equates to 1.8 vehicle arrivals per day, and 4 two-way trips.
- 1.13 Approximately 54,000 tonnes would be transported offsite by HGVs that will first deliver the energy crop feedstock. This generates no additional traffic.
- 1.14 Gunby Road / Sewstern Road is a 'C' classified road, and Buckminster Road is a 'B' classified road. It is proposed to provide a new access road linking from the site to the B676 Buckminster Road to the north. This road is a single carriageway and runs in an east/west direction providing access to the A1, and Melton Mowbray and various villages. The carriageway is typically 5.5m in width.
- 1.15 An automatic traffic counter on Buckminster Road, Gunby Road and Sewstern Road confirm that vehicles travel within the speed limits for the respective roads. The automatic traffic counter also confirm that the respective roads are lightly trafficked.
- 1.16 The personal injury accident data obtained reveals no recorded collisions within the vicinity of the junction of Buckminster Road or on Gunby Road or Sewstern Road.
- 1.17 The Transport Statement concluded that the proposed development would generate up to 6 HGV movements per hour, and the site access and access road would be suitable.

Noise Assessment

- 1.18 The main potential sources of noise were identified as: fixed mechanical plant; and onsite activity including loading shovels, feed hoppers and HGV movements. The flare would also lead to potential noise, but this is infrequent use.
- 1.19 The noise sensitive residential properties are identified as 700m to the west at Sewstern, 650m to the east at Gunby and properties located 200m to the north of the proposed access road.
- 1.20 Baseline noise surveys were undertaken at two locations over a period considered sufficient to get a representative background noise climate. The daytime noise levels were recorded at 31 to 32dB with occasional sound levels below 30dB at the weekend. During the night the typical measured background sound level was 26dB and 18dB. Background noise levels were measured to be very low.
- 1.21 The change in road traffic noise level as a result of the proposed development generated vehicles is predicted to be negligible with the change in sound level being not perceptible.
- 1.22 The principal source of noise from the proposed development would be from the loading shovels. However, it would be mitigated by the barrier effect of bulked up material stored in the clamps. Predicted rating levels are around or below 35dB at all locations, which are also considered to be low, therefore low impact is predicted at all receptors.

Air Quality and Odour Report

- 1.23 The main sources of potential air quality impacts include; road vehicle exhaust emissions; and combustion plant emissions. The air quality receptors were identified as human (nearby residential properties) and ecological receptors (roadside verges, Stainby Warren woodland). Dispersion modelling was undertaken in order to predict pollutant concentrations at sensitive locations as a result of emissions from the relevant sources.
- 1.24 The baseline survey confirms that there is one Air Quality Management Area in the district, Manthorpe Road, Wharf Road, High Street and London Road. The AQMA is over 13.5km from the site. All other pollutant concentrations are below the relevant air quality levels.
- 1.25 Mitigation proposed includes a 5m tall stack to disperse combustion emissions from the biogas boiler, covering of feedstock (except at the working clamp face), and covering the digestate lagoon to control odour emissions.
- 1.26 Potential air quality impacts associated with the road vehicle emissions are predicted to be negligible and not significant.
- 1.27 In relation to the combustion plant emissions, nitrogen dioxide would increase for nearby residential receptors and for the industrial receptor, Sewstern Industrial Estate, and nitrogen oxides for nearby ecological receptors. However, these are negligible increases and classified as not significant.

Sulphur dioxide would increase for nearby residential receptors and for the industrial receptor, and ecological receptors. These are again negligible increases and classified as not significant. Nitrogen deposition and acid deposition would also increase for nearby ecological receptors, but are predicted to be not significant. Based on the predictions it is considered that there would be no constraints to approval from an air quality perspective.

- 1.28 The odour assessment used the dispersion model technique. The significance of odour impacts as a result of emissions from the AD plant were predicted to be negligible at all receptor locations. The overall odour impact associated with the facilities was considered not to be significant in accordance with the methodology and the IAQM impact descriptions.

Flood Risk Assessment

- 1.29 A Flood Risk Assessment was prepared to evaluate the flood risk to the proposed development, in addition to considering the impact that the development will have on the surrounding area as the site's planning boundary exceeds 1 hectare. The report includes a surface water drainage strategy.
- 1.30 Drainage ditches bound the eastern, southern and western boundaries of the main site, and a further drainage ditch is located to the west of the access to the main site along Sewstern Road. There is a unnamed watercourse situated in proximity to the access on Buckminster Road. There is potential ground water below the site. The site is within the River Witham catchment.
- 1.31 The surface water drainage system for the main site area will receive the runoff from the proposed asphalt access, roofs, and concrete bund where the tanks are located (1.985ha). Runoff from the clamp and surrounding hardstanding, in addition to a limited area in the south-west of the site, will drain to the separate dirty water drainage system, that outfalls into the digestate storage lagoon. Pollution control measures are incorporated.
- 1.32 The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and has less than a 0.1% chance of flooding at a location per year. The majority of the site would have less than 25% susceptibility to ground water flooding. There would be a risk of surface water flooding during 3.3%, 1.0% and 0.1% flood events. During a flood event there is an area of the site access road that would be flooded. It is proposed that the site should be temporarily closed, and any workers onsite evacuated until the flood water recedes.
- 1.33 The proposed development is at low to moderate risk of groundwater flooding, and very low risk of flooding from reservoirs. Most of the site structures and the access are located in an area that is not at risk of pluvial flooding.

Landscape and Visual Impact

- 1.34 The South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment (January 2007) describes the site location as in the Kesteven Uplands. The potential impact of the development was assessed against historic mapping, policy and a review of the site. The potential impact of the development was assessed from twelve viewpoints within 1km of the site.

- 1.35 The site is located on a small plateau area with an approximate elevation of 132metres. There are limited public rights of way in the vicinity of the site. The nearest passes within 1km to the east of the site, although the development is largely screened by topography, hedgerow and woodland. There are permissive footpaths around Gunby which have open views towards the site through gaps in the field boundary hedgerow. There are also occasional views across the landscape from minor roads in the area which are fringed by tall hedgerow.
- 1.36 The main findings were:
- Landscape Sensitivity is considered to be pastoral landscape, some historic hedgerow boundaries and ancient woodland, and few distracting elements. – medium/high
 - Visual sensitivity is considered to be potential views from higher lands, potential views from public rights of way and residential dwelling houses, and potential views from the east and north along public roads. – medium/high
 - Landscape value is that it is an arable field within a landscape with good value, no notable conservation or historic designations in the immediate vicinity and no known particular local associations. – medium
 - This leads to the Landscape Character Sensitivity of the site being considered medium/high and overall landscape capacity to be medium/low.
- 1.37 There would be an impact of a temporary nature from the construction phase e.g. removal of landscape features, cranes or plant, site vehicles, materials and temporary lighting. There would be an impact from the completed development including a change of land use from open field to interrupted landscape with new structures and hard surfacing, new built features in the landscape, new planting and screening for the site.
- 1.38 In terms of the effects on visual amenity these would range from minor adverse to moderate adverse from the built form, and minor beneficial from the addition of planting and vegetation e.g. new hedgerow.
- 1.39 Mitigation proposed includes native tree and shrub planting on the north, east and south boundaries of the site, and reinforced existing hedgerow with native hedgerow and tree species. There will also be new planting offsite on other areas of the Buckminster Estate. This includes new hedgerow, tree planting and gaps in existing hedgerows planted with new native planting.

Ecology Appraisal

- 1.40 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken for the site which considered the potential impacts on habitats and plant species. The site is within the Cribbs Lodge Meadow SSSI impact risk zone. There are also three non-statutory designated sites, Local Wildlife sites, located within 2km of the site. Skillington to Gunby Road Verges, Stainby Warren and North Witham

Road Verges. Stainby Warren is also classed as a priority habitat a deciduous woodland.

Habitats and plant species

- 1.41 The main habitat is arable cultivated land, with some arable field margins, dense scrub, hedgerows, a dry ditch, and hard standing.

Amphibians

- 1.42 Eight waterbodies were located within 500m of the site boundary, and four were subject to assessment. The e-DNA results confirms that there were no amphibians present and the HSI score was average. The habitats on site are also considered to provide limited suitable terrestrial habitat for other amphibian species.

Reptiles

- 1.43 The scattered scrub, hedgerow bases and arable field margins provide some suitable refuge, foraging and commuting grounds for reptile species. However, the wider habitat largely comprises of arable land, reducing the overall suitability.

Bats

- 1.44 There was an Ash tree with Bat roosting suitability and the hedgerows and adjacent woodland edge provide some suitable foraging / commuting habitat for bats. There is also suitable connectivity within the wider landscape through hedgerows and small patches of woodland.

Badgers

- 1.45 No badger setts were observed on or within 30m of the site boundary. The arable field margins, scrub and hedgerow within the site boundary provide suitable foraging and commuting grounds for badger.

Otters

- 1.46 The habitats within the site are considered to provide negligible suitability for otters. No records were returned for otters within 2km of the site boundary

Water Voles

- 1.47 The ditches are considered unsuitable for water vole.

Other mammals

- 1.48 The scrub and hedgerows provide suitable habitat for various mammal species.

Birds

- 1.49 The hedgerows, arable field margins, scrub and arable land provides some suitable nesting and foraging opportunities for a range of bird species.

Invertebrates

- 1.50 The hedgerows and scrub provide some suitable habitat for various invertebrate species. No records were returned within 2km of the site boundary.
- 1.51 In conclusion, the site was not found to support any important ecological features. Mitigation is proposed for reptiles, bats, badgers, other mammals, and birds. There are proposals to enhance the site for wildlife through the delivery of BNG.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 1.52 A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) report and metric was submitted with the application which calculated the current biodiversity baseline value of the site, the pre-intervention scenario, the habitat creation and the enhancement required to achieve a 10% net gain and an outline strategy for BNG delivery.
- 1.53 The habitats were condition assessed during a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) survey and the metric calculation tool was used to determine the value of the sites biodiversity.
- 1.54 The baseline habitats were confirmed to be native hedgerow with trees, native hedgerow, hardstanding, non-cereal crop, modified grassland, other neutral grassland and mixed scrub. The development will have the following habitats created; trees, other neutral grassland, SuDs, mixed scrub, modified grassland, and hard standing. The development will retain native hedgerow, hedgerow with trees and other neutral grassland.
- 1.55 The statutory biodiversity metric concluded that the proposed development would have an overall 12.21% net gain in habitat units and a 28.64% net gain in hedgerow units.

Heritage

- 1.56 The submission includes a Geophysical Survey report to investigate the potential for archaeological remains.
- 1.57 The baseline was established for archaeological potential using mapping, the Historic Environment Record, books, aerial photographs, lidar data and a walkover of the site. There are no prehistoric or Saxon entries recorded in the assessment area. A roman road, The Drift is 600m to the west of the site.
- 1.58 There are a total of 25 designated assets within the 3km Assessment Area. Mitigation includes extensive tree planning to the north, east and south of the development site to screen the site from nearby heritage assets.
- 1.59 In conclusion, the proposed AD plant was found to not cause harm to any designated heritage asset, or effect on the historic environment to meet the threshold for being significant.

Agricultural Land Quality Assessment

- 1.60 An Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Report has been prepared to provide details of the condition of the proposed extension area and to determine likely

impacts on soils resources and agricultural land quality. The survey site consists of two fields.

- 1.61 The soils on the site are poorly drained with a Soil Wetness Class IV with high clay content. The resultant wetness/workability limitations mean machinery land access is rarely possible in spring; arable use is mainly restricted to autumn sown crops. Land of grade 3 has been identified and the subgrade is 3b.
- 1.62 Subgrade 3b is land capable of producing moderate yields of a narrow range of crops.

APPENDIX 2

Consultee Comments from:

- * Colsterworth and District Parish Council
- * Lincolnshire County Council
- * Leicestershire County Council



Sue Grant
Clerk to Colsterworth and District Parish Council
42 Bourne Road
Colsterworth
Grantham
NG33 5JE
5th June 2024

S24/0568 | Erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure. | Development East of Sewstern Industrial Estate South of Sewstern Road Gunby Lincolnshire NG33 5RD

This response has been ratified by the Colsterworth and District Parish Council at their meeting on 04 June 2024.

1. INTRODUCTION

1. The Parish Council would like to thank SKDC as the Planning Authority for extending the deadline for our comments to 14 June 2024 due to the significance of this application to our Parish. This has allowed the Parish Council to have a clear picture of the strength of opposition to this proposal demonstrated by the objections and comments submitted and published by the Planning Authority.
2. The Parish Council also supports this application being considered at full Planning Committee and not delegated to Officers.
3. The Parish Council also acknowledges the wide range of consultees across boundaries with Lincolnshire and Leicestershire due to the proposal affecting communities within a 10-15 mile radius of the site.
4. Stainby and Gunby are the nearest villages in our Parish to the proposal however, this affects our whole Parish including North Witham, Lobthorpe, Colsterworth and Woolsthorpe by Colsterworth. We would urge the Planning Authorities and other consultees to pay due regard to the representations made from all those communities.
5. The Parish Council is concerned regarding a number of omissions and inconsistencies and reliance on “desktop” modelling which appear subjective in its conclusions therefore, we do not believe that the evidence presented supports the conclusions in the applicants Non-Technical Summary which states: *“No unacceptable impacts have been identified in relation to residential amenity, odour, noise, archaeology, designated nature conservation sites, the water environment, landscape character, or the highway network.”*
6. In the light of the extensive objections and representations made to the Parish Council over several months by the community and which you will be fully aware, we **object to the application as presented to the Planning Authority.**

The following are just some observations to support the reasons for this:

2. IMPACT ON HIGHWAY SAFETY AND TRAFFIC GENERATION

As identified in SKDC's pre-planning response to the applicant, we believe there are significant gaps in the information provided and several inconsistencies. We do not believe that it is the role of the Planning Authority at this stage to impose a Traffic Management Plan when the information required is not sufficiently provided. This may also impact on the decision by Highways England, Leicestershire and Lincolnshire County Councils' Highways assessment. We do not believe therefore, that this complies with ID2 Transport and Strategic Transport Infrastructure requirements.



The size and scale of this development across a wide area means that there will be a significant impact on the road network and transportation infrastructure. This will lead to increased traffic with more congestion and longer commuting times. In addition, it will cause safety issues particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

The application suggests that the majority of crops to site will not be on internal roads and tracks and the application does actually state that *"it is likely that the majority of the HGV movements would subsequently be via the A1 Trunk Road"* (presumably accessed from the B676). The application suggests that 40% of the crops will be delivered from Buckminster land on internal tracks. We would suggest that this is in fact 20% (25,000 tonnes), half of the Buckminster land contribution which suggests that the site proposed is only "local" to 20% of the crops to site with 80% (105,000 tonnes) from elsewhere. Can the applicant provide more specific details and a Traffic Management Plan to clarify so this can be accurately assessed/verified?

We have identified some specific observations and have also been made aware of another review of Highways and Transport Issues prepared by Bruce Bamber (May 2024) and submitted to the Planning Authority in response to the local residents' concerns which we would expect is considered:

Because the external storage areas are not included in the Transport Plan Lincolnshire CC Highways and Leicestershire CC Highways should be re consulted when these are known. The location of these is a requirement of Local Plan Renewable Energy Appendix Biomass Energy Criterion 5(d).

1. Crucially, the study area in the Traffic and Transport Statement did not include the B676 through Stainby and Colsterworth to the A1 and focussed on the proposed internal tracks and access road to the site from the B676. This is a major omission.
2. We believe that the study area should also have referenced the A1 from Stamford to Grantham which falls within the 10-15 mile radius of the proposed site. This should include details of the routes proposed to consider the adequacy of access and exit slip roads to and from the A1, the current and anticipated traffic flows through all villages including North and South Witham (and Parishes within Leicestershire)
3. It is unclear if crops to site and digestate will be from and to land accessing and crossing the A1 from the B6403 or A151; this will have a particular impact on the projected increased traffic on the A1 using the access/exit on Bridge End, Colsterworth (which is a major flood risk); this is particularly relevant bearing in mind the impact of the Waste and Digestor Plant being considered by Lincolnshire County Council at Easton. (SKDC: S24/0544 and LCC: PL/0022/24)
4. We would expect a multi-agency emergency/enforcement plan for any closures on the A1 to stop A1 traffic (particularly HGVs ignoring the weight restrictions) diverting through North Witham, Stainby and Gunby and Colsterworth (particularly High Street, Colster Way, Stamford Road and Old Post Lane.)
5. Bearing the above in mind, and Highways England's response to the application at Easton *"no further analysis of the nearby A1/B6403 junction would be necessary"* we believe that this would need to be re-referred to Highways England to address concerns raised in this consultation, e.g.,
6. The figures provided in the application are inconsistent and do not appear to support the narrative/assessments regarding traffic movements. The following is our interpretation based on what we understand is being proposed:-
 - The stated tonnage of crops to site over the year is 130,000 tonnes with 80% from outside of the local Buckminster land
 - 25,000 tonnes will be harvested (September to October) from Buckminster land and taken to the facility on internal Buckminster tracks and access roads. The application states no change to current traffic movements. However, this does not appear to be the case as in the application, it confirms the tonnage of harvest from fields may be unchanged, but the destination is (i.e., all crops will be intended for the one site to be processed). These tractors and trailers do not appear anywhere in the Traffic and Transport Plan.
 - 25,000 tonnes will be harvested (September to October) from other Buckminster land further away and taken to the facility using the local highways? The location of this land is not identified in the Traffic and Transport Plan.



- 80,000 tonnes will be harvested and stored in satellite hubs, feeding the digester over the year using local highways? The location of this land is not identified in the Traffic and Transport Plan.
 - In addition to the “crops to site” at the public consultation it was anticipated that the digestate was expected to be 70,000 tonnes. Some of it to Buckminster farmland and some to external (farmer) customers. Can more information be provided on the proportion by internal and external customers to evidence the associated vehicle movements?
 - A further stage of the process is to have the liquid CO₂ taken from the site by road haulier; estimated at 24,000 tonnes (20,000t at the public consultation). There is some debate whether this is actually “gaseous waste” transported long distances, therefore, a public responsibility of the relevant Authorities, e.g., Highways and Environmental Protection? Can you ask these relevant Authorities to confirm if this is the case? The Traffic Management Plan needs to identify the routing for this and impact on B676 and A1
7. There is no information identifying the land where the crops will be grown or where the remote satellite clamps will be located. Can the applicant provide this information to consider vehicle movements further?
8. In the absence of full details of the crops sites and satellite hubs we can only speculate (as has the applicant) on the impact of the number of vehicle movements on local roads of which the majority will be HGVs.
9. There is no clarification on the suggestion that there will be a rotation of crops (i.e., rye, maize, barley, grass). Does this mean one type of crop is grown every year, or will there be a constant mix of crops over the entire year? This is relevant to identify the harvest periods which we understand will be at various times of the year depending on the crops resulting in more than one intensive harvest period. Or must be assume that the harvest period will actually be constant from June to October? This would again impact on identifying the vehicle movements. (Reference 1.7.15 Transport Statement for Gonerby Moor January 2023 as a comparison (LCC Planning: PL/0016/23).
10. Due to the inconsistencies and omissions the Parish Council has not been able to verify for itself the HGV traffic flows but understand:
- 25,000 tonnes from local Buckminster Estate farmland – brought in via tractors & trailers on farm tracks
 - 25,000 tonnes from Buckminster Estate farmland further afield – brought in via HGVs on public highway
 - 80,000 tonnes from satellite storage hub(s) in undeclared location – brought in via HGVs on public highway

It is also not clear that these “tractors and trailers” can undertake the dual role of bringing to site and removing digestate negating the requirement for additional vehicles taking away the digestate (70,000 tonnes)?

As stated above, we are unable to verify the HGV movements accurately but can only speculate. During the consultation, the applicant suggested around 1,000 movements a week during harvest was a more accurate estimate.

We believe that the independently commissioned report by Bruce Bamber (May 2024 and submitted to the Planning Authority) confirms the anomalies we have also identified. Could the applicant provide the clarification required to inform the assessment on the impact on the local tracks and road networks?

11. Most of the roads from the B676 have 7.5t limits in place as environmental protection zones. This is in place to protect the small rural villages and the very small surrounding rural lanes within our own and neighbouring parishes from HGV traffic. Whilst we recognise that “access” is permitted, the scale of this operation potentially relies on a substantial increase in HGVs having access on currently restricted roads unsuitable for HGVs - potentially exceeding the % threshold acceptable to allow permissions to be granted. This is not clear from the application and will be an unacceptable increase?
12. In the absence of a detailed Traffic Management Plan and the limited traffic site survey covering the wider Parish, we must as an example, assume and expect there will be no requirement for access or an increase of traffic on:



- From A1 at Lobthorpe via Bull Lane, Water Lane, Rectory Lane, North Witham, Gunby Road, Witham Road, Main Street Gunby, Sewstern Road and Sewstern
 - South Witham to North Witham
 - Stamford Road, Colsterworth from North Witham to Colsterworth High Street/B676 crossroads
 - Old Post Lane from North Witham through to Woolsthorpe Road into Woolsthorpe by Colsterworth
 - No access to the A1 (north or southbound) from Bridge End, Colsterworth
 - Gunby Road through Gunby
 - South Witham, Thistleton, Sewstern Village and to the site
 - No access to or from B6403
 - No access to or from A151
13. The proposed single access/exit to the site from the B676 is a safety concern with further survey work still required on the bridge on the B676 which is proposed to be lowered. This access is on a bend and in a 60mph zone only a few metres from the 30mph speed limit in Stainby – a notorious road for speeding traffic. There are no footpaths and extremely narrow and unkempt verges. We would urge the relevant authorities to ensure that this proposal is considered carefully due to the volume and size of the traffic to be generated.
14. The open countryside around our Parish encourages cycling, walking, horse-riding and tourists. There is likely to be an increased risk to those who use the lanes in the surrounding areas. Any increase in HGV traffic means that the risk to road safety is increased – particularly from all the HGVs crossing the Gunby, Sewstern Road from the new access as well on the B676 at Stainby
15. Reference on different carriageway widths (Manual for Streets MfS1) sets out guidance and what can and should accommodate traffic flows safely:
- 2.75m – suitable for single lane working only (passing places required).
 - 4.1m – two cars can pass each other.
 - 4.8m – a car can pass an HGV.
 - 5.5m – two HGVs can pass each other
- Having confirmed the width of the road in Stainby and in other affected places, it is between between 5.3 to 5.4m. Also, the point in Colsterworth coming from Stainby when entering the village from the west, just past the little bridge and before the 'slow' sign and again the road is only about 5.3 m.
16. The crossroads on the B676 at Stainby (to Skillington and Gunby) and Colsterworth (Stamford Road and High Street) are particular pinch points for passing traffic with poor visibility and gradients.
17. The hours of operation are also ambiguous in terms of assessing the vehicle movements and we would not expect heavy good vehicles operating through the villages 24 hours a day 7 days a week all year. This needs to provide more robust assessment and detail being provided.
18. At the public consultation, Ironstone Energy say that they enter into partner agreements with contracted hauliers and between them they buy specialist trailers that will carry bulk crop in and are able to carry liquids as well to take away the liquid digestate, i.e., if the same vehicle can be used to carry both products there is a clear reduction in vehicle movements for the same tonnage. However, this has not been set out clearly in the application and there is no Traffic Management Plan to confirm this will actually happen.
19. They also said at their other sites the hauliers are given strict routeing instructions. As their operations use contracted 'partner' hauliers and not 'ad-hoc, general haulage market' transport, they can stipulate the routes and manage compliance to the Traffic Management Plan, which needs to be put forward. We would expect there to be conditions to ensure compliance with their Traffic Management Plan such as a £1,000 "fine" into a local amenity fund for each vehicle found to deviate from the Traffic Management Plan.
20. We would also suggest if a Traffic Management Plan were forthcoming as a condition, a voluntary 20mph speed limit on the B676 through the 30mph zones in Stainby and Colsterworth to reduce the noise and vibration of large lorries – particularly where there are narrow or no footpaths.



21. We do not consider that the B676 is fit for any additional heavy goods traffic particularly through Stainby and Colsterworth where there are narrow or no footpaths and an already increase in HGV aggregate lorries making it a safety issue for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists.
22. The impact of the Newton Meadows housing development on the A1 in Colsterworth on the approach to the northbound A1 is also not known; the traffic entering and exiting the A1 north and southbound must negotiate a small roundabout which is often damaged (along with the road surface) due to the HGV traffic (mostly aggregate lorries). This is of particular concern now that the condition for a fourth arm as a safety control on that roundabout has not been implemented.

We do not believe that enough information or assurance for the Planning Authority has been provided to adequately assess the full impact on Highway Safety and Traffic Generation

3. CHOICE OF SITE AND TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT

In summary, the Development is contrary to Local Plan Policy: E7 Rural Economy

Policy E7 states :-

Proposals for the following types of small business schemes will be supported provided that it is demonstrated that the business will help support or regenerate the rural economy.

- Farming
- Forestry
- Equine
- Rural Enterprise
- Sports and Recreation
- Tourism

Proposals must demonstrate that they meet the following criteria.

- a) *Be of a scale appropriate to the rural location*
- b) *Be for a use which is appropriate or necessary in a rural location providing local employment opportunities which make a positive contribution to supporting the rural economy.*
- c) *The use / development respects the character and appearance of the local landscape, having particular regard to the Landscape Character Assessment and will not impact on the neighbouring uses through noise, traffic, light and pollution impacts.*

Any new building or extension to an existing building will only be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that it is an essential element of the viability of the business proposal. The scale design and construction of any new building or extension must be appropriate to its rural setting and fully justified by the business proposal.

We do not believe that this application meets the criteria:

- The proposed development is not of a scale appropriate for the rural location contrary to E7(a).
- It is not necessary for this industrial scale development to be in a rural location, 80% of the fuel is coming from outside the immediate area. The plant should be directly adjacent to a major trunk road such as the A1 as per the Gonerby Moor AD development. The proposed development is therefore, contrary to E7(b)
- The use/development does not respect the character and appearance of the local landscape and will impact on neighbouring uses particularly the residents of the surrounding small villages contrary to E7(c) . Although 2.92 of the Local Plan supporting narrative does support rural development in principle it does say that this should be discrete. Although each planning application should be decided on its own merits this application if approved would set a precedent for large scale industrial plants in open countryside. Also expanding the existing industrial estate to what appears to be three/four times its current size with such large structures is contrary to the principle of E7 and SP5 and EN1.

1. The proposed access road although in existence is a farm track. At many times during the year as such is impassable and the HGV vehicles accessing the current businesses on the industrial estate have to negotiate Sewstern crossroads on 7.5t weight limited roads. To upgrade this farm track to year round 24/7 use is a development in open countryside contrary to Local Plan Policy SP5.



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4. We have received representations that this is not an agricultural process; the raw materials are crops being brought in from locations 10-15 miles away to a centralised processing plant. This is, therefore, an industrialised process producing by-products including methane gas pumped directly into the national grid sold to industry and carbon capture and removal on public roads. It is unclear therefore if this meets the Principles of Sustainable Development in SKDC (SD1).
5. The application does not identify how and where the connection to the national grid will be and how that may impact on the construction and ongoing operation of the plant? Bearing in mind Cadent Gas has stated that there are no gas assets nearby that they are required to comment on this seems to be a major omission when the primary objective of this process is to produce biomethane gas to promote commercial net zero gains for industry?
6. The visual impact of such a huge development which will be seen from Colsterworth High Street and across the Parish, particularly from North Witham and is contrary to priorities in the Colsterworth and District Neighbourhood Plan where the rural views are highly valued.
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Report Compiled by: Cllr C Hainsworth
On behalf of the Colsterworth and District Parish Council
Date: 05 June 2024

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Sue Grant
Clerk to Colsterworth and District Parish Council
42 Bourne Road
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NG33 5JE
5th June 2024

S24/0568 | Erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure. | Development East of Sewstern Industrial Estate South of Sewstern Road Gunby Lincolnshire NG33 5RD

This response has been ratified by the Colsterworth and District Parish Council at their meeting on 04 June 2024.

1. INTRODUCTION

1. The Parish Council would like to thank SKDC as the Planning Authority for extending the deadline for our comments to 14 June 2024 due to the significance of this application to our Parish. This has allowed the Parish Council to have a clear picture of the strength of opposition to this proposal demonstrated by the objections and comments submitted and published by the Planning Authority.
2. The Parish Council also supports this application being considered at full Planning Committee and not delegated to Officers.
3. The Parish Council also acknowledges the wide range of consultees across boundaries with Lincolnshire and Leicestershire due to the proposal affecting communities within a 10-15 mile radius of the site.
4. Stainby and Gunby are the nearest villages in our Parish to the proposal however, this affects our whole Parish including North Witham, Lobthorpe, Colsterworth and Woolsthorpe by Colsterworth. We would urge the Planning Authorities and other consultees to pay due regard to the representations made from all those communities.
5. The Parish Council is concerned regarding a number of omissions and inconsistencies and reliance on “desktop” modelling which appear subjective in its conclusions therefore, we do not believe that the evidence presented supports the conclusions in the applicants Non-Technical Summary which states: *“No unacceptable impacts have been identified in relation to residential amenity, odour, noise, archaeology, designated nature conservation sites, the water environment, landscape character, or the highway network.”*
6. In the light of the extensive objections and representations made to the Parish Council over several months by the community and which you will be fully aware, we **object to the application as presented to the Planning Authority.**

The following are just some observations to support the reasons for this:

2. IMPACT ON HIGHWAY SAFETY AND TRAFFIC GENERATION

As identified in SKDC's pre-planning response to the applicant, we believe there are significant gaps in the information provided and several inconsistencies. We do not believe that it is the role of the Planning Authority at this stage to impose a Traffic Management Plan when the information required is not sufficiently provided. This may also impact on the decision by Highways England, Leicestershire and Lincolnshire County Councils' Highways assessment. We do not believe therefore, that this complies with ID2 Transport and Strategic Transport Infrastructure requirements.



The size and scale of this development across a wide area means that there will be a significant impact on the road network and transportation infrastructure. This will lead to increased traffic with more congestion and longer commuting times. In addition, it will cause safety issues particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

The application suggests that the majority of crops to site will not be on internal roads and tracks and the application does actually state that *"it is likely that the majority of the HGV movements would subsequently be via the A1 Trunk Road"* (presumably accessed from the B676). The application suggests that 40% of the crops will be delivered from Buckminster land on internal tracks. We would suggest that this is in fact 20% (25,000 tonnes), half of the Buckminster land contribution which suggests that the site proposed is only "local" to 20% of the crops to site with 80% (105,000 tonnes) from elsewhere. Can the applicant provide more specific details and a Traffic Management Plan to clarify so this can be accurately assessed/verified?

We have identified some specific observations and have also been made aware of another review of Highways and Transport Issues prepared by Bruce Bamber (May 2024) and submitted to the Planning Authority in response to the local residents' concerns which we would expect is considered:

Because the external storage areas are not included in the Transport Plan Lincolnshire CC Highways and Leicestershire CC Highways should be re consulted when these are known. The location of these is a requirement of Local Plan Renewable Energy Appendix Biomass Energy Criterion 5(d).

1. Crucially, the study area in the Traffic and Transport Statement did not include the B676 through Stainby and Colsterworth to the A1 and focussed on the proposed internal tracks and access road to the site from the B676. This is a major omission.
2. We believe that the study area should also have referenced the A1 from Stamford to Grantham which falls within the 10-15 mile radius of the proposed site. This should include details of the routes proposed to consider the adequacy of access and exit slip roads to and from the A1, the current and anticipated traffic flows through all villages including North and South Witham (and Parishes within Leicestershire)
3. It is unclear if crops to site and digestate will be from and to land accessing and crossing the A1 from the B6403 or A151; this will have a particular impact on the projected increased traffic on the A1 using the access/exit on Bridge End, Colsterworth (which is a major flood risk); this is particularly relevant bearing in mind the impact of the Waste and Digestor Plant being considered by Lincolnshire County Council at Easton. (SKDC: S24/0544 and LCC: PL/0022/24)
4. We would expect a multi-agency emergency/enforcement plan for any closures on the A1 to stop A1 traffic (particularly HGVs ignoring the weight restrictions) diverting through North Witham, Stainby and Gunby and Colsterworth (particularly High Street, Colster Way, Stamford Road and Old Post Lane.)
5. Bearing the above in mind, and Highways England's response to the application at Easton *"no further analysis of the nearby A1/B6403 junction would be necessary"* we believe that this would need to be re-referred to Highways England to address concerns raised in this consultation, e.g.,
6. The figures provided in the application are inconsistent and do not appear to support the narrative/assessments regarding traffic movements. The following is our interpretation based on what we understand is being proposed:-
 - The stated tonnage of crops to site over the year is 130,000 tonnes with 80% from outside of the local Buckminster land
 - 25,000 tonnes will be harvested (September to October) from Buckminster land and taken to the facility on internal Buckminster tracks and access roads. The application states no change to current traffic movements. However, this does not appear to be the case as in the application, it confirms the tonnage of harvest from fields may be unchanged, but the destination is (i.e., all crops will be intended for the one site to be processed). These tractors and trailers do not appear anywhere in the Traffic and Transport Plan.
 - 25,000 tonnes will be harvested (September to October) from other Buckminster land further away and taken to the facility using the local highways? The location of this land is not identified in the Traffic and Transport Plan.



- 80,000 tonnes will be harvested and stored in satellite hubs, feeding the digester over the year using local highways? The location of this land is not identified in the Traffic and Transport Plan.
 - In addition to the “crops to site” at the public consultation it was anticipated that the digestate was expected to be 70,000 tonnes. Some of it to Buckminster farmland and some to external (farmer) customers. Can more information be provided on the proportion by internal and external customers to evidence the associated vehicle movements?
 - A further stage of the process is to have the liquid CO₂ taken from the site by road haulier; estimated at 24,000 tonnes (20,000t at the public consultation). There is some debate whether this is actually “gaseous waste” transported long distances, therefore, a public responsibility of the relevant Authorities, e.g., Highways and Environmental Protection? Can you ask these relevant Authorities to confirm if this is the case? The Traffic Management Plan needs to identify the routing for this and impact on B676 and A1
7. There is no information identifying the land where the crops will be grown or where the remote satellite clamps will be located. Can the applicant provide this information to consider vehicle movements further?
8. In the absence of full details of the crops sites and satellite hubs we can only speculate (as has the applicant) on the impact of the number of vehicle movements on local roads of which the majority will be HGVs.
9. There is no clarification on the suggestion that there will be a rotation of crops (i.e., rye, maize, barley, grass). Does this mean one type of crop is grown every year, or will there be a constant mix of crops over the entire year? This is relevant to identify the harvest periods which we understand will be at various times of the year depending on the crops resulting in more than one intensive harvest period. Or must be assume that the harvest period will actually be constant from June to October? This would again impact on identifying the vehicle movements. (Reference 1.7.15 Transport Statement for Gonerby Moor January 2023 as a comparison (LCC Planning: PL/0016/23).
10. Due to the inconsistencies and omissions the Parish Council has not been able to verify for itself the HGV traffic flows but understand:
- 25,000 tonnes from local Buckminster Estate farmland – brought in via tractors & trailers on farm tracks
 - 25,000 tonnes from Buckminster Estate farmland further afield – brought in via HGVs on public highway
 - 80,000 tonnes from satellite storage hub(s) in undeclared location – brought in via HGVs on public highway

It is also not clear that these “tractors and trailers” can undertake the dual role of bringing to site and removing digestate negating the requirement for additional vehicles taking away the digestate (70,000 tonnes)?

As stated above, we are unable to verify the HGV movements accurately but can only speculate. During the consultation, the applicant suggested around 1,000 movements a week during harvest was a more accurate estimate.

We believe that the independently commissioned report by Bruce Bamber (May 2024 and submitted to the Planning Authority) confirms the anomalies we have also identified. Could the applicant provide the clarification required to inform the assessment on the impact on the local tracks and road networks?

11. Most of the roads from the B676 have 7.5t limits in place as environmental protection zones. This is in place to protect the small rural villages and the very small surrounding rural lanes within our own and neighbouring parishes from HGV traffic. Whilst we recognise that “access” is permitted, the scale of this operation potentially relies on a substantial increase in HGVs having access on currently restricted roads unsuitable for HGVs - potentially exceeding the % threshold acceptable to allow permissions to be granted. This is not clear from the application and will be an unacceptable increase?
12. In the absence of a detailed Traffic Management Plan and the limited traffic site survey covering the wider Parish, we must as an example, assume and expect there will be no requirement for access or an increase of traffic on:



- From A1 at Lobthorpe via Bull Lane, Water Lane, Rectory Lane, North Witham, Gunby Road, Witham Road, Main Street Gunby, Sewstern Road and Sewstern
- South Witham to North Witham
- Stamford Road, Colsterworth from North Witham to Colsterworth High Street/B676 crossroads
- Old Post Lane from North Witham through to Woolsthorpe Road into Woolsthorpe by Colsterworth
- No access to the A1 (north or southbound) from Bridge End, Colsterworth
- Gunby Road through Gunby
- South Witham, Thistleton, Sewstern Village and to the site
- No access to or from B6403
- No access to or from A151

13. The proposed single access/exit to the site from the B676 is a safety concern with further survey work still required on the bridge on the B676 which is proposed to be lowered. This access is on a bend and in a 60mph zone only a few metres from the 30mph speed limit in Stainby – a notorious road for speeding traffic. There are no footpaths and extremely narrow and unkempt verges. We would urge the relevant authorities to ensure that this proposal is considered carefully due to the volume and size of the traffic to be generated.
14. The open countryside around our Parish encourages cycling, walking, horse-riding and tourists. There is likely to be an increased risk to those who use the lanes in the surrounding areas. Any increase in HGV traffic means that the risk to road safety is increased – particularly from all the HGVs crossing the Gunby, Sewstern Road from the new access as well on the B676 at Stainby
15. Reference on different carriageway widths (Manual for Streets MfS1) sets out guidance and what can and should accommodate traffic flows safely:
- 2.75m – suitable for single lane working only (passing places required).
 - 4.1m – two cars can pass each other.
 - 4.8m – a car can pass an HGV.
 - 5.5m – two HGVs can pass each other
- Having confirmed the width of the road in Stainby and in other affected places, it is between between 5.3 to 5.4m. Also, the point in Colsterworth coming from Stainby when entering the village from the west, just past the little bridge and before the 'slow' sign and again the road is only about 5.3 m.
16. The crossroads on the B676 at Stainby (to Skillington and Gunby) and Colsterworth (Stamford Road and High Street) are particular pinch points for passing traffic with poor visibility and gradients.
17. The hours of operation are also ambiguous in terms of assessing the vehicle movements and we would not expect heavy good vehicles operating through the villages 24 hours a day 7 days a week all year. This needs to provide more robust assessment and detail being provided.
18. At the public consultation, Ironstone Energy say that they enter into partner agreements with contracted hauliers and between them they buy specialist trailers that will carry bulk crop in and are able to carry liquids as well to take away the liquid digestate, i.e., if the same vehicle can be used to carry both products there is a clear reduction in vehicle movements for the same tonnage. However, this has not been set out clearly in the application and there is no Traffic Management Plan to confirm this will actually happen.
19. They also said at their other sites the hauliers are given strict routeing instructions. As their operations use contracted 'partner' hauliers and not 'ad-hoc, general haulage market' transport, they can stipulate the routes and manage compliance to the Traffic Management Plan, which needs to be put forward. We would expect there to be conditions to ensure compliance with their Traffic Management Plan such as a £1,000 "fine" into a local amenity fund for each vehicle found to deviate from the Traffic Management Plan.
20. We would also suggest if a Traffic Management Plan were forthcoming as a condition, a voluntary 20mph speed limit on the B676 through the 30mph zones in Stainby and Colsterworth to reduce the noise and vibration of large lorries – particularly where there are narrow or no footpaths.



21. We do not consider that the B676 is fit for any additional heavy goods traffic particularly through Stainby and Colsterworth where there are narrow or no footpaths and an already increase in HGV aggregate lorries making it a safety issue for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists.
22. The impact of the Newton Meadows housing development on the A1 in Colsterworth on the approach to the northbound A1 is also not known; the traffic entering and exiting the A1 north and southbound must negotiate a small roundabout which is often damaged (along with the road surface) due to the HGV traffic (mostly aggregate lorries). This is of particular concern now that the condition for a fourth arm as a safety control on that roundabout has not been implemented.

We do not believe that enough information or assurance for the Planning Authority has been provided to adequately assess the full impact on Highway Safety and Traffic Generation

3. CHOICE OF SITE AND TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT

In summary, the Development is contrary to Local Plan Policy: E7 Rural Economy

Policy E7 states :-

Proposals for the following types of small business schemes will be supported provided that it is demonstrated that the business will help support or regenerate the rural economy.

- Farming
- Forestry
- Equine
- Rural Enterprise
- Sports and Recreation
- Tourism

Proposals must demonstrate that they meet the following criteria.

- a) *Be of a scale appropriate to the rural location*
- b) *Be for a use which is appropriate or necessary in a rural location providing local employment opportunities which make a positive contribution to supporting the rural economy.*
- c) *The use / development respects the character and appearance of the local landscape, having particular regard to the Landscape Character Assessment and will not impact on the neighbouring uses through noise, traffic, light and pollution impacts.*

Any new building or extension to an existing building will only be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that it is an essential element of the viability of the business proposal. The scale design and construction of any new building or extension must be appropriate to its rural setting and fully justified by the business proposal.

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Report Compiled by: Cllr C Hainsworth
On behalf of the Colsterworth and District Parish Council
Date: 05 June 2024

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LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

District: South Kesteven District Council

Application number: S24/0568

Application Type: Full – Major Planning Application

Proposal: Erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, and landscaping and other associated infrastructure

Location: Development east of Sewstern Industrial Estate, south of Sewstern Road, Gunby, Lincolnshire, NG33 5RD

Response Date: 12 July 2024

This report includes the Substantive response of the Local Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority to a planning consultation received under the Development Management Order and includes details of any planning conditions or informatives that should be attached in the event that permission is granted and any obligations to be secured by way of a S106 agreement.

General Information and Advice

Please note that although the Definitive Map and Statement proves the existence of any recorded rights of way, there may be further or higher rights that are not shown on this document that the County Council is not currently aware of. This would be especially relevant where the public has had informal access to the site or where there are references to routes across this in maps or other historic documents. As the County Council has received no application to recognise further rights of way affecting the site, no more informed guidance can be offered at this stage.

Application number: S24/0568

Application Type: Full – Major Planning Application

Location: Development east of Sewstern Industrial Estate, south of Sewstern Road, Gunby, Lincolnshire, NG33 5RD

Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority Report

Substantive Response provided in accordance with article 22(5) of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015:

Recommendation: No Objections

Comments:

The application site falls between Sewstern and Gunby and the proposed access road joins the B676 to the West of Colsterworth and the A1. The site is to be located adjacent to an existing industrial estate. The site will be accessed via a private access road, currently serving Brooks Brothers Timber Yard. The access road will cross Sewstern Road, which has a 7.5t weight limit. The applicant has provided detail of how traffic will be controlled when crossing this road, which has satisfied safety concerns of this crossing point.

The Transport Statement has confirmed that there will be between 6-7 staff working at the site once it has been constructed, they will arrive/depart at various times throughout the day. Materials to be processed at the site will generate HGV movements, during the harvest period the site could see a total of 63 daily two-way HGV movements, outside of the harvest period it is expected there will be 17 daily two-way movements. In addition to these movements, the output of material could see another 11 daily two-way movements. The majority of these movements are from nearby land farmed by Buckminster Estate. Compared to the Annual Average Daily Traffic movements, the proposals are not seen to have a severe impact on the road network.

There is no precise definition of "severe" with regards to NPPF Paragraph 115, which advises that "Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe." Planning Inspector's decisions regarding severity are specific to the locations of each proposal, but have common considerations:

- The highway network is over-capacity, usually for period extending beyond the peak hours
- The level of provision of alternative transport modes
- Whether the level of queuing on the network causes safety issues

In view of these criteria, the Highways and Lead Local Flood Authority does not consider that this proposal would result in a severe impact with regard to NPPF.

As Lead Local Flood Authority, Lincolnshire County Council is required to provide a statutory planning consultation response with regard to Drainage on all Major Applications. For this site, infiltration is poor. Therefore, the applicant has proposed a variety of SuDs techniques to capture, cleanse, store and discharge surface water at a controlled rate. Therefore, the Lead Local Flood Authority does not consider that this proposal would increase flood risk in the immediate vicinity of the site.

No Objections

Having given due regard to the appropriate local and national planning policy guidance (in particular the National Planning Policy Framework), Lincolnshire County Council (as Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority) has concluded that the proposed development would not be expected to have an unacceptable impact upon highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact upon the local highway network or increase surface water flood risk and therefore does not wish to object to this planning application.

Informatives

Highway Informative 02

In accordance with Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, please be considerate of causing damage to the existing highway during construction and implement mitigation measures as necessary. Should extraordinary expenses be incurred by the Highway Authority in maintaining the highway by reason of damage caused by construction traffic, the Highway Authority may seek to recover these expenses from the developer.

Highway Informative 03

The permitted development requires the formation of a new/amended vehicular access. These works will require approval from the Highway Authority in accordance with Section 184 of the Highways Act. Any traffic management required to undertake works within the highway will be subject to agreement. The access must be constructed in accordance with a current specification issued by the Highway Authority. Any requirement to relocate existing apparatus, underground services, or street furniture because of the installation of an access will be the responsibility, and cost, of the applicant and must be agreed prior to a vehicle access application. The application form, costs and guidance documentation can be found on the Highway Authority's website, accessible via the following link: <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/licences-permits/apply-dropped-kerb>.

Highway Informative 04

The road serving the permitted development is approved as a private road which will not be adopted as a Highway Maintainable at the Public Expense (under the Highways Act 1980). As such, the liability for the future maintenance of the road will rest with those who gain access to their property from it.

Highway Informative 08

Please contact the Lincolnshire County Council Streetworks and Permitting Team on 01522 782070 to discuss any proposed statutory utility connections, Section 50 licences and any other works which will be required within the public highway in association with the development permitted under this Consent. This will enable Lincolnshire County Council to assist in the coordination and timings of these works. For further guidance please visit the Highway Authority's website via the following link: Traffic Management - <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/traffic-management>

Officer's Name: Joseph Walden

Officer's Title: Senior Development Management Officer

Date: 12 July 2024



Lincolnshire
FIRE & RESCUE

Fire and Police Headquarters
Deepdale Lane
Nettleham
Lincoln
LN2 2LT
Tel: 01522 555777
www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lfr

Our Ref: LC
Your Ref: S24/0568

Highways SuDS Support
Lincolnshire County Council
County Offices
Newland
Lincoln
LN1 1YL

For the attention of Venezia Ross-Gilmore
Sent by email to HighwaysSUDsSupport@lincolnshire.gov.uk

9 May 2024

Dear Madam,

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

PLANNING CONSULTATION: ERECTION OF AN ANAEROBIC DIGESTION (AD) FACILITY AND CARBON CAPTURE, IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING AND PART CREATION OF NEW ACCESS TRACK, LANDSCAPING AND OTHER ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE

LOCATION: DEVELOPMENT EAST OF SEWSTERN INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, SOUTH OF SEWSTERN ROAD, GUNBY, LINCOLNSHIRE, NG33 5RD

I refer to the planning application reference S24/0568. The Fire Authority object to the application on the grounds of inadequate access and water supply for the Fire and Rescue Service. It is opinion of the Fire Authority that in order to remove the objection the following measures are required.

ACCESS

According to the plans provided it would appear that the access to and around the site are in accordance with the requirements of Approved Document B, Part B5. However, Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue requires a minimum carrying capacity for hard standing for pumping appliances of 18 tonnes, not 12.5 tonnes as detailed in the Building Regulations 2010 (As Amended) Part B5. Particular attention should be given to the section of unmade track on the access road from the main carriageway to the development site.

WATER SUPPLY

According to the plans provided on the planning portal, it would appear that one surface water attenuation pond is to be included in the proposed site. If this is to be used as an alternative supply of water for firefighting purposes, it must meet the requirements of Approved Document B, Part B5, and be capable of fulfilling both of the following conditions:

- Providing or storing a minimum of 45,000 litres of water at all times.
- Providing access, space and a hardstanding for a pumping appliance.

If the surface water attenuation pond does not or cannot meet this requirement then Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue will require the installation of one fire hydrant conforming to BS750-2012 within 90m of the premises entrance in respect of this planning application to be provided at the developer's expense. Fire hydrant acceptance testing will be carried out by a Hydrant Inspector on completion and a standard hydrant marker "H" plate will be fitted nearby. Following adoption the Fire Service will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance and repairs for the lifetime of the fire hydrant.

Should you wish to discuss this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me on the telephone number below.

Yours faithfully,

Lee Coles

Fire Safety Inspector
Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue

Telephone: 01522 553 868

Email: fire.safety@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Joshua Frost

Fire Safety Supervisor
Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue

Tel : 01522 553868

Email: fire.safety@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Cc : LFRWaterManagement@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Substantive response of the Local Highway Authority to a planning consultation received under The Development Management Order.



Response provided under the delegated authority of the Director of Environment & Transport.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Planning Application Number: S24/0568

Highway Reference Number: 2024/0568/20/H

Application Address: Development East Of Sewstern Industrial Estate South Of Sewstern Road
Gunby Lincolnshire NG33 5RD

Application Type: Full

Description of Application: Erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure.

GENERAL DETAILS

Planning Case Officer: Venezia Ross-Gilmore

Applicant: C/O Agent

County Councillor:

Parish:

Road Classification: Adopted Unclassified

Substantive Response provided in accordance with article 22(5) of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015:

There would appear to be no material impact on the public highway and therefore the Local Highway Authority has no comments to make.

Advice to Local Planning Authority

Background

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) has been consulted by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) on a planning application at Land East Of Sewstern Industrial Estate South Of Sewstern Road Gunby Lincolnshire NG33 5RD. This application is for the erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure.

The LHA's advice below is provided following a review of the following information provided by the LPA:

- 27729/SK10 Rev H Proposed Site Layout
- 27729/SK15 Rev A Proposed Highway Access Boundary Sketch
- Transport Statement March 2024

Site Access

This Application site is within SKDC's jurisdiction and the two points of access join the highway within Lincolnshire Local Highways Authority jurisdiction (LHA). The LHA do note that one access will be via an existing agricultural access onto Buckminster Road and the other will be via a new cross road arrangement on Sewstern Road. Buckminster Road is a Classified B Road, subject to the national speed limit. Sewstern Road is an unclassified road subject to national speed limit and a 7.5t weight restriction.

In light of the above, Leicestershire LHA will therefore not provide comment on the access arrangements.

Trip Generation

Staff Trips

The LHA note in the Transport Statement that once constructed the number of staff working on site will be between 6 and 7. Staff will arrive/depart at various times throughout the day to fit in with the operational requirements of the AD plant. The working hours are between 07:00 and 19:00, 7 days a week.

The Applicant has advised that the worst case scenario in terms of trip generation, would be all 7 members of staff working on site on any one day, arriving and departing in separate cars. This would generate 14 two way trips throughout the day.

Input Material via HGV

The Applicant has advised within Section 1.15.6 to Section 1.15.10 the number of trips associated with the delivery of materials to the site.

The Applicant has advised that 50,000t of materials will arrive to the site during the harvest period (June/July and September/October). 25,000t (50%) will come from the surrounding fields that already have associated harvest trip generations, and the remaining 50% will come from Buckminster Estate fields further away and arrive by HGV. This will result in an additional 22.9 HGV movements per day equating to a total of 46 two way trips over a day.

A further 80,000t of material will be stored in satellite hubs and supplied to the site on a "just in time" basis at a constant rate throughout the year. This will result in 8.5 HGV arrivals per day, equating to a total of 17 two way trips.

For the worst case scenario during the harvest period the site could see a total of 63 two-way trips by HGV to the site, however during the non-harvest period a total of there will be a total of 17 two way trips by HGVs.

Output trips

The site will generate 24,000t of carbon dioxide which will be liquefied and transported off-site per year. This would result in 3.3 vehicles arriving per day, equating to a total of 7-way trips per day.

Furthermore an additional 11,000t of liquid biofertilizer and 4,000t of solid biofertilize will be transported off site to Buckminster Estate fields further away by HGV. This would result in an additional 1.8 HGV movements per day (4 two way trips per day).

To conclude

The trip generation concludes that during the harvest period the Leicestershire highway network could expect to see a total of 50 two way trips from HGVs during the harvest period travelling to the Buckminster Estate fields.

However during the non-harvest period the LHA could expect to see a total of 21 two way HGV movements per day to the Buckminster Estate fields.

The LHA note that not all the HGV movements will be carried out during the AM and PM peak periods and the HGV will utilise the B676. The number of HGVs associated with this development are negligible when compared against the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT). Therefore it is not considered that the proposed will have a severe impact on the local highway network, in accordance with Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Date Received
2 May 2024

Case Officer
Robyn Green

Reviewer
GG

Date issued
17 May 2024

Substantive response of the Local Highway Authority to a planning consultation received under The Development Management Order.



Response provided under the delegated authority of the Director of Environment & Transport.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Planning Application Number: S24/0568

Highway Reference Number: 2024/0568/20/H/R1

Application Address: Development East Of Sewstern Industrial Estate South Of Sewstern Road
Gunby Lincolnshire NG33 5RD

Application Type: Full

Description of Application: Re-consultation. Erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure.

GENERAL DETAILS

Planning Case Officer: Venezia Ross-Gilmore

Applicant: C/O Agent

County Councillor:

Parish:

Road Classification: Adopted Unclassified

Substantive Response provided in accordance with article 22(5) of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015:

There would appear to be no material impact on the public highway and therefore the Local Highway Authority has no comments to make.

Advice to Local Planning Authority

Background

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) has been re-consulted by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) Melton Borough Council (MBC) on a planning application at Sewstern Industrial Estate, South Of Sewstern Road, Gunby. This application is for the erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure.

The LHA previously responded to this application on 17th May 2024, advising that there would appear to be no material impact on the Leicestershire County Council (LCC) maintained public highway, therefore the LHA has no comments to make.

The LHA note that the Applicant has submitted a series of revised plans relating to the vehicular access arrangements and the internal private road layout.

The LHA note that whilst amendments have been provided to the vehicular accesses, the accesses join the highway within Lincolnshire LHA jurisdiction, therefore LCC LHA will not provide comments on the access arrangement.

The LHA also note from the information there are no proposed alterations to the use or size of the facility and therefore the LHA comments from the 17th May 2024 relating to trip generation remain unchanged. For avoidance of doubt the LHA trip generation comments from the 17th May 2024 have been repeated below:

“The trip generation concludes that during the harvest period the Leicestershire highway network could expect to see a total of 50 two way trips from HGVs during the harvest period travelling to the Buckminster Estate fields.

However during the non-harvest period the LHA could expect to see a total of 21 two way HGV movements per day to the Buckminster Estate fields.

The LHA note that not all the HGV movements will be carried out during the AM and PM peak periods and the HGV will utilise the B676. The number of HGVs associated with this development are negligible when compared against the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT). Therefore it is not considered that the proposed will have a severe impact on the local highway network, in accordance with Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)”

To conclude, there would appear to be no material impact on LCC public highway, therefore LCC LHA, have no further comments to make.

Date Received
19 June 2024

Case Officer
Robyn Green

Reviewer
GG

Date issued
05 July 2024

Substantive response of the Local Highway Authority to a planning consultation received under The Development Management Order.



Response provided under the delegated authority of the Director of Environment & Transport.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Planning Application Number: S24/0568

Highway Reference Number: 2024/0568/20/H/R2

Application Address: Development East Of Sewstern Industrial Estate South Of Sewstern Road Gunby Lincolnshire NG33 5RD

Description of Application: Re-consultation. Erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure.

GENERAL DETAILS

Planning Case Officer: Venezia Ross-Gilmore

Substantive Response provided in accordance with article 22(5) of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015:

There would appear to be no material impact on the public highway and therefore the Local Highway Authority has no comments to make.

Advice to Local Planning Authority

Background

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) has been re-consulted by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) Melton Borough Council (MBC) on a planning application at Sewstern Industrial Estate, South Of Sewstern Road, Gunby. This application is for the erection of an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility and carbon capture, improvement of existing and part creation of new access track, landscaping and other associated infrastructure.

The LHA previously responded to this application on 17th May 2024 and 5th July 2024, advising that there would appear to be no material impact on the Leicestershire County Council (LCC) maintained public highway, therefore the LHA has no comments to make.

Given that the accesses join the highway within Lincolnshire LHA jurisdiction, LCC LHA will not provide comments on the access arrangement.

The LHA also note from the information there are no proposed alterations to the use or size of the facility and therefore the LHA comments from the 17th May 2024 relating to trip generation remain unchanged. For avoidance of doubt the LHA trip generation comments from the 17th May 2024 have been repeated below:

"The trip generation concludes that during the harvest period the Leicestershire highway network could expect to see a total of 50 two way trips from HGVs during the harvest period travelling to the Buckminster Estate fields."

However during the non-harvest period the LHA could expect to see a total of 21 two way HGV movements per day to the Buckminster Estate fields.

The LHA note that not all the HGV movements will be carried out during the AM and PM peak periods and the HGV will utilise the B676. The number of HGVs associated with this development are negligible when compared against the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT). Therefore it is not considered that the proposed will have a severe impact on the local highway network, in accordance with Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)”

To conclude, there would appear to be no material impact on LCC public highway, therefore LCC LHA, have no further comments to make.

Date Received
19 September 2024

Case Officer
Simon Herbert

Reviewer
GG

Date Issued
07 October 2024



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**



Planning Committee

9 January 2025

S24/1418

Proposal:	Erection of a single dwelling with associated access, landscaping and engineering works
Location:	Fulbeck Heights, Pottergate Road, Fulbeck
Agent	Kevin Kelly Architects
Application Type:	Full planning application
Reason for Referral to Committee:	The application is a departure from the Local Plan and it is Officer's recommendation to approve the application
Key Issues:	• Principle of Development • Design Quality and Visual Impact • Biodiversity and Ecology
Technical Documents:	• Archaeological Desk Based Assessment • Built Heritage Statement • Design and Access Statement • Design Journey, Consultation and Engagement Statement • Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy • Minerals Resource Assessment • Ground Condition Study • Sustainability Statement • Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and Metric • Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment • Ecological Impact Assessment

Report Author

Adam Murray – Principal Development Management Planner



01476 406080



Adam.Murray@southkesteven.gov.uk

Corporate Priority:

Growth

Decision type:

Regulatory

Wards:

Loveden Heath

Reviewed by:

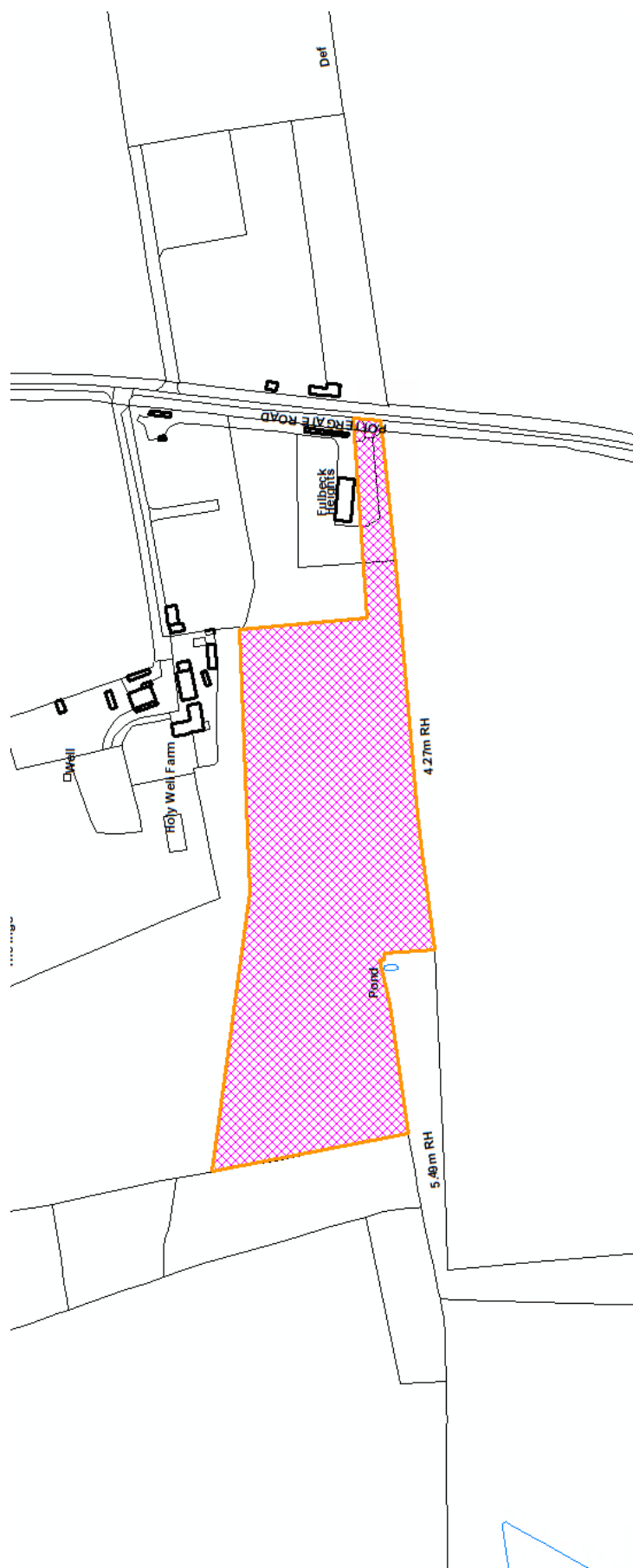
Phil Jordan, Development Management & Enforcement Manager

30 December 2024

Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

To authorise the Assistant Director – Planning and Growth to GRANT planning permission, subject to conditions.

S24/1418 – Fulbeck Heights, Pottergate Road, Fulbeck



Key



Application
Boundary



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The current application seeks full planning permission for the erection of an area of undeveloped grassland situated to the west of Pottergate Road; approximately 1.5km to the east of the main built-up area of Fulbeck.

The application site is defined as being located within the Open Countryside, and the proposed development seeks planning permission for a residential dwelling with no essential need to be located within the open countryside. As such, the application proposals are contrary to Policy SP5, and in conflict with the overall principles of the Local Plan spatial strategy. Therefore, the application is contrary to the adopted Development Plan when taken as a whole. In such circumstances, primary legislation directs the Local Planning Authority to refuse planning permission, unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise.

The policies contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (Published December 2024) are a material planning consideration that must be taken into account in the determination of planning applications.

The current application is seeking planning permission for a single dwelling under the provisions of Paragraph 84(e) of the Framework, which supports the development of isolated homes in the countryside where the design is of exceptional design quality in that it:

- i. Is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and
- ii. Would significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

The proposed development has been the subject of extensive engagement with the Council's Design PAD service, and an independent Design Midlands Design Review Panel throughout the pre-application period and the application details how the design comments made through these processes have been responded to in the final submitted design.

In the context of the above, it is the Case Officer's assessment and supported by the Council's Principal Urban Design Office and a Design Midlands Review Panel, that the application proposals meet the high bar required to accord with Paragraph 84(e) of the Framework, and therefore, is exceptional design, helping to raise the standards of the design in the local area. As a result, in accordance with Paragraph 139 of the Framework, this is to be attributed significant weight in the overall planning balance.

Taking all of the above into account, the application proposals would be contrary to the adopted Development Plan when taken as a whole. However, it is Officer's assessment that the material considerations in this case, including the exceptional design quality of the scheme required by Paragraph 84 and 139 of the Framework, would outweigh the harm caused by the conflict with the development plan. Therefore, on balance, it is Officer's assessment that the application should be recommended for approval.

1 Description of the site

- 1.1 The application site comprises an area of approximately 2.52 hectares (6.22 acres) of irregular shaped land situated to the west of Pottergate Road; approximately 1.5km to the east of the main built-up area of Fulbeck.
- 1.2 The site comprises of an area of undeveloped grassland, which falls away from Pottergate Road to the east, towards Fulbeck village in the west, and also falls from south to north. The total topographical variation between the entrance to the proposed development site on Pottergate Road, and the Beck positioned on the western boundary of the site is approximately 30 metres.
- 1.3 The application site is known locally as Fulbeck Heights and is accessed via an unmade gravel track and car park from Pottergate Road to the east, which is shared with the existing offices of the same name, which are also within the ownership of the Applicant.
- 1.4 The site is bound to the south by a small copse of woodland, and to all other sides by undeveloped agricultural land which is in arable use and / or unmaintained grassland. The proposed development site boundaries are not clearly defined on the ground. To the north-east of the application site is an existing agricultural dwelling (Holywell Farm), which is a two-storey L-shaped building with a red clay pantile roof.
- 1.5 The proposed development site benefits from extensive views from the high position on Pottergate Road down the escarpment towards Fulbeck village to the west. The site is also visible from South Heath Lane, which is a main route out of the village towards Pottergate Road and runs approximately 1km to the north of the application site.
- 1.6 As referenced above, the site is located outside of the main built-up area of an existing settlement within the District – the nearest settlement is Fulbeck which is located approximately 1.5km to the west of the site – and therefore, the site falls to be defined as being located within the Open Countryside. In addition, it is noted that there is a Public Right of Way (PRoW) which runs along the northern boundary of the application site and connects Fulbeck village to Pottergate Road and runs through the adjoining agricultural land. The site is located within a Minerals Safeguarding Area for Limestone as designated in the Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

2 Description of the proposal

- 2.1 The current application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a single dwelling with associated access, landscaping and engineering works.
- 2.2 The application scheme is the result of extensive pre-application engagement between the Applicant, the Local Planning Authority and statutory consultees. This has included attendance at multiple Design PAD meetings and a further independent review of the proposals by a Design Midlands Panel. Full details of the evolution of the proposals as a response to the pre-application engagement is set out within the Design Journey, Consultation and Engagement Report (Kevin Kelly Architects) (August 2024), submitted as part of the application.
- 2.3 The application proposals have been accompanied by a range of technical reports including:
 - Archaeological Desk Based Assessment
 - Built Heritage Statement
 - Design and Access Statement
 - Design Journey, Consultation and Engagement Statement

- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy
- Minerals Resource Assessment
- Ground Condition Study
- Sustainability Statement
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and Metric
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Ecological Impact Assessment

- 2.4 The application has also been accompanied by a Proposed Site Layout, Proposed Elevation Plans, Proposed Floor Plans, Proposed Roof Plans, and Proposed Site Sections, which indicate that the development would comprise of the following:
- 2.5 The application proposals seek planning permission for the erection of a single dwelling. The Proposed Site Layout demonstrates that the proposed dwelling would be positioned centrally within the site, broadly aligned with the ridge line running north-south through the site, which allows the proposed dwelling to be “built into” the site. Access to the site is to be taken via an extension of the existing access from Pottergate Road, which would be a gated access marked by steel gates with stone flank walls. The proposed access would comprise a gravel drive with central grass strip and there would be a secondary set of steel gates positioned approximately 2/3rd along the access drive, which would mark the entry into the residential curtilage. The dwelling would be served by a gravel forecourt with an integrated triple garage on the northern side of the dwelling. The primary garden space for the dwelling would be situated to the south of the property on an area forming a plateau in the land shielded by the tree lined southern boundary, and this area is also proposed to feature a wildflower meadow. Three new ponds are proposed to be developed on land to the north and west of the proposed dwelling, and two x ground mounted solar arrays are proposed to the east of the dwelling in an extended area of meadow long grass.
- 2.6 The proposed dwelling would be U-shape form and would be a contemporary interpretation of the traditional use of stone in the local architecture. The proposed dwelling would be a two-storey dwelling which steps off the edge of the topography of the land to include an Upper Ground Floor and Lower Ground Floor. The proposed dwelling has been designed to be outward facing over the escarpment with a roofscape which results in the impression of a cluster of small farm buildings, with a central oculus window marking the centre point of the dwelling.
- 2.7 The proposed dwelling would be constructed primarily with local limestone, with Ancaster Stone textures used on the gable ends of the dwelling, and wet cast limestone used for the door and window surrounds. The roof is to comprise of clay pantiles, and natural timber doors and windows are proposed.
- 2.8 The proposed dwelling is also designed to be underpinned by the principles of high sustainability performance and includes the following measures, which have been integrated into the proposals:
- The buildings embodied carbon is to be reduced through the specification of low carbon materials with a focus on locally sourced natural materials.
 - Energy demand will be reduced by achieving a well-insulated envelop which is both airtight and thermal bridge free. High performance glazing provides a positive energy balance whilst mechanical ventilation with heat recovery will maintain good air quality.

- Heating and hot water will be met by electrically driven air source heat pumps. Photovoltaics will generate zero carbon energy. Hot water will be pre-heated using solar thermal panels.
- Water efficient fixtures and fittings will be specified to reduce water consumption below the levels required by national building regulations.
- Rainwater harvesting will be used as a means of reducing water consumption.
- External lighting will be designed to minimise the impact of light pollution. All light fittings will be specified with a reduced light spill and controlled using photocells and timelocks.
- EV charging points are to be included.

3 Relevant History

3.1 No relevant previous application history

4 Policy Considerations

4.1 South Kesteven Local Plan 2011-2036 (Adopted January 2020)

Policy SD1 – The Principles of Sustainable Development in South Kesteven

Policy SP1 – Spatial Strategy

Policy SP2 – Settlement Hierarchy

Policy SP5 – Development in the Open Countryside

Policy EN1 – Landscape Character

Policy EN2 – Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Policy EN3 – Green Infrastructure

Policy EN4 – Green Infrastructure

Policy EN4 – Pollution Control

Policy EN5 – Water Environment and Flood Risk Management

Policy EN6 – The Historic Environment

Policy DE1 – Promoting Good Quality Design

Policy SB1 – Sustainable Building

Policy ID2 – Transport and Strategic Transport Infrastructure

4.2 Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD (Adopted June 2016)

Policy M11 – Safeguarding of Minerals Resources

4.3 Design Guidelines for Rutland and South Kesteven Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted November 2021)

4.4 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Published December 2024)

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development.

Section 4 – Decision-making

Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes.

Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport.

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places.

Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change.

Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Section 17 – Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals.

4.5 **South Kesteven Local Plan Review 2021 – 2041 (Regulation 18 Draft)**

5 Representations received

5.1 **Fulbeck Parish Council**

Consolidated comments

5.2 Fulbeck Parish Council has voted as a majority to ensure the application.

5.3 Concerns were expressed surrounding potential damage, such as ground contamination to the existing ecology. The Parish Council seek assurances that appropriate surveys have been carried out and appropriate management plans will be put in place for at least 30 years.

5.4 The Parish Council seeks assurances that robust construction and traffic management plans have been drawn up.

5.5 Also of concern was the visibility and visual aspect (from the village) of the proposed dwelling during daylight hours and at night.

5.6 There are some fundamental unanswered questions and a lack of guidance from Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust on the matter. Clarification is required on the following:

- How any weight is to be placed on the desk-based ecological assessment?
- How any judgement can be made about the achievement of a 10% net gain without clarity on the baseline?
- How 10% net gain will be measured?
- What measures will be put in place to deal with any failure to deliver the relevant Net Gain?
- What commitment is there to ensure 10% net gain is achieved on site rather than elsewhere in the District, County or Country?

5.7 **Heritage Lincolnshire**

5.7.1 No objection subject to conditions.

5.7.2 The site for the proposed development lies in an area of archaeological interest. Cropmarks recorded within the landscape to the south of the proposed development may represent the remains of prehistoric boundaries or enclosures. An archaeological desk-based assessment submitted in support of the application has highlighted the topographic setting of the site as being potentially archaeological significant.

5.7.3 Therefore, it is recommended that the Developer should be required to commission a scheme of investigation.

5.8 **Historic England**

5.8.1 No comments to make.

5.9 **Lincolnshire County Council (Highways & SuDS)**

5.9.1 No objections.

5.9.2 The vehicular access meets the visibility guidelines set out in Manual for Streets. The car parking provided is in line with the guidance set out in Lincolnshire County Council's Design Approach and turning space is provided within the limits of the site to allow vehicles to enter and leave in a forward gear and therefore, it is considered that this proposal would not result

in an unacceptable impact upon highway safety. The alteration to the access will be subject to a Section 184 Agreement.

5.10 Lincolnshire County Council (Minerals)

5.10.1 No comments received.

5.11 Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

5.11.1 No objections.

5.11.2 Section 4.2 of the EIA outlines potential impacts to Fulbeck Heath Road Verges Local Wildlife Site (LWS). This site is composed of calcareous plant species along the roadside forming the main access for the proposed development. There should be no vehicle parking along this road and the losses incurred through the creation of the access should be incorporated into the planting and enhancement of the grassland in the development boundary.

5.11.3 The habitat enhancement will be created through the formation of a mosaic of different habitats that include broadleaved woodland, mixed scrub, higher quality grasslands and ponds. These are appropriate for the locality and will likely generate an uplift in habitat quality supporting a greater diversity of plants and invertebrates, which in turn support a greater diversity of reptiles, birds and mammals.

5.11.4 We expect to see a full BNG management and monitoring plan as required under the Environment Act 2021. We note previous communications with the Trust and can see evidence of some of those comments being incorporated into the illustrative plan.

5.12 Ministry of Defence (Defence Infrastructure Organisation)

5.12.1 No objections.

5.13 SKDC Conservation Officer

5.13.1 No objections.

5.13.2 The site benefits from long views across the wider landscape, with its elevated position and sloping landscape. Its rural position, as well as natural visual barriers, such as small copse of wood and field boundaries, reduces the potential visual impacts of the proposed development. The substantial distance to Fulbeck Conservation Area also reduces the potential impact upon the setting of the Conservation Area.

5.13.3 Although a substantial structure, the design and materials chosen for the proposed dwelling are reflective of the wider surrounding architecture. The incorporation of the slope and trees within the design provides good screening of the building from most vista points. The proposed solar panels are well hidden within the landscape, set at the upper level, surrounded by shrub and trees, which screens them from the nearby heritage assets.

5.13.4 Due to the close proximity to Holywell Farm to the north of the site, there would be a minor change to the setting of the farm. Historically, the farm would have been a remote individual dwelling, with Gallipot Hall and Bleak House the closest neighbours. The proposed dwelling will infill the space between Holywell Farm and Bleak House. However, with this comprising of a single dwelling, the proposal maintains the nucleated character of the wider landscape. It is therefore not considered to cause harm to the setting of the heritage assets.

5.14 SKDC Environmental Protection Officer

5.14.1 No objection subject to conditions.

5.15 **SKDC Principal Urban Design Officer**

5.15.1 Support

5.15.2 The submitted documents entitled “Design Journey, Consultation and Engagement” and “House Design Journey and Stakeholder Consultation” record the various comments made at pre-application through consultation with SKDC, a Design Midlands Review Panel and then further SKDC engagement through Design PAD. These submitted documents are helpful in setting out how the various stages of design comments have been responded to.

5.15.3 The proposal came to use as a high quality design, using stone creatively. Following our initial comments about how it would be seen within the landscape, it was softened and splayed out. Following requests for further studies and refinements, we now have a scheme that is very well researched and evidenced with a strong response to context and narrative, adhering to the design process in the Design Guidelines for Rutland and South Kesteven.

5.15.4 The application falls under Paragraph 84 of the NPPF, being isolated and, having been through a robust set of assessment processes, is deemed to have met, and robustly evidenced, the high bar required for this test.

5.15.5 The application information evidences a building that is truly outstanding, having the highest standards in architecture, and helping to raise the standards of design more generally in rural areas, in addition to significantly enhancing its immediate setting and being sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

5.16 **The Gardens Trust**

5.16.1 No comments to make.

5.17 **The Ramblers Association**

5.17.1 No comments received.

6 Representations as a Result of Publicity

6.1 The application has been advertised in accordance with the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement and letters of representation have been received from 9 interested parties, of which 8 have raised formal objections and 1 has remained neutral. The material considerations raised within the representations can be summarised as follows:

(1) Principle of Development

a. The application is contrary to Policy SP5 of the Local Plan.

(2) Design Quality and Visual Impact

a. The proposed development is completely out of context with the surrounding countryside.

b. The application proposals would not improve the design of Fulbeck.

c. The proposed dwelling is impressive from an architectural perspective.

d. The proposed development would harm the landscape due to light pollution.

(3) Impact on heritage assets

- a. The proposed development would be visible from several view points which would result in harm to the setting of Listed Buildings, including Fulbeck Hall and Fulbeck Church, as well as Fulbeck Conservation Area.

(4) Flood Risk and Drainage

- a. Impact of the development on natural springs.

(5) Biodiversity and Ecology

- a. The proposed development will harm local habitats on the site.
- b. The reports make no reference to local wildlife on the site and would result in harm to protected species.
- c. The proposed development would damage the road verges which are designated as a Local Wildlife Site.

(6) Other Matters

- a. The proposals would set a precedent for further development
- b. Loss of view

7 Evaluation

- 7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the Council adopted the South Kesteven Local Plan 2011-2036 on 30 January 2020, and this forms the Development Plan for the purposes of the current application.
- 7.2 The Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan also forms part of the adopted Development Plan in relation to minerals planning.
- 7.3 The Local Planning Authority have also adopted a Design Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Adopted November 2021), and this document is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 7.4 The policies and provisions set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) ("the Framework") (Published December 2024) are also a relevant material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 7.5 It is also appreciated that the Local Planning Authority are also in the process of conducting a Local Plan Review. The Regulation 18 consultation on the draft Plan was carried out between February and April 2024. At this stage, the policies contained within the draft Plan Review can be attributed very little weight in the determination of planning applications. However, the updated evidence base which accompanies the ongoing Plan Review is a material consideration and must be taken into account in the determination of planning applications.
- 7.6 **Principle of Development**
 - 7.6.1 It is noted that public representations received on the application have raised formal objections to the principle of residential development on the site, citing that the proposed development would be contrary to Policy SP5 of the adopted Local Plan.

- 7.6.2 As stated above, the application site is located outside of the main built-up area of any of the defined settlements within the District; the nearest settlement is Fulbeck, which is located approximately 1.5km to the west of the site. As such, the site is defined as being within the Open Countryside.
- 7.6.3 Policy SP5 (Development in the Open Countryside) is the principal spatial policy of the development plan in respect of development in such locations. It identifies that development within the Open Countryside will be strictly limited to that which has an essential need to be located outside of the existing built form of a settlement; and identifies a series of examples of the types of development that would be considered acceptable in principle.
- 7.6.4 The proposed development scheme would involve the erection of a new build dwelling on land situated outside of the main built-up area of Fulbeck on land defined as being Open Countryside. The proposed dwelling would not be a replacement dwelling, or the result of any conversion of buildings, and does not have a demonstrable need to be located within the Open Countryside. As such, the proposed development would be contrary to Policy SP5 of the adopted Local Plan. Furthermore, as a result of this conflict, the proposed development would be contrary to the principles of the overall spatial strategy for the District, which seeks to direct development towards sustainable locations, and therefore, would be in conflict with the Development Plan when taken as a whole. In such circumstances, the Local Planning Authority are directed to refuse planning permission, unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.6.5 The policies and provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework are a relevant material planning consideration. Paragraph 84 of the Framework sets out further guidance in relation to the development of dwellings within the countryside. It states that “planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one of more of the following circumstances apply:
- (a) There is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside.
 - (b) The development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets
 - (c) The development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting
 - (d) The development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or
 - (e) The design is of exceptional quality in that it:
 - (i) Is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise the standards of design more generally in rural areas; and
 - (ii) Would significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.”
- 7.6.6 In assessing whether the application proposals would accord with Paragraph 84 of the Framework, the starting point is to determine whether the scheme would be considered “the development of an isolated dwelling in the open countryside”. In this regard, Case Law has established that whether a dwelling is isolated and therefore assessed under Paragraph 84 is determined by its proximity to a settlement. In view of this, the proposed development is located approximately 1.5km to the west of Fulbeck, and therefore, the proposed development scheme would reasonably be defined as being an isolated dwelling within the

Open Countryside. As such, the application proposals would fall to be assessed against Paragraph 84 of the Framework.

- 7.6.7 Taking the above into account, the application proposals are contrary to Policy SP5 of the adopted Local Plan, and the overall principles of the Local Plan spatial strategy. As such, the application would be contrary to the adopted Development Plan when taken as a whole. In such circumstances, primary legislation directs the Local Planning Authority to refuse planning permission, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. These matters are discussed in further detail below.

7.7 Design Quality and Visual Impact

- 7.7.1 The current application is seeking planning permission for a single dwelling under the provisions of Paragraph 84(e) of the NPPF, which requires the Applicant to demonstrate that the proposal is of exceptional design quality, reflecting the highest standards in architecture and would help to raise the standards of design more generally, and would significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.
- 7.7.2 It is noted that public representations have raised objections on the basis that the proposed development would not be in keeping with the surrounding countryside and would not improve the design quality of Fulbeck. On the other hand, public representations have also commented on the architectural merits of the proposed dwelling.
- 7.7.3 The application has been accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, as well as a Design Journey, Consultation and Engagement document, which details the evolution of the proposed development through pre-application engagement with the Council's Design PAD service, a Design Midlands Review panel, as well as other stakeholders and consultees.
- 7.7.4 These documents comprehensively set out how the proposals respond to their local context and have a clear narrative that responds to the evidence and research undertaken throughout the design process. In short, the submitted documents suggest that the proposed development should be deemed to be exceptional design for the following reasons:

"The project's focus on "Studies in Stone" represents a deep engagement with traditional materials, particularly limestone, in innovative ways. By combining traditional craftsmanship with modern design techniques and technologies, the project pushes the boundaries of how local materials can be utilized in contemporary architecture. This not only celebrates the local vernacular but also reinterprets it for the 21st century, meeting the criterion for innovation and exceptional quality"

- 7.7.5 As stated above, the proposed development has been the subject of extensive engagement with the Council's Design PAD service and an independent Design Midlands Design Review Panel; these reviews were undertaken at pre-application stage and design comments made have been responded to in the final submitted design.
- 7.7.6 A full copy of the Design Midlands Review Panel report is enclosed at **Appendix 1**. To summarise, the Design Panel confirmed that they considered there to be enormous potential in the site; and the brief, site analysis, design approach and design work undertaken were critical in demonstrating that the high bar of Paragraph 84 had been achieved. Nonetheless, they identified a number of areas of further consideration, which related to refining the brief / narrative of the development; undertaking further landscape assessment; embedding

sustainability as a design driver; and designing the house and landscape with a more coherent language.

- 7.7.7 The submitted Design Journey, Consultation and Engagement document (August 2024) outlines how the points raised by the Review Panel were addressed in the submission version of the application scheme. This notes that the review process prompted a refinement of the architectural language, focusing on the notion of “studies in stone” and reducing the visual clutter of the development. This has resulted in the final submitted version of the scheme having a clear narrative of exceptional design quality through its use of traditional material in modern and innovative ways.
- 7.7.8 A further review was then undertaken by the Council’s Design PAD service in advance of the application submission. Subsequently, the Council’s Principal Urban Design Officer has been consulted on the application scheme and has confirmed that, in their professional assessment, the proposals have met and robustly evidenced that they meet the requirements of Paragraph 84(e) of the NPPF.
- 7.7.9 In view of the site’s location within the open countryside, together with the high threshold of design quality required to enable the proposed application scheme to be deemed acceptable, conditions are proposed to remove permitted development rights relating to extensions and alterations to the dwelling, which will ensure that the development scheme operates as assessed. Similarly, conditions are proposed to remove permitted development rights relating to outbuildings and boundary treatments within the residential curtilage; this will ensure that domestic paraphernalia does not adversely affect the site’s rural context. Furthermore, conditions are proposed to require a detailed sample of the materials to be used in the construction of the development, which must be in broad accordance with the details contained within the Design and Access Statement. This will ensure that the “study in stone” uses the high quality materials necessary to realise this key narrative.
- 7.7.10 In respect of the potential landscape and visual impacts of the development, the proposed development would invariably result in a visual impact as a result of the change from undeveloped grassland to a residential dwelling. It is appreciated that the proposed development would be visible to users of the public right of way that runs along the northern boundary of the site, and due to its location on the ridge of the escarpment, it would be visible from Fulbeck village.
- 7.7.11 The application has been accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Ibbotson Studios) (October 2023), which identifies the following:
- The site is well contained by existing vegetation and the landform, although the site is partially visible from Pottergate Road and South Heath Lane, and occasionally glimpsed from the vicinity of the recreation ground in the village, it has been designed as a contemporary interpretation of the local characteristics to enhance views rather than detract.
 - From the footpath network, the adjacent path Fulb/12/1 has visual impacts with significant effects, especially from the section of the path adjacent to the site passing through the field. Whether these will be regarded as positive or negative by path users will be dependent on the quality of the execution of the design, and the correct establishment and management of the proposed landscaping.
 - There will be visual impacts: overall theses are considered as being neutral or as positive and beneficial. As the landscape proposals mature, the proposals would fit

the scale, landform and would create new beneficial landscape features. The proposed house would be sympathetic to the pattern of houses and farmsteads located along the Cliff.

- 7.7.12 The visual impact of the proposed development has been subject to significant discussions through the Design PAD and Design Review Panel process. This has resulted in the evolution of the design proposals, which has sought to soften this visual impact through splaying the building (separating the individual elements to allow the landscape to permeate through) and the development of a well-designed landscape strategy. As a result, whilst there would be some visual impact from the development, it is Officer's assessment that, subject to conditions ensuring the delivery of a high quality development as intended, this would not be a harmful visual impact. Conditions are proposed to require the implementation of the identified soft landscaping proposals, together with conditions requiring protection and establishment of this landscaping over a 5 year period.
- 7.7.13 It is noted that public representations have raised objections on the basis that the proposed development would result in an unacceptable landscape impact due to light pollution interrupting dark skies.
- 7.7.14 The submitted Design and Access Statement outlines how the siting, layout and orientation of the proposed dwelling has been driven by the intention to harness the best use of natural daylight and sunlight, as well as utilising energy efficient lighting to reduce the embodied carbon footprint of the development. Nonetheless, it is appreciated that a detailed Lighting Assessment has not been submitted as part of the application scheme, and therefore, conditions are proposed to require the submission and compliance with a detailed lighting strategy.
- 7.7.15 Taking the above into account, it is Officer's assessment that the application proposals represent exceptional design, which would help to raise the standard of design in the local area and would be appropriate for the site's context. As such, the application would accord with Policy DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan, as well as the provisions of Paragraph 84(e) and Paragraph 139 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Officers consider that significant weight should be attributed to the exceptional quality of the design in the overall planning balance. This planning balance is discussed in the conclusions below.

7.8 Impact on Biodiversity and Ecology

- 7.8.1 Public representations have raised objections on the basis that the proposed development would result in harm to local wildlife on the site and would damage local habitats, including the roadside verges on Pottergate Road, which are a designated Local Wildlife Site. In addition, it is noted that representations received from Fulbeck Parish Council and members of the public have raised objections to the adequacy of the ecological assessments undertaken as part of the application.
- 7.8.2 The application has been accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment (BWB) (October 2023), which sets out the results of an extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey, which included a search for evidence of any protected species and the potential of the site to support any protected species. The Assessment identifies the following key conclusions:
- Access for the construction and future operation of the site will be taken from Pottergate Road and there is likely to be some damage to the LWS whilst access is created and from regular passage of construction vehicles. Given the location of this potential impact, there is likely to be some temporary disruption of the overall function

of the LWS. This would be a minor impact, temporary in nature, which could be mitigated through the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan.

- There is the potential for amphibians to be present within ponds close to the site and therefore within the site itself. Potential options for mitigation would likely require fencing and trapping to remove newt from the construction area if they were found to be present, as well as the enhancement of the habitats to provide additional features, such as additional ponds or opportunities for hibernation.
- Impacts on mammals are considered unlikely due to the lack of evidence of these species and the lack of permanent features for them to reside within the site.
- Direct impacts to roosting bats are considered unlikely.

7.8.3 In addition, the application has also been accompanied by a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BWB) (October 2023), which includes the results of the statutory biodiversity metric. This confirms that the proposed development would deliver a 3.85 net gain in habitat units (23.78%) and an increase in 2.02 hedgerow units (132.62%).

7.8.4 Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust have been consulted on the application, and initially imposed a holding objection pending the submission of the Ecological Impact Assessment. Following receipt of this document, the Trust were re-consulted, and they have subsequently removed their holding objection, and confirmed that they have no objection subject to conditions. The requested conditions relate to the submission of a BNG Management and Monitoring Plan covering the full 30-year period required under the Environment Act 2021. These matters are covered by the statutory biodiversity gain condition which is attached to any planning permission granted and therefore, would be required to be submitted prior to commencement of the development.

7.8.5 Nonetheless, conditions are also proposed to require the compliance with the mitigation and enhancement measures contained within the Ecological Impact Assessment, which includes the completion of any further survey works where necessary, as well as the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan, to mitigate the potential impacts on the designated Local Wildlife Site.

7.8.6 Taking the above into account, subject to the imposition of conditions, the proposals would satisfy the requirement of Policy EN2 of the adopted Local Plan, and Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.9 **Impact on Heritage Assets**

7.9.1 Public representations have raised objections on the basis that the proposed development would be visible from viewpoints which contribute to the setting of Listed Buildings, including Fulbeck Hall and Fulbeck Church, as well as the Fulbeck Conservation Area.

7.9.2 The application has been accompanied by a Built Heritage Impact Assessment (Squire Heritage Consulting) (October 2023), which confirms that whilst the site may be seen in views to / from Listed Buildings, due to the distance, topography and good landscape screening, the proposed development would not have any adverse impacts on these assets. Similarly, it is concluded that the proposed development would be no adverse impacts on the Conservation Area.

- 7.9.3 The Council's Conservation Officer has been consulted on the application and has confirmed that they have no objections. They have confirmed that there would be no harm to the setting or significance of any designated heritage assets.
- 7.9.4 Similarly, Historic England and the Gardens Trust have been consulted and neither party has raised any objections.
- 7.9.5 With regards to the impact of the development on archaeology, Heritage Lincolnshire (as Local Archaeological Advisors) have been consulted on the application and have confirmed that the site offers the potential for archaeological remains to be present. Therefore, further investigation is required. These works are proposed to be secured via pre-commencement conditions.
- 7.9.6 Therefore, subject to the imposition of conditions, the application proposals would not have any unacceptable adverse impacts on any below ground archaeological assets, or any designated heritage assets. As such, the proposals would be in accordance with Policy EN6 of the Local Plan, Section 16 of the Framework and Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 7.10 **Access and Highways Impacts**
- 7.10.1 As outlined above, access to the site is to be taken via an extension of the existing access from Pottergate Road, which would be a gated access marked by steel gates with stone flank walls.
- 7.10.2 Lincolnshire County Council (as Local Highways Authority) have been consulted on the application proposals and have confirmed that they have no objections
- 7.10.3 Consequently, it is concluded that the application proposals would not give rise to any unacceptable adverse impacts on highways safety and / or capacity. As such, the application proposals are assessed as being in accordance with Policy ID2 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan and Section 9 of the Framework.
- 7.11 **Flood Risk and Drainage**
- 7.11.1 Public representations received on the application have raised concerns that the proposed development would result in an adverse impact on the natural springs that occur on the site and feed the watercourses in the surrounding area.
- 7.11.2 The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 of the Flood Map for Planning, and is also identified as being at very low risk of surface water flooding. As such, the proposed development is considered to present an overall low risk of surface water flooding.
- 7.11.3 The application has been accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (Cundall) (October 2023), which identifies the following:
- The drainage design has been developed so that surface water collected from roof areas of the proposed development is discharged via rainwater downpipes to a below ground network. This network will convey surface water runoff to a proposed soakaway for infiltration located in the northwest of the site.
 - Buff gravel is proposed to be used for the driveway leading up to the proposed development, and this permeable material will allow for infiltration, mimicking the existing drainage patterns of the site.

- The lower landscaped terrace will be drained separately to the wetland pond located to the front of the property. In the event that the pond overtops, the excess water will flow down the hill towards the watercourse in the west, as is the existing situation, and will not pose any flooding risk.

7.11.4 Lincolnshire County Council (as Lead Local Flood Authority) have been consulted on the application proposals; however, they are not required to provide comments on minor applications and, therefore, have declined to comment.

7.11.5 Notwithstanding this, as detailed above, the proposed surface water drainage strategy seeks to mimic existing drainage patterns and does follow SuDS principles. The site is located in an area which is not deemed to be at risk of flooding, and therefore, it is Officer's assessment that the proposed development would not give rise to unacceptable risks of flooding and would not adversely affect existing drainage regimes. Nonetheless, further details of surface and foul water drainage would be addressed through Building Regulations, which requires development to be carried out in accordance with Approved Document H.

7.11.6 Taking the above into account, it is Officer's assessment that the application proposals would not give rise to unacceptable risks of flooding and, therefore, accord with Policy EN5 of the adopted Local Plan and Section 14 of the Framework.

7.12 **Climate Change**

7.12.1 The application proposals would involve the development of a single dwelling within the Open Countryside, contrary to the adopted spatial strategy for the District and, therefore, the scheme would be inconsistent with the locational principles of Policy SD1.

7.12.2 Notwithstanding this, the application has been accompanied by a Sustainability Statement (Cundall) (October 2023), which outlines the sustainable design measures and principles that are to be implemented as part of the scheme. This includes the following measures:

- The buildings embodied carbon is to be reduced through the specification of low carbon materials with a focus on locally sourced natural materials.
- Energy demand will be reduced by achieving a well-insulated envelop which is both airtight and thermal bridge free. High performance glazing provides a positive energy balance whilst mechanical ventilation with heat recovery will maintain good air quality.
- Heating and hot water will be met by electrically driven air source heat pumps. Photovoltaics will generate zero carbon energy. Hot water will be pre-heated using solar thermal panels.
- Water efficient fixtures and fittings will be specified to reduce water consumption below the levels required by national building regulations.
- Rainwater harvesting will be used as a means of reducing water consumption.
- External lighting will be designed to minimise the impact of light pollution. All light fittings will be specified with a reduced light spill and controlled using photocells and timelocks.
- EV charging points are to be included.

7.12.3 The above measures would reflect the requirements of sustainable construction set out in Policy SB1 of the adopted Local Plan, and conditions are proposed to require compliance with the submitted statement.

7.12.4 Therefore, subject to the imposition of conditions, the proposal would meet the requirements of Policy SB1 of the adopted Local Plan.

7.13 **Effect of the development on residential amenity**

7.13.1 In respect of the impact of the development on residential amenity, it is noted that no public representations have been raised on these matters.

7.13.2 Notwithstanding this, in assessing the proposed development against the amenity guidelines contained in the Design Guidelines SPD, it is Officer's assessment that the proposed scheme would accord with all relevant standards in relation to privacy, light and outlook due to its adequate separation distances to the nearest residential property.

7.13.3 Taking the above into account, it is concluded that the application proposals would not give rise to any unacceptable adverse impacts on privacy, light or outlook. As such, the application proposals would accord with Policy DE1 of the adopted Local Plan, the Design Guidelines SPD, and Section 12 of the Framework in respect of residential amenity considerations.

7.14 **Other Matters**

Public Representations

7.14.1 Public representations have raised objections on the basis that the proposed development would set a precedent for additional residential development within the Open Countryside.

7.14.2 Planning applications are required to be determined on their own merits, and whilst the Local Planning Authority have a duty to be consistent with decision-making, the determination of a planning application does not establish bound the decision for any other planning application.

7.14.3 In addition, public representations have also raised objections to the impact of the development on private views of the open countryside. The impact of development on a private view is not a material planning consideration and, therefore, would not be a justified reason to refuse planning permission.

Minerals Safeguarding

7.14.4 As stated above, the site is located within a Minerals Safeguarding Area.

7.14.5 Lincolnshire County Council (as Minerals Planning Authority) have been consulted on the application and have raised no objections. As such, the application is deemed to be in accordance with Policy M11 of the Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

Environmental Protection

7.14.6 The Council's Environmental Protection Team have been consulted and have raised no objections subject to conditions requiring a Construction Management Plan and control over working hours. As detailed above, a condition is proposed to be included for a CEMP to ensure that the scheme does not result in any unacceptable impacts on the designated Local Wildlife Site. However, in respect of conditions restricting working hours, it is Officer's assessment that these are adequately addressed through statutory noise nuisance

regulations, and therefore, it is not necessary to impose further control through planning conditions.

8 Crime and Disorder

- 8.1 It is concluded that the proposals would not result in any significant crime and disorder implications.

9 Human Rights Implications

- 9.1 Article 6 (Rights to fair decision making) and Article 8 (Right to private family life and home) of the Human Rights Act have been taken into account in making this recommendation. It is concluded that no relevant Article of the Act will be breached in making this decision.

10 Planning Balance and Conclusions

- 10.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 10.2 The current application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a single dwelling with associated access, landscaping and infrastructure on land to the west of Pottergate Road, approximately 1.5km outside of Fulbeck. In this respect, the application site is located within the Open Countryside, where development is restricted to that which has an essential need to be located within such a location. Policy SP5 identifies a number of examples of development that is likely to be considered acceptable in principle, however, the current application does not fall within any of the identified examples and there is no essential need for the proposals to be located within the open countryside.
- 10.3 In view of the above, the proposed development would be contrary to Policy SP5 of the adopted Local Plan and would be inconsistent with the overall spatial strategy for the District. As such, it is Officer's assessment that the application scheme would be contrary to the overall Development Plan. In such circumstances, primary legislation directs the Local Planning Authority to refuse planning permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore, it is Officer's assessment that the identified conflict with the development plan should be given significant weight in the planning balance.
- 10.4 In respect of material considerations, the application proposals are being promoted under Paragraph 84(e) of the National Planning Policy Framework, which permits the development of isolated homes in the countryside where they are exceptional design quality and would help to raise the standards of design generally within the local area. It is the Case Officer's assessment and supported by the Council's Principal Urban Design Officer and a Design Midlands Review Panel, that the application proposals would meet the high bar required to adhere to Paragraph 84(e) of the Framework and therefore would be exceptional design, helping to raise the standards of design in the local area. In accordance with Paragraph 139 of the Framework, this is to be attributed significant weight in the overall planning balance.
- 10.5 It is appreciated that the application proposals would result in the provision of a single dwelling, which would provide a windfall contribution to the Council's housing land supply, and this is significant public benefit, which Officer's would attribute minor weight given the modest contribution it would make to the housing land supply.
- 10.6 Furthermore, the proposals would also deliver environmental benefits through the provision of a biodiversity net gain which substantially exceeds the mandatory 10% net gain required

by the Environment Act 2021. It is the Case Officer's assessment that this is to be attributed significant weight in the planning balance.

- 10.7 Taking all of the above into account, the application proposals would be contrary to the adopted Development Plan when taken as a whole. However, it is Officer's assessment that the material considerations in this case, including the exceptional design quality of the scheme required by Paragraph 84 and 139 of the Framework, would outweigh the harm caused by the conflict with the development plan. Therefore, on balance, it is Officer's assessment that the application should be recommended for approval.

11 Recommendation

- 11.1 To authorise the Assistant Director – Planning and Growth to GRANT planning permission, subject to conditions

Schedule of Condition(s)

Time Limit for Commencement

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In order that the permission is commenced in a timely manner, as set out in Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Approved Plans

Approved Plans

- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following list of approved plans:
 - Proposed Elevation GG-HH (Ref: 00/AE110/Rev A)
 - Proposed Elevation FF-AA (Ref: 00/AE120/Rev A)
 - Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan (Ref: 00/AP110/Rev A)
 - Proposed Upper Ground Floor Plan (Ref: 00/AP120/Rev A)
 - Proposed Roof Plan (Ref: 00/AP130/Rev A)
 - Proposed Section BB-CC (Ref: 00/AS110/Rev A)
 - Proposed Site Layout (ref: 103/01C)
 - Proposed Site Layout – Whole Site (Ref: 102/02A)

Unless otherwise required by another condition of this permission.

Reason: To define the permission and for the avoidance of doubt.

Before the Development is Commenced

Biodiversity and Ecology

Construction Environmental Management Plan

- 3) Before any part of the development hereby permitted is commenced, a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall include measures to mitigate against the adverse effects of vehicular movements, noise, dust and vibration and means to manage the drainage and ecological impacts of the construction stages of the development. The submitted CEMP shall include:
 - i. Access construction
 - ii. The routing of all construction vehicles
 - iii. The parking of all vehicles of site operatives and visitors
 - iv. The loading and unloading of all plant and materials
 - v. The storage of all plant and materials used in construction the development
 - vi. Wheel washing facilities
 - vii. A strategy stating how surface water will be managed during the construction stage and protection measures for any sustainable drainage features. This should include drawing(s) showing how drainage systems (temporary or permanent) connect to an outfall (temporary or permanent) during construction

- viii. Ecological Management Plan, including appointment of an Ecological Clerk of Works, and the implementation of Natural England licences as required.

The approved CEMP shall be strictly adhered to throughout the construction period.

Reason: To minimise the effects of the construction stage of the development on the nearby highway and ecological assets.

Heritage and Archaeology

Written Scheme of Investigation

- 4) Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, a Written Scheme (WSI) of Archaeological Investigation shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Thereafter, all works on site shall be carried out in accordance with the approved WSI.

Reason: In order to provide a reasonable opportunity to record the history of the site and in accordance with Policy EN6 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

During Building Works

Design Quality and Visual Impact

Materials Specification

- 5) No development above damp-proof course shall take place until a detail specification of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted specification shall be in broad accordance with the details contained within the submitted Design and Access Statement (KKA) (October 2023).

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in accordance with Policy DE1 (Promoting Good Quality Design) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan, and to ensure that the development achieves the high standards of design required by Paragraph 84 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Light Spillage Assessment and Strategy

- 6) Notwithstanding the submitted details, no development above damp-proof course shall take place until a detailed Lighting Assessment and Strategy has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

The Assessment and Strategy shall set out the lighting strategy and specification for the building and site, including all access roads, and shall include a light layout plan with beam orientation, a schedule of equipment in the design (luminaire type, mounting height, aiming angles, luminaire profiles and measures to prevent light spillage), and shall be accompanied by an assessment of the impact of the proposed lighting strategy upon the landscape character of the area, including submission of a light spillage plan.

Thereafter, the lighting shall be installed, maintained and operated in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in accordance with Policy DE1 (Promoting Good Quality Design) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan, and to ensure that the development achieves the high standards of design required by Paragraph 84 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Biodiversity and Ecology

Ecological Mitigation

- 7) All works on site, including construction works, shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendation contained within Section 4 and 5 of the Ecological Impact Assessment (BWB) (October 2023) including, where necessary, further survey works to identify the presence / absence of protected species, in advance of any site clearance works.

Reason: In the interests of best ecological practice and in accordance with Policy EN2 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Before the Development is Occupied

Design Quality and Visual Impact

Materials Implementation

- 8) Before the dwelling hereby permitted is first occupied, all external materials must have been completed in accordance with the approved external material details.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in accordance with Policy DE1 (Promoting Good Quality Design) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan, and to ensure that the development achieves the high standards of design required by Paragraph 84 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Hard Landscaping and Boundary Treatments Implementation

- 9) Before any part of the development hereby permitted is occupied, all hard landscaping and boundary treatments shall have been completed in accordance with the details shown on the approved Site Layout Plan (Ref: 103-02A).

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in accordance with Policy DE1 (Promoting Good Quality Design) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan, and to ensure that the development achieves the high standards of design required by Paragraph 84 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Site Levels Implementation

- 10) Before any part of the development hereby permitted is occupied, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved site levels as detailed on the approved Site Layout Plan (Ref: 103-02A).

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in accordance with Policy DE1 (Promoting Good Quality Design) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan, and to ensure that the development achieves the high standards of design required by Paragraph 84 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Climate Change

Sustainable Construction

- 11) Before any part of the development hereby permitted is occupied, the sustainable building measures detailed in the approved Sustainability Statement (Cundall) (October 2023) shall have been implemented in full.

Reason: To ensure that the development mitigates and adapts to climate change in accordance with Policy SB1 of the adopted Local Plan.

Ongoing Conditions

Design Quality and Visual Impact

Soft Landscaping Implementation

- 12) Before the end of the first planting / seeding season following the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, all soft landscaping works shall have been carried out in accordance with the Site Layout Plan (Ref: 103-02A), unless required by another condition of this permission.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in accordance with Policy DE1 (Promoting Good Quality Design) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan, and to ensure that the development achieves the high standards of design required by Paragraph 84 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Soft Landscaping Protection

- 13) Within a period of five years from first occupation of the development hereby permitted, any trees or plants provided as part of the approved soft landscaping scheme, that die or become, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced in the first planting season following any such loss with a specimen of the same size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a reasonable standard of landscaping, in accordance with the approved designs and in accordance with Policy DE1 (Promoting Good Quality Design) and Policy EN2 (Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

PD Rights – Extensions or alterations

- 14) Notwithstanding the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 1, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking, or re-enacting that Order, with or without modification), no enlargement, improvement or other alteration of the approved properties, shall be carried out without planning permission first having been granted by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority considers that further development could cause harm to the character of the area, and for this reason would wish to control any future development and in accordance with Policy DE1 (Promoting Good Quality Design) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

PD Rights – Roofs

- 15) Notwithstanding the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 1, Class B of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking, or re-enacting that Order, with or without modification), no additions to the roof of the approved property, shall be carried out without planning permission first having been granted by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority considers that additions to the roof of the approved dwellings could cause detriment to the amenities of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties, or the character of the area, and for this reason would wish to control any future development and in accordance with Policy DE1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

PD Rights – Outbuildings

- 16) Notwithstanding the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 1, Class E of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking, or re-enacting that Order, with or without modification), no buildings etc. incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse, shall be constructed without planning permission first having been granted by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority considers that further development could cause harm to the character of the area, and for this reason would wish to control any future development and in accordance with Policy DE1 (Promoting Good Quality Design) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

PD Rights – Boundary Treatments

- 17) Notwithstanding the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 2, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking, or re-enacting that Order, with or without modification), no gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure shall be erected without planning permission first having been granted by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority considers that further development could cause harm to the character of the area, and for this reason would wish to control any future development and in accordance with Policy DE1 (Promoting Good Quality Design) of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

Standard Note(s) to Applicant

- 1) In reaching this decision, the Council has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner by determining the application without undue delay. As such, it is considered that the decision is in accordance with Paragraph 39 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).
- 2) The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:

(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and

(b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be South Kesteven District Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are listed below.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements listed below are considered to apply.

- 3) In accordance with Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, please be considerate of causing damage to the existing highway during construction and implement mitigation measures as necessary. Should extraordinary expenses be incurred by the Highway Authority in maintaining the highway by reason of damage caused by construction traffic, the Highway Authority may seek to recover these expenses from the developer.
- 4) The permitted development requires the formation of a new/amended vehicular access. These works will require approval from the Highway Authority in accordance with Section 184 of the Highways Act. Any traffic management required to undertake works within the highway will be subject to agreement. The access must be constructed in accordance with a current specification issued by the Highway Authority. Any requirement to relocate existing apparatus, underground services, or street furniture because of the installation of an access will be the responsibility, and cost, of the applicant and must be agreed prior to a vehicle access application. The application form, costs and guidance documentation can be found on the Highway Authority's website, accessible via the following link: <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/licences-permits/apply-dropped-kerb>.
- 5) Please contact the Lincolnshire County Council Streetworks and Permitting Team on 01522 782070 to discuss any proposed statutory utility connections, Section 50 licences and any other works which will be required within the public highway in association with the development permitted under this Consent. This will enable Lincolnshire County Council to assist in the coordination and timings of these works. For further guidance please visit the

Highway Authority's website via the following link: Traffic Management -
<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/traffic-management>

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Proposed Site Layout



Proposed Elevations



NOTES

A	2nd Planning Issue	AK	19.09.23
-	Final Planning Issue	RM	06.04.22



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PROJECT TITLE
FULBECK HEIGHTS

PROJECT NUMBER
22002

REVISION FOR
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
ELEVATION GG
ELEVATION HH

DATE
11.11.2022

REVISION
A

PROJECT NO.
(00)AE110

01 - ELEVATION GG
1:100 @ A1 / 1:200 @ A3



02 - ELEVATION HH
1:100 @ A1 / 1:200 @ A3



01 - ELEVATION FF
1:100 @ A1 / 1:200 @ A3



02 - ELEVATION AA
1:100 @ A1 / 1:200 @ A3

NOTES

A	2nd Planning Issue	KK	18.09.23
-	First Planning Issue	KK	06.04.22
REVISION	DESCRIPTION	CHECKED BY	ISSUE DATE
8000	4000	2000	0



CLIENT
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PROJECT TITLE
FULBECK HEIGHTS

PROJECT NUMBER
22002

DRAWING TITLE
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
ELEVATION FF
ELEVATION AA

DATE
11.11.2022

SCALE
1:100 @ A1

REVISION
A

REVISION NO.
(00)AE120

09.11.2023

Dear David and Team,

Design:Midlands Design Review Panel – Thursday 26th October 2023
Design Review of Fulbeck Heights – Fulbeck (Our Ref: DMDR2334)

We write following the Design Review of Fulbeck Heights near Fulbeck and would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your team for utilising the Design:Midlands Design Review Service.

The Design:Midlands Panel members reviewing the scheme were Nils Feldmann (Chair), Alina Hughes and Lindsey Wilkinson adhering to the ten principles of Design Review.

Site Context

The site is irregular in shape. It is bounded to the east by the client's business (Vibraplant) and Pottergate Road which connects to the A17 to the north. To the south in part by an area of woodland, open landscape and a Public Right of Way (PRoW) which connects into Fulbeck. To the west by open landscape. To the northwest by the village of Fulbeck which is within a conservation area and comprises numerous heritage assets. To the north by a mature hedgerow, Holly Well Farm, and a PRoW along the site boundary which connects with the aforementioned PRoW and the village of Fulbeck.

Key features of site include the distinct topography with significant falls in site levels forming a 'ridge' and a 'bowl' central to the site; long views afforded from the site in particularly to the west and northwest; a mature landscape including the aforementioned woodland (to the south of the site), isolated trees and hedgerows to the north and south boundaries; recent tree planting (to enhance the biodiversity of the site) and beehives.

Access to the site is from Pottergate Road to the east.

The Proposed Scheme

The scheme proposes a multi generation home for David, his family and potentially David's in-laws. The drivers for the scheme are modesty, topography, views, Fulbeck village, a Roman villa and sustainability. The proposal comprises a house positioned at the top of the site levels along the ridge above the bowl.

The design concept draws on the village of Fulbeck by proposing a house comprising a series of connected buildings of different scale, mass and height with pitched roofs, arranged in a cluster on a plinth, and orientated to align with the views afforded from the site to the west.

The house is on two levels, with an upper ground floor and a lower ground floor. The upper level comprises the main entrance and central staircase connecting the floors, three bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms, two offices, a studio and a garage (three vehicles). The lower ground floor comprises the master bedroom, kitchen / dining, a lounge, a formal living spaces and a gym.

The landscape proposals around the house comprise a range of hard and soft landscape spaces to the immediate house, these include a gravel courtyard to the front / main entrance, paved terraces to the south, west and north of the house, a lawn area to the south including an outdoor kitchen bound by a wildflower meadow adjacent to the existing trees / woodland and a linear lawn to the north. To the west of the house is a series of low walls, steps and terraces which includes a formal pond. A vegetable and fruit garden is proposed to the northeast of the house.

The wider landscape proposals include meadow long grass and new tree planting to the east of the house, new hedgerows which define the site boundaries and the formal and informal landscape, two ponds and new tree planting to the site boundaries and within the site itself. Photo voltaic panels are also proposed within the landscape.

Access to the site is as existing along a drive adjacent to the southern boundary and then is angled to align with the main entrance, through a set of gates into a central gravel forecourt.

Paragraph 80 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The intention is to build a case for development under Paragraph 80e of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government July 2021.

Paragraph 80 states:

Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- (a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
- (b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
- (c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
- (d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or
- (e) *the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:*
 - *is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and*
 - *would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.*

The Panel's Comments

The Panel make the following comments and recommendations for your consideration:

Site analysis and studies

The Panel acknowledged the work undertaken and the comprehensive package of information presented comprising site studies (ecology, archaeology, minerals, flood risk and heritage); analysis of the immediate site context and Fulbeck village; landscape and visual impact assessment including Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV).

The Panel recommended to undertake additional work to demonstrate a robust understanding of the wider landscape character, which was identified as a gap in the site analysis – what makes the setting special and what is its character. This work will assist in demonstrating how the proposals reference and reinforce the landscape character, in particular in understanding the impact of the proposals on the landscape.

The Client's Brief

Building a home on the site presents a unique opportunity. The scheme will be a multi- generational home for your family, children and potentially your in-laws. The proposals will need to meet the individual and differing needs of each member of the household. The Panel suggested undertaking a 'day in the life' exercise to illustrate the day-to-day living needs for each member of the family ie. weekday and weekends and different times of the day / year. This should include for example particular views to be enjoyed to/from the house, the level of enclosure and privacy as well as openness, relationship with existing landscape features, etc. A clearer assessment of spatial requirements (outdoor spaces) would also be beneficial.

The above will further equip the Design Team with in-depth knowledge to ensure the design of the house fully meets the needs of the whole family. The importance of designing for future needs should also form part of the exercise, ie. how the proposal can adapt to the needs of the family including elderly parents / in-laws.

The Panel emphasised the importance of translating the brief for the project, once clarified, into a much clearer overall narrative for the scheme and recommended that this be documented as part of the design process. Recording this process will help to develop the narrative which is essential to inform the design and make a convincing case for the development.

The Design Drivers

The design drivers for the site, in addition to the client's needs, include referencing the typology of Fulbeck village with a roofscape concept of clusters of buildings, views to and from the site. Further aspirations and inspirations include 'modesty', the typology of a Roman villa, a building which 'perches' on the ridge, and sustainability.

The scheme as proposed was thought to be unclear and a number of design drivers competing with each other – is the house modest? Is it perched? Which parts of the building are meant to be hidden, which parts are meant to be visible? What is the rationale for these design decisions? The Design Team were recommended to refine and distil the design drivers / aspirations. These should also be ordered within a hierarchy to understand which ones are the most important.

The site was observed to be close to but not within the village of Fulbeck. The Panel did not feel the proposals should follow the typology and character of Fulbeck rigorously and highlighted the risk of the scheme being perceived as 'Little Fulbeck'. Instead of the village, the Panel considered the precedence of prominent 'buildings on the ridge' in the wider vicinity, as presented during the meeting, a potentially powerful driver for the scheme. Encouragement was given to evidence the above, by providing examples of such buildings within the landscape and how the proposals could follow this pattern.

'Modest/y' appeared to be an important driver for the scheme initially, but the Panel was uncertain what 'modesty' means for this project, and as proposed the scheme was not considered to be modest in scale or appearance. The Panel recommended to communicate more clearly what is meant by modesty and how this has informed the proposals.

The overall ambition for a sustainable house which is Net Zero is very commendable. The Panel recommended sustainability should be explored and embraced rigorously as part of the design development process from the onset. Rather than designing a house first and then exploring

sustainability in later stages, this approach could help to reduce the need for solar panels / technologies etc.

The proposal for a house comprises a cluster of buildings forms, which leads to increased building envelope and surface areas. If this approach is pursued, consideration needs to be given to the question of whether the building could be more compact to reduce surface areas, whether parts of the house can operate independently of each other, for example the guest wing be heated only when needed, the provision of an unheated circulation space etc.

Optimising orientation in response to sun / shade is key to designing a sustainable building, enabling a positive and significant impact in driving the design of the scheme. The proposed material palette comprises timber frame and insulation, this will also impact on the design of the house (envelope thickness, glazing amount, etc.) which need to be considered at this stage.

Clarification on what is meant by Net Zero would be helpful to understand the aspirations, ie. which stages would be assessed (construction, occupation, cradle-to-grave, with or without off-setting, etc.) and whether you plan to achieve industry standards (RIBA 20230 Climate Challenge, etc.).

The significance of introducing a new development to the site and its setting, the impact of the scheme on views into the site which include views from the PRoW, and the strategy / approach for views (for example viewpoint 9 from Fulbeck, page 33 of the DAS) needs to be assessed against a set of criteria. The Panel did not consider the building needs to be hidden drawing on the positive contribution of exceptional architecture can have on a view.

The long and panoramic views from the site are a key element of the client brief and an important driver for the scheme, therefore the house has a broad elevation to the west, including the plinth, and the very prominent two-storey gable, which is accentuated further by the decision to spread out the accommodation into separate buildings.

The Panel believe there is opportunity to explore the potential for different parts of the house to experience and respond to the different views, rather than focus primarily on views to the west. The orientation of the house and its rooms should be considered alongside the outwards views to drive the layout and form of the house. This would enable the house to respond more positively to the site context, heighten the experience of the internal spaces when moving through the house, and relate better to the various outside areas during times of the day / seasons of the year.

The Panel were unconvinced by the references of the typology of a Roman Villa. If this is to be pursued, a stronger rationale needs to be provided on its relevance to this site and how it would inform the scheme in response to the client's brief. Clarification is also required about the proposed material palette, which is intriguing, but not illustrated fully in the visuals provided.

All of the above will greatly assist in further strengthening the narrative and a building with a coherent architectural language.

The position of the house within the site

The logic for the position of the house within the site was understood, but the Panel considered there to be an un-satisfactory dominance of views over orientation and sustainability in the "single-aspect

layout". The Design Team were recommended to undertake an exercise to test positions and layout of the house against the design drivers and aspirations. This work should be documented and appraised to explain how ideas have been considered / discounted / adopted. A clear explanation showing how the position of the house within the site has been arrived at will be valuable in contributing to a compelling narrative.

Landscape Strategy

The overall approach, components and tone of the landscape proposals was supported. The proposals will have an impact on the landscape, it is important to define what this impact should be, how the impact would be sensitive to the landscape character, and how the 'significant improvement to the setting' would be delivered. As stated before, a study of the wider landscape character is essential to informing the proposals.

The topography / site levels are an important and key feature of the landscape and the plot. From the information provided there was difficulty in understanding the level and significance of the proposed remodelling and its impact on the landscape character. The provision of supporting and detailed information including existing and proposed cross sections and images were recommended. Clarifying the approach to spoil during construction could also form part of the above.

This work along with refining the design drivers may result in a different approach, potentially one which lessens the intervention on the landscape.

As mentioned above the building has been designed with a strong focus on the west elevation. The Panel commented on the importance of the spaces to the north, south and west of the house, which offer different contexts, view and micro-climates to complement the outdoor areas to the west. Clarification on the drivers for the open space was encouraged, ie. what has informed their location, design approach, size, aspect, seasonal usability in particular those in exposed locations, and how the outdoor spaces connect both visually and physically with the rooms within the house.

With regard to the individual spaces, the space to the west (where the beehives are located), is where the site is sheltered from the wind. Further consideration needs to be given to the importance of this space and its relationship with the house.

As proposed the emphasis of the design is to the west / the perceived main frontage, while the entrance is to the east / the functional rear. The gravel forecourt is an important space, it is where the family, visitors / guests will arrive, and this needs to be reflected in its design. Encouragement was given to strengthen the design to reflect its role and a function beyond the movement and storage of cars.

Sequence of arrival

Access to the house will be from the existing street access along a gravel drive parallel to the site boundary which is then angled to connect into a hard landscape gravel forecourt formed by the garage and house.

The Panel encouraged further consideration be given to the position of the access as part of the exercise in determining the position and orientation of the house within the site. This should also include the experience of travelling along the route ie. what do you experience at various points along the route and are there views across the wider landscape above the ridges as alluded to in the presentation.

Summary

The Panel thank you and your team for the site visit, scheme information, presentation and for hosting the design review meeting. Adam Murray, Richard Shaw and Ariane Buschmann from South Kesteven District Council were also thanked for engaging and participating with the design review. The opportunity to discuss the proposals collaboratively with yourself, your design team and the local authority representatives was an excellent opportunity and a privilege.

The Panel considered there to be enormous potential in the site. The brief, the site analysis, the collaborative design approach and the design work so far, is essential in achieving the high bar set by paragraph 80e of the NPPF.

The next stage should address the following:

- Refine the client brief including undertaken an exercise to better understand the needs of each member of the family ie. a day in the life
- Strengthen the site studies to include an assessment of the wider landscape character, in particular in understanding the impact of the proposal on the landscape character
- Distil the design drivers and aspirations for site and house within a hierarchy – which drivers are the most important, what is meant by ‘modesty’, etc.
- Embed sustainability as a key driver from the start ie. orientation, form, massing, etc.
- Design the house and landscape with a coherent language, and
- Development of external spaces in response to use, orientation and connection with the house.

We trust that the feedback provided within this letter will prove to be of benefit to you in seeking a successful resolution and outcome for this scheme and provide an opportunity for further discussions with the determining authorities. We would be happy to provide further design advice as the project progresses and we will seek to ensure that the composition of the Panel remains the same throughout any ongoing review process.

Yours sincerely,

Dharmista Patel
Design:Midlands Design Review Panel Manager

Design:Midlands Design Review adheres to the ten principles for design review as follows:

1. Independent: It is conducted by people who are separate from the scheme promoter and decision-maker, and it protects against conflicts of interest.
2. Accountable: It records and explains its advice and is transparent about potential conflicts of interest.
3. Expert: It is conducted by suitably trained people who are experienced in design and know how to criticise constructively. Review is usually most respected where it is carried out by professional peers of the project designers, as their standing and expertise will be acknowledged.
4. Advisory: It does not make decisions. It acts as a source of impartial advice for decision-makers.
5. Accessible: Its findings are clearly expressed in terms that decision-makers can understand and use.
6. Proportionate: It is used on projects whose significance warrants the public investment of providing design review at national, regional and local level, as appropriate. Other methods of appraising design quality should be used for less significant projects.
7. Timely: It takes place as early as possible in the life of a design because this saves the most time and costs less to make changes. If a planning application has already been made, it happens within the timeframe for considering it. And it is repeated when a further opinion is required.
8. Objective: It appraises schemes in the round according to reasoned, objective criteria rather than the stylistic tastes of individual Panel members.
9. Focused on outcomes for people: It asks how this building or place can better meet the needs of the people using it, and of the public at large who are affected by it.
10. Focused on improving quality: It constructively seeks to improve the quality of architecture, urban design, landscape, highway design and town planning.

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**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**



Planning Committee

9 January 2025

S24/1707

Proposal:	Change of use from dwelling (C3) to children's home (C2) for up to 2 young people
Location:	The Lodge, Main Street, Hougham
Applicant:	Anchor Care and Education Limited
Application Type:	Full Planning Application
Reason for Referral to Committee:	Called in by Councillor Paul Wood citing the following considerations: • Impact on the character of the village • Noise and disturbance to neighbouring properties • Parking and traffic issues
Key Issues:	• Impact on character appearance of the area • Impact on neighbours' residential amenities • Impact on highway safety

Report Author

Adam Murray – Principal Development Management Planner



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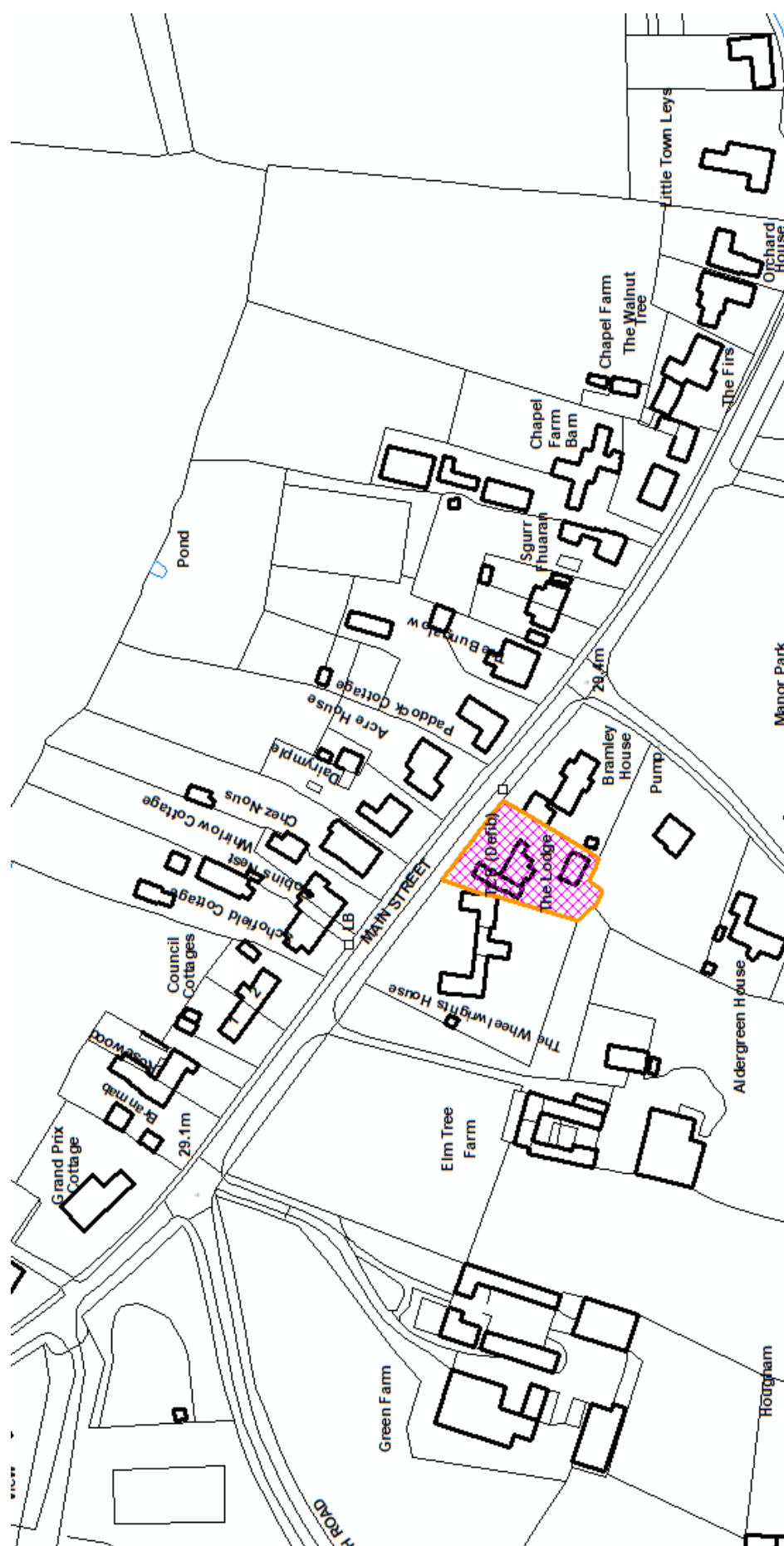
Corporate Priority:	Decision type:	Wards:
Growth	Regulatory	Viking

Reviewed by:	Phil Jordan, Development Management & Enforcement Manager	30 December 2024
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Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

To authorise the Assistant Director Planning & Growth to GRANT planning permission subject to conditions

S24/1707 – The Lodge, Main Street, Hougham



Key



Application
Boundary



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1 Description of Site

- 1.1 The application site comprises a 5-bedroom detached dwelling situated to the south of Main Street, located centrally within the village of Hougham.
- 1.2 The property is a two-storey detached dwelling constructed of red brick and a clay pantile roof, with a single storey pitched roof projection to the side, and a more recently timber clad, gable ended single storey extension to the side and front on the western side of the dwelling.
- 1.3 The property is set back from the highway and occupies a modest plot of approximately 0.25 acres. The site is bound to the east and west by additional, large detached residential dwellings of varying designs and materiality.
- 1.4 An application for a Lawful Development Certificate for Proposed Use of the dwelling as a children's care home (Application Ref: S24/1185) has previously been refused in September 2024 and is currently subject to a planning appeal. In addition, it is noted that the site is also subject to a current planning application for retrospective permission for the repositioning of an LPG tank to the rear of the dwelling.

2 Description of Proposal

- 2.1 The current application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the dwelling from a private dwelling (Use Class C3) to a children's care home (Use Class C2) for occupation by up to 2 young people.
- 2.2 The proposed care home would operate on a 2:1 ratio of carers to children plus a Registered Manager meaning that there would be up to 7 persons occupying the property at any time (5 staff and 2 young persons). Staff work on shifts between 08:00 and 21:00 or 20:00 and 09:00.

3 Relevant History

<u>Application Ref</u>	<u>Description of Development</u>	<u>Decision</u>
S24/1185	Lawful Development Certificate (Proposed) for use of a private dwelling (Use Class C3) as a children's care home (Use Class C2)	Unlawful Development 04.09.24 Appeal Lodged
S24/1978	Retrospective approval for repositioning of an LPG tank	Pending consideration

4 Policy Considerations

- 4.1 **South Kesteven Local Plan 2011-2036 (Adopted January 2020)**
Policy SD1 – The Principles of Sustainable Development in South Kesteven
Policy SP1 – Spatial Strategy
Policy SP2 – Settlement Hierarchy
Policy SP3 – Infill Development
Policy H4 – Meeting All Housing Needs
Policy DE1 – Promoting Good Quality Design
Policy ID2 – Transport and Strategic Transport Infrastructure
- 4.2 **Design Guidelines for Rutland and South Kesteven Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted November 2021)**
- 4.3 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Published December 2024)**

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development.
Section 4 – Decision-making
Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes.
Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport.

4.4 **South Kesteven Local Plan Review 2021-2041 (Regulation 18 Draft)**

5 Representations Received

5.1 **Hougham Parish Council**

5.1.1 Objection.

5.1.2 Hougham is a relatively isolated village with only neighbouring Marston within reasonable walking or cycling distance. The only school within walking distance is Marston Primary so any children over primary age or who are not registered at the local school would need to use some form of vehicular transport to get to school. The joint population of Hougham and Marston is small enough that it is unlikely that staff would be available locally therefore all staff would have to travel by car to work.

5.1.3 The applicant suggests that Hougham has a regular bus service, this is not the case with the only regular service being the school bus service into Grantham. The business model relies heavily on car transport, both in transporting children to their respective schools and activities and in enabling staff to travel to work.

5.1.4 Whilst this is an existing building, it is our view that the proposed use would undoubtedly compromise the character of the village by introducing a business model of accommodation into an otherwise residential area.

5.1.5 This proposal does not address a perceived local need. It is not clear whether the children would be from South Kesteven or further afield. In fact, the model relies on removing children from otherwise familiar surroundings and the jobs created would be for employees who will need to travel to the workplace.

5.1.6 The applicant states that the location provides a “calm and peaceful environment”. The site is within the confines of the village with neighbours to each side and a working farm to the rear, sited on the main street through the village which is in near constant use by farm vehicles, heavy plant and machinery.

5.1.7 It is a quiet village with relatively few families with young children. A number of villagers have expressed their concerns about the potential effects on the quality of life in the village by this proposal. Whilst concerns could arise from normal family occupancy, the proposed use differs significantly from the character of the remaining village and there is a far higher potential for noise and disturbance than that which could be expected with normal family occupancy.

5.1.8 The site is limited to accommodate the number of cars proposed with such a necessarily high staffing ratio, which is much higher than that of an equivalent family home.

5.1.9 Whilst we accept that the potential of anti-social behaviour is not a material planning consideration, it is nevertheless a serious matter of concern to those who may be affected.

5.2 **Lincolnshire County Council (Highways & SuDS)**

Consolidated comments

5.2.1 No objection.

5.2.2 The proposal is for the change of use from a dwelling (C3) to children's home (C2) catering for up to 2 young people and the access and parking arrangements remain unchanged. The application has demonstrated that there is enough parking for the proposed staff numbers; therefore, it is considered that the proposals would not result in an unacceptable impact on highways safety.

5.2.3 Additional Information Required – Parking Plan.

5.3 **Lincolnshire County Council (Children's Care Home – Senior Commissioning Officer)**

5.3.1 No comments to make.

6 Representations as a Result of Publicity

6.1 The application has been advertised in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and public representations have been received from 39 interested parties, all of whom have raised objections. The representations have raised the following matters:

(1) Principle of development

- a. The proposal is not required to meet a local need for Hougham.
- b. Hougham is not a sustainable location for development.

(2) Impact on the character of the area

- a. The potential for parking on the lawn would be damaging to the area.

(3) Impact on neighbouring amenity

- a. The staff changeover period would result in an increase in noise and light pollution causing harm to neighbouring occupants.

(4) Access and Highways Impacts

- a. Insufficient parking and manoeuvrability on site which would result in on-street parking
- b. Insufficient visibility to allow for vehicles to exit the site safely

(5) Other Matters

- a. Accuracy of the information submitted with the application
- b. Adequacy of the proposed operators
- c. The occupants will have participated in crime, anti-social behaviour or violent activities.
- d. Adequacy of the public consultation on the application – absence of site notices.
- e. The proposed development would not meet Ofsted requirements.
- f. Concern about fire risk
- g. Impact on property values
- h. Concerns about the safety of the children.

7 Evaluation

- 7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the Council adopted the South Kesteven Local Plan 2011-2036 on 30 January 2020, and this forms the Development Plan for the purposes of the current application.
- 7.2 The Local Planning Authority have also adopted a Design Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Adopted November 2021), and this document is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 7.3 The policies and provisions set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (“the Framework”) (Published December 2024) are also a relevant material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 7.4 It is also appreciated that the Local Planning Authority are also in the process of conducting a Local Plan Review. The Regulation 18 consultation on the draft Plan was carried out between February and April 2024. At this stage, the policies contained within the draft Plan Review can be attributed very little weight in the determination of planning applications. However, the updated evidence base which accompanies the ongoing Plan Review is a material consideration and must be taken into account in the determination of planning applications.
- 7.5 **Principle of Development**
- 7.5.1 It is appreciated that representations received have raised objections on the basis that Hougham is not a sustainable location for a care home.
- 7.5.2 The application dwelling is located within the centre of Hougham, which is defined as a Smaller Village in Policy SP2 of the adopted Local Plan.
- 7.5.3 The principle of residential development within this location has already been established by virtue of the host property being a private residential dwellinghouse. Whilst the proposed development would result in a change of use, it would remain within the residential use class and would result in a small children’s care home accommodating up to 2 young persons and 4 staff members at any time. The host dwelling is a 5-bedroom dwelling and therefore, it is Officer’s assessment that the level of occupancy is no greater than that possible through the current lawful use as a private dwellinghouse. As such, it is Officer’s assessment that the proposed development would be in accordance with Policy SP2 and SP3 of the adopted Local Plan as a matter of principle.
- 7.5.4 Furthermore, representations have also raised objections on the basis that the proposed development is not required to meet an identified local need.
- 7.5.5 Policy H4 (Meeting All Housing Needs) states that new housing proposals shall (a) enable older people and the most vulnerable to promote, secure and sustain their independence in a home appropriate to their circumstances, including through the provision of specialist housing across all tenures in sustainable locations. New housing proposals shall take account of the desirability of providing retirement accommodation, extra care and residential care housing and other forms of supporting housing.
- 7.5.6 The Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) published 23 May 2023 set out the Government’s commitment to “support the development of accommodation for looked after children, and its delivery through the planning system”. The Statement identifies that the planning system

should not be a barrier to providing homes for the most vulnerable children in society; and also states that “In two tier authorities, we expect local planning authorities to support these vital developments where appropriate to ensure that children in need of accommodation are provided for in their communities”.

7.5.7 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (published December 2024) further emphasises this requirement by setting out the obligation for the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community to be assessed and reflected in planning policies. This includes a need to assess the requirements for looked after children, which is to be evidenced used the local authority’s Children’s Social Care Sufficiency Strategy.

7.5.8 The Lincolnshire County Council Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2023-27 (Published September 2023) (**Appendix A**) sets out the following:

- Capacity within children’s homes is an issue, with many homes at capacity or experiencing difficulties with needs matching and recruiting and retaining high quality staff.
- Demand for children’s independent placements as of March 2021 increased by 25% since 2010.
- Children’s Strategic Commissioning have seen a rise in independent placements in place on 31st March 2018 to 31st March 2023 of 126% increase in independent residential children’s home placements.
- Lincolnshire places the majority of children and young people close to “home”.
- As of 31st March 2023, 53% of independent residential care placements were not in Lincolnshire or adjacent counties and this needs to be a real area of focus for market development.

7.5.9 The above information highlights a clear need for additional independent care homes to meet the growing demand for accommodation for children in care within Lincolnshire. The proposed development would provide 1 dwelling capable of accommodating 2 children towards meeting this identified need. This is a significant public benefit that the Case Officer attributes significant weight.

7.5.10 Conditions are proposed to restrict the use and number of occupants to the details described above, to ensure that the proposed development operates in accordance with the manner in which it has been assessed.

7.5.11 Taking all of the above into account, the proposed change of use to form a children’s care home would be in accordance with Policy SP1, SP2, SP3 and H4 of the adopted Local Plan and Section 5 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and therefore is acceptable in principle, subject to material considerations. These matters are discussed in detail below.

7.6 **Impact on the character and appearance of the area**

7.6.1 Representations received on the application have raised objections on the basis that the proposed development would change the character of the village, and also that any parking of vehicles on the front garden of the dwelling would be harmful to the streetscene.

7.6.2 It is not proposed to extend or alter the exterior of the dwelling into the outside amenity space. Whilst it is possible that the areas to the front garden may be changed to hardstanding to enable additional parking, these works could be carried out using permitted

development rights available to the current use of the dwelling as a private dwellinghouse. In this context, it is Officer's assessment that this would not result in any unacceptable adverse impacts on the streetscene.

- 7.6.3 In respect of the nature of the proposed occupation of the property, and the consequential impact on the character of the area, it is Officer's assessment that the level of occupancy of the property would not exceed that which would reasonably occur through occupation of the dwelling by a single family as a private dwellinghouse.
- 7.6.4 Nonetheless, it is appreciated, that the nature of the vehicular movements associated with the proposed development would be materially different given that the trip movements would be largely clustered around staff changeover periods at the beginning and end of the day. However, it is the Case Officer's assessment that this difference in vehicular movements would not be sufficient to warrant harm to the overall character and appearance of the area.
- 7.6.5 Consequently, it is Officer's assessment that the proposed development scheme would not result in any unacceptable adverse impacts on the character and appearance of the area, and therefore would accord with Policy SP3 and DE1 of the Local Plan, and Section 12 of the Framework on these matters.

7.7 Impact on neighbouring amenity

- 7.7.1 Representations received on the application have raised objections on the basis that the increased number of vehicular movements would result in an unacceptable impact on noise and light pollution.
- 7.7.2 It is Officer's assessment that, whilst there would be an increase in the number of vehicle movements occurring compared to the private occupation of the dwelling, this would not be of such a level to result in any unacceptable adverse impacts in relation to noise and light pollution; particularly, when considering the position of the dwelling adjacent to a neighbouring agricultural land use and the main arterial route running through the village.
- 7.7.3 In addition, there are no external changes proposed to the building and, therefore, there would be no unacceptable adverse impacts in relation to overlooking or overshadowing
- 7.8 Taking into account the nature of the proposal it is considered that there would be no unacceptable adverse impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of adjacent properties in accordance with Policies DE1 and SP3 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the Framework.

7.9 Access and Highways Impacts

- 7.9.1 Representations received on the application have raised objections on the basis that there is insufficient space on site to accommodate the number of vehicles required for the development, and that there is insufficient visibility to allow vehicles to exit the site safely.
- 7.9.2 Lincolnshire County Council (as Local Highways Authority) have been consulted on the application and have confirmed that they have no objections. They have confirmed that the applicant has demonstrated that there is sufficient parking space to accommodate the development and have confirmed that they have no concerns in relation to highways safety. Further comments received from LCC Highways have subsequently requested the submission of a parking plan.
- 7.9.3 The Applicant has submitted a Car Parking Appraisal (BSP Consulting) (December 2024), which identifies sufficient on-site parking for up to 5 vehicles including plans showing the

proposed swept path analysis indicating how these parking places could be accessed and egressed in a forward gear.

- 7.9.4 Lincolnshire County Council have been consulted on the submitted parking plan, and no further comments have been received.
- 7.9.5 Taking the above into account, it is Officer's assessment that the proposed development would not result in any unacceptable adverse highways impacts and would provide sufficient off-street parking to accommodate the development proposal. As such, it is Officer's assessment that the application proposals would accord with Policy ID2 of the Local Plan and Section 9 of the Framework.

7.10 **Other Matters**

Public consultation

- 7.10.1 Representations received have raised concerns about the level of public consultation undertaken on the application citing the absence of a site notice to advertise the proposals and the lack of engagement from the Applicant.
- 7.10.2 As stated above, the application has been advertised in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, as well as the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order. Notification of the application has been sent directly to the adjoining properties, as well as the statutory consultees. The nature of the proposed development and the site context does not require a formal site notice to be displayed for the application. There has been a relatively high public engagement with the consultation undertaken, including representations from the Parish Council and 39 public representations. As such, officers are satisfied that appropriate consultation exercise has been undertaken in this instance.
- 7.10.3 In respect of the lack of public consultation by the Applicant, whilst the National Planning Policy Framework encourages applicants to engage directly with the local community, it would be unreasonable for the Local Planning Authority to refuse an application due to the absence of any consultation, but rather the LPA would need to demonstrate the unacceptable consequences of an absence of consultation.

Adequacy of the submission

- 7.10.4 Representations have raised concerns about the accuracy of the information submitted as part of the application. In particular, concerns have been raised about the contradictory references to the number of children who will occupy the property.
- 7.10.5 The application has been assessed by the Case Officer, who is satisfied that there is sufficient information on which to make an informed decision about the proposed development. The concerns about the proposed number of occupants are noted and as stated above, conditions are proposed to ensure that the occupation of the care home is limited to 2 children to ensure that the proposals are operated as assessed.

Suitability of the operator

- 7.10.6 Representations have raised objections on the basis of the adequacy of the Applicant to operate the proposed care home, citing Ofsted reports for other facilities operated by the Applicant which require improvement.
- 7.10.7 As Members will be aware, if granted, planning permission would run with the land rather than specific to the applicant and, therefore, it is entirely possible that the proposed care

home would be operated by another provider rather than the current Applicant. Notwithstanding this, the suitability of the operator of the site would be subject to control by Ofsted through separate social care legislation, which also includes a further assessment of the suitability of the site to be a licensed care home.

The proposed development would not meet Ofsted requirements

- 7.10.8 Public representations have raised objections on the basis that the proposed development would not adhere to Ofsted requirements for licensing of the property as a care home, in particular concerns have been raised in relation to fire safety.
- 7.10.9 As stated above, the registration and monitoring of care homes is a separate process undertaken by Ofsted, and therefore, is not a matter for consideration as part of the planning application process, which is solely concerned with the change of use of the dwelling.

Anti-social behaviour

- 7.10.10 Concerns have been raised that occupants of the proposed care home would have participated in crime, anti-social behaviour or violent activities, and would therefore increase the likelihood of such activities occurring in Hougham. Similarly, concerns have also been raised about the safety of the future occupants due to proximity to watercourses, railway lines and agricultural machinery.
- 7.10.11 Matters relating to anti-social behaviour would be subject to control through separate procedures of law enforcement, as they would for the current occupation of the dwelling as a private dwellinghouse. Nonetheless, further control is provided by the Ofsted registration process.
- 7.10.12 It is Officer's assessment that the proposed change of use would not result in any unacceptable adverse impacts in relation to crime or the fear of crime occurring.

Impact on property values

- 7.10.13 Public representations have raised objections on the basis that the proposed change of use would increase the likelihood of criminal activity occurring and thus result in a reduction in property values.
- 7.10.14 The impact of a development proposal on private property values is not a material planning consideration and cannot be given weight in the determination of the current application.

8 Crime and Disorder

- 8.1 It is concluded that the proposals would not result in any significant crime and disorder implications.

9 Human Rights Implications

- 9.1 Article 6 (Rights to fair decision making) and Article 8 (Right to private family life and home) of the Human Rights Act have been taken into account in making this recommendation. It is concluded that no relevant Article of the Act will be breached in making this decision.

10 Planning Balance and Conclusions

- 10.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 10.2 The current application seeks planning permission for the change of use of a dwelling (Use Class C3) to a children's care home (Use Class C2) for occupation by up to 2 young persons. The proposed development would contribute towards the identified need for the provision of additional independent institutions within Lincolnshire, as evidenced in the Lincolnshire County Council Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2023-27 (Published September 2023). This is a significant public benefit, which the Case Officer attributes significant weight.
- 10.3 Furthermore, it is the Case Officer's assessment that the proposed change of use would not result in any unacceptable adverse impacts on the character of the area, neighbouring amenity or highways safety.
- 10.4 As such, it is Officer's assessment that the application would accord with the adopted Development Plan as a whole, and there are no material considerations in this case to indicate that planning permission should be withheld.

11 Recommendation

- 11.1 To authorise the Assistant Director – Planning & Growth to GRANT planning permission, subject to conditions.

Schedule of Condition(s)

Time Limit for Commencement

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In order that the permission is commenced in a timely manner, as set out in Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Approved Plans

Approved Plans

- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following list of approved plans:

- Site Location Plan (received 2nd October 2024)

Unless otherwise required by another condition of this permission.

Reason: To define the permission and for the avoidance of doubt.

Ongoing Conditions

Use of the Property

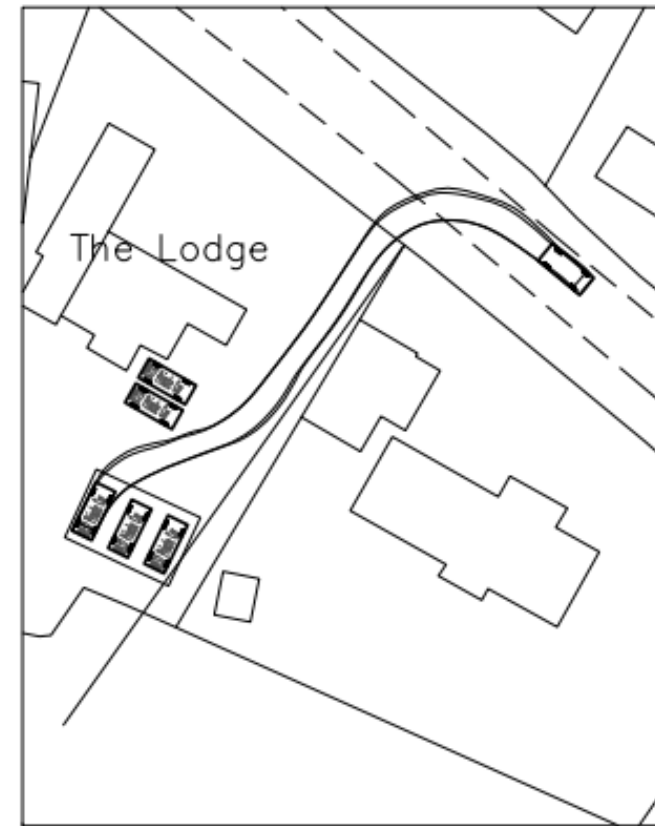
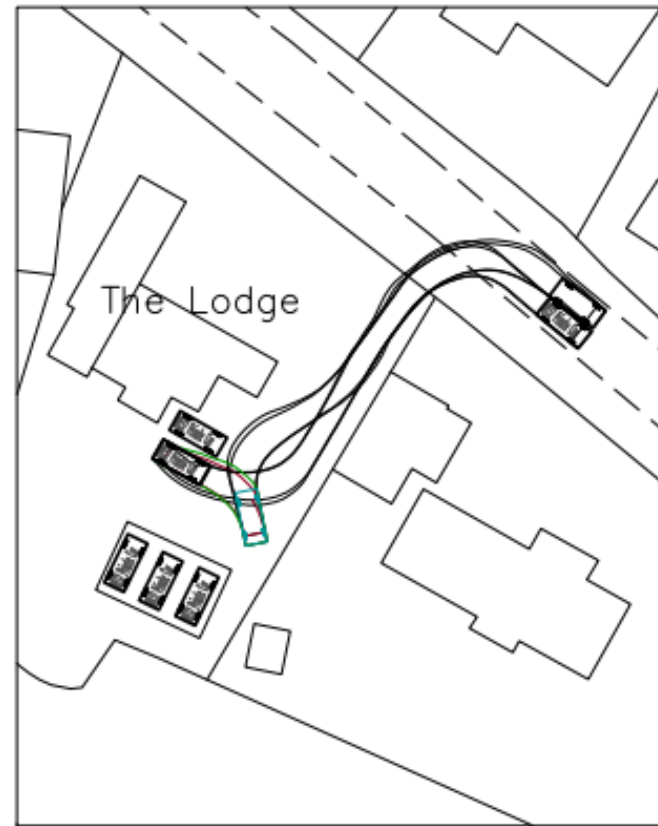
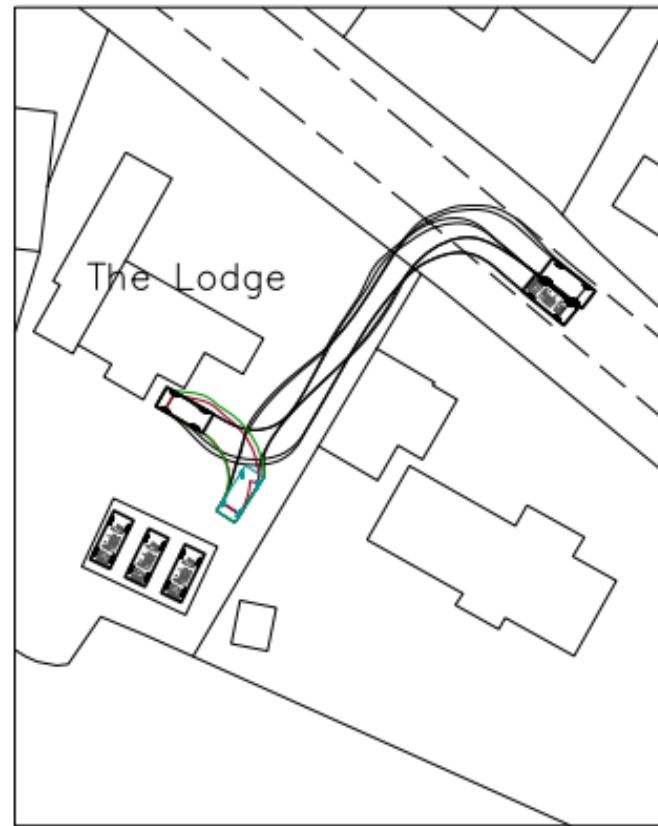
- 3) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order with or without modification), the premises shall be used only as a children's care home for up to two children and for no other purpose (including any other use falling within Class C2 of the Order).

Reason: To ensure that the development operates as assessed.

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KEY PLAN						
Construction Files		Information/Consulting Files		Design/Integration Files		
In addition to the hazards/risks normally associated with the type of works detailed on this drawing take note of the above. It is assumed that all works on this drawing will be carried out by a competent contractor working, where appropriate, to an appropriate method statement.						
SAFETY HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION BOX						
P02	Parking positions rearranged					
	TB	12/24	JAD	12/24	MWR	12/24
P01	FHH Issue					
	TB	12/24	JAD	12/24	MWR	12/24
REV	COMMENT					
	DRAWN BY	DATE	CHECKED BY	DATE	APPROVED BY	DATE
SCALE @ A3		ISSUING OFFICE			PROJECT NUMBER	
1:500		NOTTINGHAM			24-0614	
CLIENT APPROVAL						
A - APPROVED						
B - APPROVED WITH COMMENTS						
C - DO NOT USE						
STATUS		PURPOSE OF ISSUE				
S1		PRELIMINARY				
• CIVIL • STRUCTURAL • TRANSPORTATION • GEOTECHNICAL • ENVIRONMENTAL  12 Oxford Street Nottingham NG1 5BG Tel: 0345 413 4008 email: info@bspconsulting.co.uk Also offices in Derby, Leicester and Sheffield  BSI Design and Construction KITEMARK™  BAA Design and Construction KITEMARK™						
PROJECT						
THE LODGE MAIN STREET HOUGHAM LINCOLNSHIRE						
TITLE						
INDICATIVE_ CAR PARKING ARRANGEMENTS						
CLIENT						
ANCHOR CARE AND EDUCATION						
PROJECT ORIGINATOR FUNCTIONAL SPATIAL FORM DISCIPLINE NUMBER						
LMSH-BSP-XX-XX-D-S-0001						REV
						P02



KEY PLAN	
DB32 Private Car Overall Length 4.223m Overall Width 1.715m Overall Body Height 1.392m Min Body Ground Clearance 0.733m Max Track Width 1.620m Lock to lock time 4.00s Kerb to Kerb Turning Radius 5.780m	
Construction Rules	Minimums and Loading Rules
In addition to the hazards/risks normally associated with the type of works detailed on this drawing take note of the above. It is assumed that all works on this drawing will be carried out by a competent contractor working, where appropriate, to an appropriate method statement.	
SAFETY HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION BOX	
P02 Parking positions rearranged TB 12/24 JAD 12/24 MWR 12/24 P01 1111 1111 TB 12/24 JAD 12/24 MWR 12/24 REV COMMENT DRAWN BY DATE CHECKED BY DATE APPROVED BY DATE SCALE @ A3 ISSUING OFFICE PROJECT NUMBER 1:500 NOTTINGHAM 24-0614	
CLIENT APPROVAL	
A - APPROVED	
B - APPROVED WITH COMMENTS	
C - DO NOT USE	
STATUS	PURPOSE OF ISSUE
S1	PRELIMINARY
• CIVIL • STRUCTURAL • TRANSPORTATION • GEOTECHNICAL • ENVIRONMENTAL bsp CONSULTING 12 Oxford Street Nottingham, NG1 5BG Tel: 0115 412 4800 Email: info@bspconsulting.co.uk Offices in Derby, Leicester and Sheffield bsi Design and Construction KITEMARK™ BSI 12002 BSI K12 1/2014	
PROJECT	
THE LODGE MAIN STREET HOUGHAM LINCOLNSHIRE	
TITLE	
VEHICLE_SWEEP_PATHS	
CLIENT	
ANCHOR_CARE_AND_EDUCATION	
PROJECT ORIGINATOR FUNCTIONAL SPATIAL FORM DISCIPLINE NUMBER	REV
LMSH-BSP-XX-XX-D-S-0002	P02

Existing Floor and Block Plan



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Open Report on behalf of Heather Sandy, Executive Director of Children's Services	
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Report to:	Corporate Parenting Panel
Date:	07 September 2023
Subject:	Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2023-2027

Summary:

This report presents the Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2023-2027 for the Panel's endorsement prior to online publication. The Sufficiency Strategy also includes the Children in Care Action Plan (Appendix A1) and the Children's Services Independent Placements Market Position Statement 2023-24 (Appendix A2).

Actions Required:

The Corporate Parenting Panel is invited to:-

1. support and endorse the Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2023-2027 and Appendices A1 and A2.
2. support and endorse the online publication of the Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2023-2027 and Appendices A1 and A2.
3. agree to the annual presentation of the update of the Children in Care Action Plan (Appendix A1) prior to publication online.

1. Background

[Section 22G](#) of the [Children Act 1989](#), and the [Statutory Guidance on Securing Sufficient Accommodation for Looked After Children \(2010\)](#), is explicit in placing a duty on Local Authorities to act strategically to address gaps in provision by ensuring that they include, in relevant commissioning strategies, their plans for meeting the sufficiency duty.

The 2018-2022 Sufficiency Strategy was previously signed off by the Corporate Parenting Panel with the recommendation to report annually on progress against the Action Plan (Appendix A1 to the Sufficiency Strategy). The last Action Plan update came to the Corporate Parenting Panel in January 2022, where it was also agreed that an updated Sufficiency Strategy would be developed and realigned with the reporting/financial year.

Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2023-2027

Children's Strategic Commissioning has worked with internal Officers and appropriate commissioned stakeholders to finalise the Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy for the period 2023-2027, and has aligned the Strategy to the Children in Care (CiC) and High Needs Transformation Programmes as well as the national picture of placement sufficiency highlighted in the 2022 [Children's Social Care Market Study](#) by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and more recently in the Government's implementation and strategy document for social care reform [Stable Homes, Built on Love](#).

The Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2023-2027, attached at Appendix A, gives the position on 31 March 2023; progress after this will be aligned to the financial/reporting year and reported through the annually updated Children in Care Action Plan, returning annually to the Corporate Parenting Panel in Quarter 1 of each year, with the first annual update due in May 2024.

Children's Strategic Commissioning will also develop an annual Market Position Statement which will support the market development work to be undertaken with the independent placement sector to support placement capacity in Lincolnshire and ensure Children in Care are able to be accommodated in high quality placements as close to home as possible.

The Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2023-2027 and its appendices, including the annually updated Children in Care Action Plan (Appendix A1) and the Market Position Statement (Appendix A2) will be published online to support market development and engagement with the independent placement sector.

2. Conclusion

The Corporate Parenting Panel is invited to discuss and endorse the Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2023-2027; and endorse the publication of the Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2023-2027 online with Appendices A1 and A2, the annual update of the Children in Care Action Plan and the annually updated Market Position Statement.

The Corporate Parenting Panel is also invited to request Children's Strategic Commissioning provide an annual update of the Children in Care Action Plan (Appendix A1 to the Sufficiency Strategy).

3. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

Risks were identified within the Strategy and elements are included within the Action Plan (Appendix A1) which will identify key actions for reporting and review.

4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy 2023-27, including Children in Care Action Plan (Appendix A1) and Children's Services Independent Placements Market Position Statement 2023-24 (Appendix A2)

5. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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Children in Care

Sufficiency Strategy

2023-2027

Ensuring Lincolnshire's Children in Care and care leavers are supported to thrive and reach their potential in high quality accommodation placements and have access to effective support services

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1. Lincolnshire Sufficiency Statement

The vision for Children's Services in Lincolnshire is *'Putting Children First – working together for all children, young people and families to be happy, healthy, safe and the best they can be.'*



Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services aims to secure sufficient accommodation to support Children in Care (CiC) and care leavers to achieve the highest possible outcomes. Such accommodation should be:

- safe and suitable
- meets young people's social and emotional needs
- supportive and caring
- enables an effective transition to independence and adulthood.

We will work with internal and external stakeholders, including commissioned services and partner agencies to develop and maintain effective support for our CiC and care leavers, to enable them to thrive and succeed.

We will continuously evaluate our progress, holding ourselves and our partners to account, whilst challenging practice and the way we do things to ensure the needs of our children are prioritised through innovative practice, and always listening to our children's voices.

Lincolnshire County Council's Sufficiency Strategy aims to ensure we have the right placement, of the right quality, in the right place, at the right time and for the right price.

1.1. Key challenges

1.1.1. Lincolnshire County Council's Children's Services is rated **Outstanding** and provides a range of support services for our most vulnerable children and young people.

1.1.2. Children's Services work with partners and commission services to deliver support based on need, encouraging and empowering children and young people to achieve positive outcomes.

1.1.3. Nevertheless, Lincolnshire, like other areas, is facing significant challenges:

- The need to increase capacity in foster households both in-house and within the independent market is a national concern and focus for development. We want children to experience growing up in positive family environments wherever possible.
- Capacity within residential children's homes is similarly an issue, with many homes at capacity or experiencing difficulties with needs matching and recruiting and retaining high quality staff.
- Placing children who have very complex needs and challenging behaviours is demanding. Demand for placements nationally means suppliers are more inclined to accept placements for often younger and less challenging children. This is a national issue and can result in authorities paying incredibly high costs or having to fund whole settings to secure a single placement, which is reducing capacity further.
- Projected increases in CiC numbers is likely to impact on services including social care, Virtual School, and health services and may then impact on support to care leavers as numbers also increase.
- Market and relationship development of independent suppliers is critical to sourcing and supporting effective and value for money placements. There are children placed in Lincolnshire from other areas and Lincolnshire children that are placed outside of the county. Greater partnership working is needed with the independent market to ensure local sufficiency that can meet local needs.
- There is an increase in CiC needing mental health support as part of their placement offer and a noted growth in the number of education placements needed for children with Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) needs. Mental Health services across the county are under pressure, particularly since the pandemic, with higher demand for services impacting waiting times. Local services are highly regarded, rated **Outstanding** by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), and work closely with Children's Services but it is harder to secure the right support when a child is placed out of area. There is also a need for increased supply of education settings that can support children with SEMH needs.
- Providing placements for CiC with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may be increasingly challenging over the next four years, especially if there is an education need that cannot be met within mainstream provision.
- Workforce recruitment and retention is a challenge across the placement sector, including in-house and independent provision, this sometimes impacts on market capacity with beds closed because of unsafe staffing ratios.
- The impact of OFSTED regulation and inspection on supported accommodation suppliers may mean some suppliers will exit the market if registration is incompatible with their business model.

- There is an increase in referrals through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC).
- There are rising placement costs as a result of the increase in the cost of living, with costs passed back to the Council.

1.1.4. The ability to accurately forecast placement demand impacts on the way Local Authorities (LAs) can shape and develop their local independent placement market, offering further challenge to being able to procure the right placements for children and young people that meet their needs.

1.1.5. Demand for children's independent placements as of March 2021 increased by 25% since 2010.

1.2. Sufficiency Duty

1.2.1. **Section 22G** of the **Children Act 1989**, and the **Statutory Guidance on Securing Sufficient Accommodation for Looked After Children (2010)** places a clear duty on LAs to act strategically to address gaps in provision by ensuring that they include, in relevant commissioning strategies, their plans for meeting the Sufficiency Duty.

1.2.2. The Sufficiency Duty requires each LA providing children's services to take steps that secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation within its area to meet the needs of children that it is looking after and children whose circumstances are such that it would be consistent with their welfare for them to be provided with accommodation in the LA area.

1.2.3. The Duty not only applies to CiC but equally applies to children and young people who are on the edge of care, acknowledging the importance of taking earlier, preventive action to support children and families so that fewer young people enter care.

1.2.4. The **Children and Young Persons Act 2008** defines Sufficiency as '*a whole system approach which delivers early intervention and preventative work to help support children and their families where possible, as well as providing better services for children if they do become looked after. For those who are looked after, Local Authorities and their Children's Trust partners should seek to secure a number of providers and a range of services, with the aim of meeting the wide-ranging needs of looked after children and young people within their local area.*'

1.3. Strategic priorities and strategies

1.3.1. Lincolnshire Children's Services is rated as **Outstanding** by OFSTED, who noted that '*Children and families have benefited from leaders prioritising and investing in services, strengthening the range and offer of support*'.

1.3.2. Lincolnshire Children's Services principles, which underpin how we will commission and deliver services to achieve our vision, are:

- **Early Help:** Strong protective universal services accessible to all with a range of early help available so children have the best start in life and families have extra help when they need it.

- **Safeguarding:** A shared responsibility to ensure children are safe at home, school and in their community.
- **Aspiration:** Children are able to thrive and cope with life challenges.
- **Learning and achievement:** All children being the best they can be with targeted interventions to close the gap so vulnerable children achieve as well as their peers.
- **Best use of resources:** Integrated commissioning with a focus on best value, improved outcomes and community engagement.

1.3.3. Lincolnshire's main principles are further supported by and are embedded in conjunction with:

- Children in Care and Care Leaver Strategy (see 1.4.1.)
- **Care Leaver's Charter**
- Early Help Strategy (see 3.8.1.2.)
- **Early Childhood Strategy**
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) (see 1.5.)
- **Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy**
- **Lincolnshire High Needs Strategy**
- **Lincolnshire SEMH Strategy**
- Participation Strategy (see 1.6.4.)
- **Lincolnshire Local Transformation Plan for Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health**
- **SEND High Needs Strategy.**

1.4. Children in Care and Care Leaver Strategy 2022-2025

1.4.1. The **Children in Care and Care Leaver Strategy 2022-2025** focuses on 6 key priority areas:

1. **Support to remain with family** - We support families to improve their relationships and avoid preventable difficulties by providing them with the right support in their community, from the right person at the right time. We only bring children into care when it cannot be made safe for them to stay in their home, family network or community.
2. **Stability and permanence** - When children and young people need long term care outside of the family network, they will have stability and be safe from harm. All placements for children and young people will be targeted to support their needs, whether this is foster care or residential provision.
3. **Build not break relationships** - All children, young people and care leavers can build enduring relationships with consistent people and they have a trusted, stable relationship with an adult who is important to them.
4. **Learning and aspirations** - We want our children, young people and care leavers to succeed in their educational setting and continue with lifelong learning so that they can realise their aspirations.
5. **Healthy and resilient** - We promote good long term physical and emotional health and want to enable our children, young people and care leavers to have contented and healthy lives and be helped to evolve from what has happened in the past.
6. **Safe and suitable accommodation** - We support our children, young people and care leavers to access and sustain suitable accommodation which meets their needs, helps them feel safe and supports their growth to independence.

- 1.4.2. Key priorities that the Sufficiency Strategy actively will support to achieve are (2) **stability and permanence**, and (6) **safe and suitable accommodation**.

1.5. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

- 1.5.1. The JSNA process aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of current and future local needs across a range of issues, utilising a wide range of quantitative and qualitative data, including user, patient, and community views. The requirement to produce a JSNA has been a statutory duty on LAs and local NHS since 2007. This duty has been further enhanced by the 2022 update to the **Health and Social Care Act 2012**.
- 1.5.2. Children and young people's Health and Wellbeing is one of the core themes of the JSNA, with a key priority being to improve health and reduce health inequalities for children and young people.
- 1.5.3. Lincolnshire's **JSNA** is on the **Lincolnshire Health Intelligence Hub**, along with a range of population and demographic data.

1.6. Listening to our children and young people

- 1.6.1. Lincolnshire County Council takes a child's rights approach to help ensure that children and young people's views are heard and acted on. The foundation of our work is Article 12 of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**.
- 1.6.2. Our priorities are working with the Lincolnshire Youth Cabinet, Voices for Choices (V4C), Young Inspectors, and Lincolnshire's Children in Care Council. Further information about these is at www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/young-people.
- 1.6.3. V4C events have been held in four quadrants of the county during half terms, with a mixture of virtual and face-to-face meetings. In addition, Big Conversation events are supported by Children in Care teams, care leavers, senior staff including Councillors. Notes, issues, concerns and proposed solutions are shared widely across the Council.
- 1.6.4. The **Participation Strategy 2023-26** for Children's Services provides a framework for the participation of children and young people in Lincolnshire and ensures that the voice of the child can be clearly heard and evidenced. Listening to and acting on the views of children is essential for the development and improvement of relevant and effective services. This applies to services provided uniquely to children and young people and those provided to the wider community.
- 1.6.5. Lincolnshire children and young people have co-produced a number of resources, including the **Skills for Adult Life booklet**, the Caring Promise, guidance for social workers and the Family Services Directory (FSD) and SEND Local Offer (see 3.8.1.14.), and have contributed to service design of both in-house and commissioned services.

1.7. Transformation programmes

- 1.7.1. Lincolnshire County Council continues to develop and enhance services, undertaking reviews with key stakeholders to consider how services and working and how they may be improved, especially as cohort needs and demand change over time.
- 1.7.2. The **Children in Care (CiC) transformation programme** seeks to develop and improve information and tracking of CiC to better understand their strengths and challenges, with the aim of stepping them down from residential placements to foster family environments and bringing them back into Lincolnshire wherever possible to better provide wraparound support by other services as a holistic outcomes-focused improvement approach.
- 1.7.3. The **Building Communities of Specialist Provision programme** is looking to transform Lincolnshire's special school landscape, through creating an integrated system where pupils attend the nearest school with investment in facilities, building a new school, expanding several others and increasing special school places.
- 1.7.4. The **SEND transformation programme** is similarly looking to transform the SEN support landscape, with a focus on supporting mainstreams schools to deliver robust early intervention through a meaningful graduated approach.
- 1.7.5. The **Children and Young People's Mental Health transformation programme** vision is that, together with children and young people in Lincolnshire, we will understand how we can best support their emotional wellbeing and mental health and transform and improve services enabling CYP to live independent, safe, well and fulfilled lives in their local communities.

2. National and local context

2.1. National and regional context

National context

- 2.1.1. Between 2016 and 2022 the number of CiC rose 16.7% in England¹ and the annual cost of children's social care in England is currently around £5.7 billion per annum.
- 2.1.2. In March 2022, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) published its final report into the children's social care market. Taken directly from the report², the CMA found that:
- *a lack of placements of the right kind, in the right places, means that children are not consistently getting access to care and accommodation that meets their needs*
 - *the largest private providers of placements are making materially higher profits, and charging materially higher prices, than we would expect if this market were functioning effectively*
 - *some of the largest private providers are carrying very high levels of debt, creating a risk that disorderly failure of highly leveraged firms could disrupt the placements of children in care.*
- 2.1.3. The CMA also recognised that children and young people had increasing complex needs, highlighting the gap between the number of children and young people requiring placements and the number of placements available.
- 2.1.4. Further concerns highlighted in the report included the number of children and young people placed far from their home Local Authority and/or existing support networks, difficulties in accessing wraparound and support services, sector recruitment and retention (including foster carers and residential children's home staff) and regulation and inspection requirements.
- 2.1.5. Following the CMA report, in February 2023 the Government published their implementation and strategy document, **Stable Homes, Built on Love**, which sets out six key pillars that aim to reform children's social care:
- Pillar 1:** Family Help provides the right support at the right time so that children can thrive with their families
 - Pillar 2:** A decisive multi-agency child protection system
 - Pillar 3:** Unlocking the potential of family networks
 - Pillar 4:** Putting love, relationships and a stable home at the heart of being a child in care
 - Pillar 5:** A valued, supported and highly-skilled social worker for every child who needs one
 - Pillar 6:** A system that continuously learns and improves and makes better use of evidence and data.

¹ Source: [Local Authority Interactive Tool \(LAIT\)](#), Number of Looked After Children

² Source: [Children's social care market study](#), Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), March 2022

- 2.1.6. **Pillar 4** in particular will impact on placement sufficiency and quality, with a focus on foster care recruitment, leadership and management improvements in the children's homes sector, increased financial oversight of placements as well as two pathfinder Regional Care Co-Operatives (RCCs) to plan, commission and deliver care places.
- 2.1.7. In addition, **Pillar 4** focuses on: prioritising loving relationships; strengthening and widening the corporate parenting role; creating increased education, employment and training opportunities for CiC and care leavers; universal wraparound support and accommodation for care leavers; decrease mental health and physical health disparities and increase life expectancy for CiC and care leavers.

East Midlands context

- 2.1.8. The East Midlands region has similarly seen a rise in CiC numbers, increasing by 25.15% from 2016 to 2022³, which is greater than both the rise across England (see 2.2.4.) and the 6.5% rise in Lincolnshire CiC numbers in the same period.
- 2.1.9. Placement capacity has been stretched across the region; whilst Lincolnshire, like many LAs, is a fostering first authority. Lincolnshire has a preference to place children and young people in-county, so they can be close to their important networks and receive outstanding support; as of 31st March 2023 22% of CiC were placed outside the county boundary.

2.2. Local context

- 2.2.1. Lincolnshire is the fourth largest county in England with diverse communities dispersed across a large and diverse landscape. The county is predominantly rural and home to approximately 761,224 residents (**Office of National Statistics (ONS) mid-2020 population estimates**).
- 2.2.2. Approximately 21.5% of the total population is aged 0-19 years (163,550), of which 76% (124,565) is aged 5 to 19 years.
- 2.2.3. Based on the **Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019**, 6.7% of Lincolnshire's population (approximately 50,000 people) live within the 10% most deprived areas of England. This is highest within Lincoln (16.9%) and East Lindsey (16.8%). There are 29 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) within the 10% most deprived nationally.
- 2.2.4. In Lincolnshire at end of March 2023⁴, there were 728 CiC, 391 children and young people with a 'Child Protection' (CP) plan, and 3,135 Children in Need (CiN) with an open episode of need. 6,968 children and young people had an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and there were 63 UASC who made up 9% of all CiC. Lincolnshire CiC numbers have increased by 10.5% since 2018⁵, versus c.16% increase nationally.

³ Source: **Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)**, LA Level Data, Number of Looked After Children

⁴ Source: Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services Analysis Tool (ChAT) March 2023

⁵ 659 Lincolnshire CiC on 31st March 2018 (Source: Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services Analysis Tool (ChAT) March 2018)

- 2.2.5. As a snapshot rate, Lincolnshire CiC numbers represent 49 per 10,000 young people, versus 70 per 10,000 in England⁶

2.3. Impact of Covid-19

- 2.3.1. The Covid-19 pandemic which started in March 2020 has had a significant impact on social care teams across the country, and Lincolnshire was no exception.
- 2.3.2. Presenting behaviours and needs of young people were often exacerbated by not having the structure of education settings, parents and carers faced numerous difficulties, and the Council's Children's Services teams continue to see the effects of this with a rise of late entrants into care and an increase in young people accessing some of our support services, notably those around mental health (*see 3.8.1.5.*).
- 2.3.3. We worked closely with our in-house and independent placement suppliers to avoid placement breakdown and successfully maintained the majority of those placements.

⁶ Source: Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services Analysis Tool (ChAT) March 2023

3. Lincolnshire's position

- The population of Children in Care (CiC) has increased in Lincolnshire by 10.5% over the last 5 years.
- 728 children were in care on 31st March 2023 – 42% of them were female while 15% were of mixed, Asian, Black or other ethnic origin.
- 78% of CiC were placed within Lincolnshire on 31st March 2023.
- 67% of children were placed in foster households while 5% were in residential settings.
- The CiC numbers are predicted to remain fairly stable over the coming few years at around 720-740.



3.1. Challenges in providing placements and related services

- 3.1.1. Despite CiC numbers predicted to remain fairly stable, the Council want to ensure high-quality placements are available for those young people that need them, and it is critical to develop effective cross-functional mechanisms to support information sharing and process development.
- 3.1.2. Children's Services and relevant commissioned services work closely together to share intelligence and ensure young people are well supported. However, challenges in providing support can arise due to the scale and complexity of Children in Need (CiN), children and families open to Early Help, CiC and care leavers.
- 3.1.3. Social care teams have found positions difficult to recruit to, and some commissioned services have experience additional difficulties in staff retention, particularly as a result of the cost of living crisis which has driven people into higher paid employment. This is also reflected in children's placements, with in-house foster carer recruitment and retention being impacted and independent placements being similarly affected.
- 3.1.4. Similarly, the continued recruitment of **in-house foster carers** seeks to maintain, and ultimately increase, numbers of foster care households within Lincolnshire who are able to offer a variety of placement types including respite and short-term therapeutic placements, in addition to shorter-term and longer-term opportunities. There remains an ongoing need to source long-term and more permanent homes for CiC who are unable to return to their birth families.

- 3.1.5. The CiC Transformation Programme continues to review existing placements, both in-house and in the independent sector, through the monthly Placement Management Meetings in order to provide assurance of impact and value for money. The Valuing Care (VC) toolkit has been developed and is embedded into the Mosaic social care reporting platform as a means of highlighting children and young people's strengths and challenges.
- 3.1.6. One of the key aims of the transformation work is to place Lincolnshire CiC within county or as close as possible, as this will help the Council provide its range of effective support services to both young people and their carers.

3.2. Needs of Children in Care

- 3.2.1. Social care teams are working closely with Children's Strategic Commissioning and commissioned partners to consider the needs of young people, and where capacity is available or may be developed based on need, availability and cost.
- 3.2.2. Social care teams have seen an increase in complexity of need, alongside the rise of late entrants into care which became more evident around the start of the pandemic and has continued.
- 3.2.3. 4.6% of school age children in Lincolnshire had an EHC Plan or SEN Statement⁷ which is higher than the 3.4% seen across the East Midlands; of this, 41.2% of Lincolnshire school age children with an EHCP were Children in Care (CiC)⁸. 4% of children and young people in **Independent Non-Maintained Special Schools (INMS) placements** on 31st March 2023 were looked after⁹, and social care and SEND teams are seeing an increase in young people with SEMH difficulties requiring specialist education placements.
- 3.2.4. The level of complex and high challenging behaviours is evident across **residential children's homes**, and Lincolnshire social care want to place CiC with carers skilled in effective therapeutic care and de-escalation techniques that minimise physical interventions and support placement stability, whilst supporting the transition of some young people into foster families or on to independence.
- 3.2.5. The National Transfer Scheme (NTS) for **Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)** has impacted both capacity of placements and capacity of health and social care. Many UASC have additional support needs, having experienced trauma, separation and violence on their journey; many experience poor mental health and require significant support to access education and the wider community offer.

⁷ Source: [Local Authority Interactive Tool \(LAIT\)](#), LA Level Data, Children with SEN, % of Pupils with Statement (of SEN) or EHC Plans (all schools), 31st March 2021

⁸ Source: [Local Authority Interactive Tool \(LAIT\)](#), LA Level Data, Looked After Children, % of LAC with a SEN Statement/EHCP

⁹ Source: Lincolnshire County Council Children's Strategic Commissioning - LCCPlacements INM workbook 2022-23

3.3. Supply of placements

- 3.3.1. Many LAs are experiencing challenges in securing placements for their CiC, as in-house provision is increasingly insufficient to cope with the numbers of children and young people that require our support.
- 3.3.2. The CiC Transformation Programme aims to develop and support in-house placement capacity through ongoing recruitment of staff and carers. Lincolnshire is increasing its' number of **in-house residential children's homes** to increase the number of spaces available – these will be smaller homes that aim to transition children and young people into a foster family environment where the majority of young people are best able to thrive.
- 3.3.3. Despite having a good level of in-house foster carer numbers compared to many other LAs, Lincolnshire has seen an increased reliance on **Independent Foster Agencies (IFAs)**, use of which has increased by 182% over the past 5 years. As of 31st March 2023, 65% of placements with IFAs were in Lincolnshire, and we have seen a significant decrease in the number of IFAs offering placements for older children and those with complex behaviours.
- 3.3.4. **Supported accommodation** placements for 16 and 17 year olds are well supported through the Council's commissioned Youth Housing service (known as NEST¹⁰) which is contracted to Nacro until 31st December 2025 and delivers 72 bed spaces for CiC, care leavers and young people at risk of homelessness in Lincoln, Boston and Grantham as well as a small number of intense support houses for the most complex young people. Lincolnshire also has two in-house supported accommodation homes for CiC, supported lodgings via the Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service (see 3.7.) and a range of more specialist commissioned placements for UASC. Long-term use of Supported Accommodation has decreased, with such placements more typically being short-term transitional placements to manage complex behaviours or low-need placements outside of Lincolnshire where a young person has established networks and/or education. OFSTED are due to commence registration of supported accommodation in 2023 in line with new regulatory requirements, which may impact on the number of suppliers offering placements.
- 3.3.5. Children's Strategic Commissioning and the LCCPlacements Team manage the sourcing of independent placements, procuring them via the Open Select List¹¹ and UASC Closed Ordered List¹² and undertaking ongoing contract management and quality assurance. Commissioning Officers seek to develop mutually beneficial relationships with suppliers to maximise outcomes for Lincolnshire children and young people.

3.4. Location of placements

- 3.4.1. Lincolnshire County Council works closely with colleagues from across the East Midlands region on a range of initiatives, action groups and projects to increase access to services across the

¹⁰ Nacro Education, Support and Transition

¹¹ The Open Select List (OSL) is a procurement mechanism that manages referrals to suppliers for independent placements. Suppliers apply to join the OSL annually and are given first opportunity to respond to referrals.

¹² The UASC Closed Ordered List (UASC COL) is a procurement mechanism that manages placements for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children aged 16-17 on arrival, who are referral via the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) or are spontaneous arrivals in Lincolnshire.

region, given many CiC, where not placed within their home Local Authority (LA), are placed in bordering LAs¹³.

- 3.4.2. Lincolnshire places the majority of children and young people close to 'home' – as of 31st March 2023, 60% of independent foster placements (inc UASC), 86% of Independent Non-Maintained (Special) School (INMS) placements and 38% of independent supported accommodation placements for 16-17 year olds were in Lincolnshire or adjacent counties¹⁴. 53% of independent residential care placements were not in Lincolnshire or adjacent counties and this needs to be a real area of focus for market development.
- 3.4.3. Regional Directors of Children's Services (DCSs) meet weekly and there are various strategic groups that meet monthly to share best practice and explore solutions to emerging issues and improve intelligence about placement capacity and development. The region has worked together on a number of bids including *DfE Staying Closer Staying Connected* and the *UASC Foster Care Project*, both of which sought to develop service and support capacity for CiC and care leavers across the region.

3.5. Cost of placements

- 3.5.1. The nine East Midlands LAs have developed a regional approach to agreeing independent placement fee increase requests via the online portal which launched in 2022. The process supports LAs in reviewing placement fees, offering challenge to suppliers and sharing intelligence around contract and service quality, including any concerns.
- 3.5.2. Placement costs have steadily increased over the past 5 years; in 2017-18 the average residential cost for an independent residential children's home placement for a Lincolnshire young person was £4,038 per week and in 2022-23 this has risen to an average of £5,504 per week.
- 3.5.3. In the same period total costs for independent residential children's homes placements increased by almost 80% from £5,928,000 in 2017-18 to £8,701,219 in 2022-23; this is related to an increase in total placement numbers, which have increased over the same period (see 3.6.4.).
- 3.5.4. Suppliers have been additionally impacted due to the rising cost of utilities and other inflationary pressures, staff wages impacting on recruitment and retention and increasing complexities of behaviour and need of young people, all of which have driven up the placement cost.

3.6. Placement trends and projections

- 3.6.1. Lincolnshire is not alone in seeing a rise in late entrants into care, an increase in complex and challenging behaviours and high numbers of children and young people requiring specialist education provision.

¹³ 22% of Lincolnshire CiC placed out of county on 31st March 2023 (Source: Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services Analysis Tool (ChAT))

¹⁴ Source: Lincolnshire County Council Children's Strategic Commissioning - LCCPlacements INM workbook 2021-22

3.6.2. The 2022 Commissioning and Markets Authority (CMA) report¹⁵ stated:

The Institute for Government¹⁶ projected in its 2021 Performance Tracker that demand for children's social care would grow by around 5% between 2019-20 and 2024-25, driven by increasing demand for foster and residential placements. The Social Market Foundation¹⁷ projected that, in England, 'based on the growth seen in the last five years, we could expect that close to 77,000 children will be in foster care by 2030; an increase of more than 30% from now.'

3.6.3. Certainly over the past five years, Lincolnshire has seen a rise in numbers of CiC from 659 on 31st March 2018 to 728 on 31st March 2023, along with a rise in placement moves/breakdown¹⁸.

3.6.4. Children's Strategic Commissioning have seen a rise in independent placements in place on 31st March 2018 to those in place on 31st March 2023:

- 126% increase in independent residential children's home placements (15 to 34)
- 182% increase in independent foster care placements inc UASC (33 to 60)
- 560% increase in Independent Non-Maintained (Special) School placements (63 to 353).

3.6.5. As a result of investment in successive commissioned Youth Housing contracts (see 4.1.1.8.) and Lincolnshire's two in-house supported accommodation sites, there has been a reduction in numbers of children and young people in Intense Needs Supported Accommodation (INSA), which has seen a decrease of 38% from those in place on 31st March 2018 to 31st March 2023 (13 to 8).

3.6.6. The NTS was mandated nationally in October 2021 in response to exceptionally high numbers of UASC being accommodated by Kent and LAs on the south coast. Since then, Lincolnshire has accommodated 66 referrals to 31st March 2023, 83% of whom have been accommodated via the UASC Closed Ordered List (the remaining 17% were aged under 16 years old at point of referral and were placed with foster carers). In comparison, pre-NTS spontaneous arrival numbers averaged 20 young people per year. NTS referrals are unlikely to slow in the short-term as the Home Office continues to try to move children and young people from temporary asylum hotels as quickly as possible to Local Authority care, and small-boat arrivals continue to be a factor.

3.7. Care leavers

3.7.1. Lincolnshire County Council has commissioned Barnardo's to deliver the statutory **Leaving Care Service** for a number of years, with the most recent 5 year contract starting in 2020. There were 418 Lincolnshire care leavers on 31st March 2023 that were supported by the Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service (LLCS).

3.7.2. LLCS work closely with social care and other partners to ensure effective transition, with allocations just after 16 years old ensuring young people get to know their Leaving Care Worker early and are supported to independence.

¹⁵ Source: [Children's social care market study](#), Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), March 2022

¹⁶ Source: Institute for Government, [Performance Tracker 2021](#)

¹⁷ Source: [Fostering the Future](#), Social Market Foundation, June 2021

¹⁸ 5% of CiC experienced 3 or more placement moves in 2017-18 versus 9% of CiC in 2022-23 (Source: Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services Analysis Tool (ChAT))

- 3.7.3. As of 31st March 2023, 93% of care leavers aged 19-21 were in safe and suitable accommodation, with clear understanding of the reasons for those living in unsuitable accommodation. LLCS has a clear focus on this measure, which includes support to former-UASC care leavers requiring accommodation during their asylum process, young parents, and supported lodgings suppliers. LLCS administer the New Homes Grant on behalf of the Council, adding value to young people through care packages and practical tenancy and benefit support.
- 3.7.4. As of 31st March 2023, 50% of care leavers aged 19-21¹⁹ were in Education, Employment and Training (EET). The service supports care leavers to access EET and also supports the Care Leaver Apprenticeship Service (CLAS).

3.8. Support services

- 3.8.1. The previous Sufficiency Strategy 2018-22 identified a range of support services that were central to integrated support to CiC and care leavers, ensuring Lincolnshire children, their carers and involved professionals are able to access appropriate and high quality services:

3.8.1.1. Whilst some other Councils have reduced their **Children's Centres**, Lincolnshire recognises the importance and value of this key part of early years support to all families and has retained all 48 **Children's Centres**, which continue to be integral to offering preventative services for early years and deliver wide range of services and support to families across the county. They are open to anyone who has or cares for a child under the age of 5 years old. Lincolnshire has also been selected as one of 75 LAs to benefit from the Government's **Family Hubs and Start for Life** programme; the programme stems from clear evidence that identifying risks early and preventing problems from escalating means better long-term outcomes for children and their families. Family Hubs provide high-quality, joined-up, whole-family support services from conception, through a child's early years until they reach the age of 19 (or 25 for young people with SEND).

3.8.1.2. Through the Council's **Early Help Strategy**, the early help front door is embedded into social care practice, resulting in consistency in decision making, allocations and use of resources. Children and young people and their families are offered targeted clear support as early as possible, successfully preventing the need for statutory interventions and diverting many young people away from entering the care system, as well as providing the support they and their families need to thrive. On 31st March 2023, there were 4821 cases open to Early Help which is an increase of almost 300% (1615) from March 2022. There were also 704 incoming requests²⁰ in the same month; trend data highlights that requests for support increase during the longer school holidays in December, April and August.

3.8.1.3. The Council has commissioned **Behaviour Outreach Support Service (BOSS)** and the **Autism Learning Difficulties Service** (*known as the **Working Together Team***) on behalf

¹⁹ Based on a cohort of 210 care leavers

²⁰ Source: LCC March 2023 Summary Performance Report, Early Help Request Data, MOSAIC

of Lincolnshire schools and academies since 2016 as part of the Inclusive Lincolnshire Strategy. A commissioning review of both services commenced in February 2020 prior to the previous agreements for the services coming to an end in August 2022. The new re-commissioned services offer robust training and workshops primarily to Lincolnshire mainstream schools and academies, and parents/carers. Both services also have a strong focus on early intervention and prevention, building resilience across Lincolnshire mainstream schools and academies, increasing inclusion and promoting a collective responsibility to improving Lincolnshire pupils' social, emotional wellbeing and mental health concerns.

- 3.8.1.4. **Safe Families for Children** have been commissioned to provide support to families whose children are on the edge of care, utilising approved volunteers to help stabilise the family dynamic through befriending, mentoring and positive role-modelling, aiming to lower the risk of abuse and neglect and reduce the number of children and young people taken into care.
- 3.8.1.5. Following a successful pilot, **Future 4 Me (F4Me)** was established as a permanent service in 2018. The F4Me service supports adolescents on the edge of care through a recognised profile of need linked to support around emotional wellbeing, missing and exploitation, substance misuse, and criminal behaviour. A strong focus on early intervention and timely support to avoid children entering the criminal justice system is provided by the **Joint Diversionary Panel (JDP)**²¹. F4Me includes social workers, police and probation officers, and education mentors. In addition, a dedicated complex needs health team is embedded in the service and is funded through NHS England (Health and Justice) to develop individualised support packages and provide psychology-based trauma-informed consultation to the wider staff team. F4Me work with partners from the Police, Probation, Courts, District Councils, and Health to support young people more holistically. The **Restoring Family Relationships Team** focus on working with families in times of conflict or family breakdown to ensure, where possible, relationships are restored, and young people remain within their families where it is safe and appropriate to do so. In April 2023, an inspection of Future4Me by the youth justice Inspectorate His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) rated the service as **Outstanding**.
- 3.8.1.6. Children and young people who are experiencing difficulties or concerns with their **mental health and wellbeing**, their families and the professionals working with them are able to access information about the support available from a variety of universally available local services via the online **Emotional Health and Wellbeing Pathway**. Lincolnshire commissions Children and Young People's Mental Health (CYPMH) services that span the spectrum of emotional wellbeing and mental health needs from prevention and early intervention to specialist and crisis mental health services. To ensure that young people and their families get the right support at the right time, by the right team, all routine referrals are triaged and/or screened by practitioners in the

²¹ First time entrants in Lincolnshire for the period January 2022 to December 2022 were 107 per 100,000 10-17 year olds; this compares to 171 per 100,000 in the East Midlands and 149 in England in the same period.

Children and Young People Access Team. The [Here4You Line](#) provides the opportunity to speak directly to a mental health practitioner who can discuss how a young person is feeling or presenting and explore which services are best suited to help. Young people and parents can also self-refer via the Here4You Line. [Healthy Minds Lincolnshire](#) provides emotional wellbeing support to children and young people up to 19 years old (25 if special educational needs/disability or care leavers). [Mental Health Support Teams](#) are being rolled out across the most deprived areas of the county to work in education settings, and [CAMHS \(Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service\)](#) supports those young people with moderate to severe mental health needs. There is also a community crisis service with on call support available 24/7. Lincolnshire Children's Services, health services and key partner agencies have a trauma-informed approach to working with young people.

- 3.8.1.7. Lincolnshire's commissioned **Domestic Abuse Support Service** delivers outreach support for adults who have experienced domestic abuse, therapeutic sessions for children and young people who have experienced or witnessed domestic abuse, professional resources and refuge support. The new [Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse website](#) launched in January 2023 with a range of resources and information for adults, children and young people who are either being abused or are using abusive behaviour, to offer support and advice, and signpost them to services locally and nationally.
- 3.8.1.8. Work is ongoing with the Lincolnshire's Regional Adoption Agency (RAA), Family Adoption Links, which was launched in October 2020 with regional partners to determine which services could be jointly developed or commissioned to offer pre- and post-adoption support to birth and adoptive parents. Lincolnshire now delivers post-adoption support to adoptive parents in-house and has commissioned [Pac-UK](#) to deliver statutory **Birth Counselling** services to birth parents and families whose children have been placed for adoption.
- 3.8.1.9. It is important that we listen to the views of children and young people but recognise sometimes they may benefit from an independent advocate who can help them to articulate what they want and how they may feel about things. Following a service review, [Voiceability](#) were commissioned to deliver a range of **advocacy services** including for CiC and child protection advocacy.
- 3.8.1.10. **Caring2Learn (C2L)** has been embedded into Children's Services delivery and sits within the Fostering Service and the Virtual School. [Caring2Learn](#) continues to develop effective networks with schools and foster carers, delivering evidence-based good practice models and a highly valued training programme for schools, carers and Children's Services staff. The Fostering Service and the Virtual School continue to promote the Caring2Learn Award for Caring Schools and Learning Homes and is further developing the Foster Care Champions network which provides peer support to fostering households. The Virtual School has developed a bespoke training package to support schools and designated teachers to nurture and promote wellbeing and attachment and improve educational outcomes for CiC.

- 3.8.1.11. CiC and care leavers are more likely to have lower educational attainment than other young people and, whilst Lincolnshire young people have performed comparably well, there are indications that the impact of the pandemic and disruption to almost two years of school has had an adverse effect over the entire school age cohort. The **Virtual School** and **SEND** colleagues work closely with the Education team to enhance provision and develop strong relationships with individual school settings to overcome some of these attainment barriers and increase educational resilience and aspiration.
- 3.8.1.12. The commissioned **We Are With You** service for young people under 18 years old who are worried about their or someone else's drug or alcohol use offers a free online chat and telephone service, with a comprehensive website offering a range of advice and information. The We Are With You service has a strong **social media presence** to deliver their safety messages and attend a variety of outreach events. In the 2022-23 academic year they delivered to approximately 19,500 students in Lincolnshire secondary schools and alternative education provisions, as well as 'What's In The Box?' sessions on substance misuse to 3688 children in Year 6 at primary school. Online learning modules are available on request for students not attending school, including those who are home-schooled. Substance misuse services for adults (18 year old and over) are located in Lincoln, Boston, Grantham, Spalding and Skegness, as well as at HMP Lincoln.
- 3.8.1.13. **Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (LSCP)** is a statutory multi-agency partnership that has identified a number of strategic priorities for 2022-2025 which cover a range of safeguarding and welfare issues that face children and young people in Lincolnshire. They include exploitation, neglect, emotional wellbeing, healthy relationships, and sexual and physical harm. Through the work of the sub-groups, partners collaborate on multi-agency audits, design campaigns and develop and review training, policies and procedures to support practitioners in their work. **LSCP's** comprehensive 6-year training pathway is available for all statutory and non-statutory partners, including Children's Services staff. On a three year cycle, the LSCP seeks assurance from all partners, and any services they commission, on their compliance with section 11 of the Children's Act 2004.
- 3.8.1.14. **Workforce development** for social care and SEND staff development and progression is highly valued in Lincolnshire, with clear training and learning pathways to develop good practice, explore new thinking and build confidence. Supplier development is similarly critical; through strong relational commissioning, the Children's Strategic Commissioning Team is proactive in supporting suppliers to develop their skills and knowledge as a way of promoting the Council's aspirations and priority outcomes for CiC and care leavers.
- 3.8.1.15. Information on available services and general advice and support for Lincolnshire families and young people have been enhanced through the on-line **Family Services Directory (FSD)**, which incorporates the **Care Leaver Local Offer** and an extensive section on Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (see 3.8.1.15.). In addition the **SEND Local Offer** has a wide range of information to support families with children with disabilities and SEND.

3.8.1.16. The previously commissioned **Return Interview Service** was brought in-house from 1st April 2018. Subsequent review of protocols and processes with all stakeholders have seen an increase in return interviews following a missing episode, with an average of 98% of young people accepting the offer of a return interview throughout 2022-23. Young people, their families or placement suppliers are subsequently offered appropriate advice, including referrals to support services.

4. Lincolnshire priorities for 2023-27

4.1. Operational improvements identified in the previous Sufficiency Strategy 2018-22

4.1.1. The previous Sufficiency Strategy 2018-22 identified a number of improvements to delivery and practice that would positively impact on wider social care support for Lincolnshire children and young people, including the commissioning of key support services:

4.1.1.1. The DfE **Partners in Practice (PiP)** programme was an initiative that aimed to develop effective partnerships between local and central governments. Lincolnshire's PiP work resulted in 5 main projects: embedding the Signs of Safety model including Restorative Practice; review and redesign of Early Help support; sector-led improvement; the development of the Future 4 Me (F4Me) and Caring2Learn (C2L) service; and the development of the children's social care workforce. The 2020 evaluation²² of the programme found '*largely encouraging findings and areas of added value*'; much of the work of PiP has now been embedded into day-to-day delivery and practice, overseen by the Quality and Standards Team, and has further led into the CiC Transformation programme (see 1.7.). The DfE Sector-Led Improvement Partnership (SLIP) is continuing, with Lincolnshire a key partner in providing high-intensity support to other LAs.

4.1.1.2. The value and role of **Kinship Carers** is recognised and these carers receive the same level of supervision, support and training as all other approved foster carers. Exploring and capitalising on the family network can be hugely beneficial for children whose carers are supported to understand the challenges these children face, with a range of financial, practical and emotional support available to manage the difficult feelings and relationships that are unique to kinship care. Support from social care teams continues to be vital in unlocking the potential of family networks, including Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs) which continue to be a significant permanence option for CiC.

4.1.1.3. Due to increasing local and national demand, existing arrangements regarding the **Lincolnshire Secure Unit (LSU)** were reviewed with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). The review resulted in the recommissioning of a 5-year contract in 2019. Work is ongoing with the DfE on a new purpose-built 24-bed secure children's home, with an additional 4-bed step-down bed spaces. Funding has been approved to take this project through to planning which is due in mid-July 2023 with a view to work starting on site in early 2024. The home is expected to open in early 2026.

4.1.1.4. A full service review of the statutory **Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service** was carried out in 2018-19; extensive service user and stakeholder engagement resulted in a service redesign which included earlier allocation at 16, twin tracking with social care and enhancement of specific service elements. Barnardo's were awarded 5-year contract in 2020 to deliver the service, and have continued to add significant value, including accommodation and Education, Employment and Training (EET) workers, specialist

²² [Lincolnshire Partners in Practice Programme Evaluation](#), March 2020

support to former-UASC care leavers, an embedded Mental Health Worker post through LPFT, emotional wellbeing workers and management of Supported Lodgings suppliers. The service will again be reviewed in 2023 to consider the model from April 2025.

- 4.1.1.5. Children's Strategic Commissioning successfully implemented the **Open Select List (OSL)** procurement process in 2017, which facilitates the compliant procurement of placements for CYP in independent residential care, independent foster care, supported accommodation and Independent Non-Maintained (Special) Schools²³. The OSL re-opens annually to allow new suppliers to join and has been effective in the management of placement referrals to the independent market. Subsequent OSLs were created in 2020 for Domiciliary Care, Alternative Provision (to support Interim Home Tuition) and CWD Short Breaks and were incorporated into the new 5-year OSL cycle which opened in 2022 with updated service specifications and Terms and Conditions for each of the seven strands.
- 4.1.1.6. Ongoing placement and contract management is one of the key priorities of the Children in Care (CiC) Transformation Programme (see 1.7.) and has resulted in the Valuing Care (VC) toolkit for mapping strengths and needs of Lincolnshire CiC to better support placement matching, along with the Placements Management Meeting (PMM) and strengthened protocols with the in-house Foster Duty Desk.
- 4.1.1.7. The **Closed Ordered List for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC COL)** was commissioned in 2018 to facilitate the timely accommodation of spontaneous arrivals of unaccompanied 16-17 year olds. Suppliers have close working relationships with both social care and Leaving Care teams, and young people are well supported to access health and community services, education and legal representation. The UASC COL was reviewed in 2021-22 and a new 5-year contract was recommissioned in 2022 with updated service specification and Terms and Conditions. Additional capacity created through the new contract is essential to manage the increase in UASC referred to Lincolnshire through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS).
- 4.1.1.8. Lincolnshire's commissioned **Youth Housing service** was redesigned in 2019 and a 5-year contract was awarded to Nacro. The start of the contract was delayed to 1st January 2021 due to the impact of Covid on accommodation readiness, government guidance that young people should not needlessly move placement, and recruitment difficulties. The service has continued to evolve and now incorporates the Care Leaver Homelessness Prevention Project, via grant funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).
- 4.1.1.9. The Corporate Parenting Manager (CPM) has worked with key partners including District Councils and Adult accommodation suppliers to develop effective pathways, including a county-wide housing protocol and agreement to local connection for Lincolnshire care

²³ When it opened in 2017, the OSL included 4 strands: independent residential children's homes, independent foster care (IFAs), Independent Non-Maintained (Special) Schools (INMS) and Intense Needs Supported Accommodation (INSA, now Supported Accommodation).

leavers in any part of the Local Authority (LA) area. The CPM has also developed onward housing options for former-UASC care leavers leaving supported accommodation.

4.2. Strategic priorities for 2023-27

- 4.2.1. Lincolnshire children and young people that may need support, be they CiC, care leavers, young people at risk of homelessness or young people on the edge of care, deserve strong, outcomes-focused and enabling services that offer appropriate challenge and nurture to support our young people to develop the skills and resilience for adult life and independence.
- 4.2.2. These aims are reflected nationally in the emerging children's social care reforms detailed in the **Stable Homes, Built on Love** implementation strategy and consultation report, and within Lincolnshire's Children's Services transformation programmes (see 2.1.5.)
- 4.2.3. Following the review of the 2018-22 Sufficiency Strategy, including where services and support have been embedded into current delivery (see 3.8.) and where identified aims have been completed (see 4.1.), the Council have identified **five key priority areas** for the 2023-27 Sufficiency Strategy:
 - **In-house regulated placements**
 - **Independent regulated placements**
 - **Supported accommodation**
 - **Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)**
 - **Care leavers**
- 4.2.4. Each of the priorities has a number of current issues and targeted actions which are detailed in the **Children in Care Sufficiency Action Plan** (see *Appendix A1*); these will be reported on annually and will inform the review and update of the Council's **Market Position Statement** (see *Appendix A2*).

Appendix A

A1 Children in Care Sufficiency Strategy Action Plan

Progress against the identified **Strategic Priorities for 2023-27** will be reported annually to the Council's Corporate Parenting Panel in July of each year from 2024 and will inform the development of the annual **Market Position Statement** (see *Appendix A2*) which will be published on the Council website.

	Category/service	Priorities	What needs to happen	Progress
1	In-house regulated placements	i	- Review of foster care support and benefits to support retention - Programme of foster carer recruitment including succession planning as older foster carers retire - Foster carer training package including digital offer and Caring2Learn (C2L) - Recruitment of carers for particular groups of young people e.g. UASC, parent and child, teenagers with challenging behaviour - Consistent, high quality support to foster carers by social workers	<i>To be reported annually</i>
		ii	- Develop information sharing protocols between service areas - Information shared at Placement Management Meeting (PMM) to support placement decisions - Continue to support information sharing with in-house Foster Duty Desk and LCCPlacements	<i>To be reported annually</i>
		iii	- Review of CYP placed in-house to consider if a move to foster placements would be suitable (in-house or independent) - Review of in-house residential children's homes to ensure they meet the needs of our CiC cohort - Opening of two new residential children's homes in 2023 - Recruitment of high-quality staff including bank and relief staff to ensure workforce is flexible and has sufficient capacity - Monitor occupancy levels to ensure in-house placements are utilised effectively to maximise outcomes	<i>To be reported annually</i>

		iv	Capacity within the secure estate is sufficient to meet CYP needs	- Review and renegotiate the Lincolnshire Secure Unit (LSU) contract with Ministry of Justice (MoJ) in 2026 - Commence building the new 24-bed secure children's home - Lincolnshire CYP are able to access in-county secure accommodation when needed - CYP in secure estate are supported effectively to return to 'mainstream' placements - CYP with Deprivation of Liberty orders (DoLS) are accommodated in safe and suitable placements	<i>To be reported annually</i>
2	Independent regulated placements	i	Independent regulated placements are effective and meet CYP needs	- Annual re-opening of the Open Select List to increase numbers of pre-approved suppliers - LCCPlacements team are well-resourced to support service areas with referrals and contract arrangements - Develop relationships with suppliers to negotiate block contracts and block commissioning arrangements, and enhance knowledge of vacancies and new local provision - Children's Services placement management oversight (in-house and independent) to seek to bring most Lincolnshire CYP back into Lincolnshire-based placements	<i>To be reported annually</i>
		ii	Independent regulated placements offer Value for Money (VfM)	- Sustainable fee increases are agreed with suppliers through the regional panel - Full-cohort oversight of placements in line with the aims of the Children in Care (CiC) transformation programme - Review INMS placements with SEND team to ensure suitability and management of referrals, and look to develop a placements overview forum to consider placement demand, capacity and needs trends - Appropriate challenge to placement packages including support and cost reduction, and effective step-down or transition	<i>To be reported annually</i>
		iii	Placements for late entrants into care with complex behaviours deliver high outcomes	- Ongoing development of placement referral form to ensure young people are represented clearly and positively - Suppliers are upskilled in a range of de-escalation techniques and management of complex behaviours	<i>To be reported annually</i>

				Develop effective step-down referral route into in-house supported accommodation and commissioned Youth Housing service	
		iv	Children with Disabilities (CWD) are supported to access appropriate SEND services	- Development of supplier relationships to increase access to high-quality and effective SEND services - Commissioning of CWD Support Services including Early Support and Learning Provision, Targeted Positive Activities, and Domiciliary Care - Commissioning of Alternative Provision, Domiciliary Care and CWD Short Breaks through the Open Select List provides VfM - Open Select List for SEND services re-opens annually to develop supplier numbers	<i>To be reported annually</i>
3	Supported accommodation	i	Numbers of young people in Supported Accommodation are low	- Commissioned Youth Housing contract continues to deliver VfM and high outcomes through their intensive support placements - Young people are accommodated in-house where appropriate	<i>To be reported annually</i>
		ii	Care leavers and young people aged 16-17 at risk of homelessness are supported to access suitable accommodation	- Effective contract management and appropriate challenge to supported accommodation suppliers to be effective in reducing placement packages - Deliver a well-resourced Youth Housing service - Review existing commissioned Youth Housing service to determine delivery from January 2026 - Young people are supported to access education, employment or training (EET) to increase future opportunities and independence - Joined-up access to move-on options e.g. adult accommodation, Intense Housing Management (IHM) accommodation, specialist accommodation - Maintain and develop links with District Councils and other housing suppliers	<i>To be reported annually</i>
		iii	Supported accommodation suppliers are registered with OFSTED	- Supported accommodation suppliers register with OFSTED in good time to ensure placements are made in line with regulations - In-house supported accommodation is registered with OFSTED - Supported accommodation contract is reviewed to ensure new regulations are reflected in our service specification and Terms and Conditions	<i>To be reported annually</i>
4	Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)	i	UASC are placed in high quality, culturally appropriate placements that meet their specific support needs	- UASC Closed Ordered List and the Open Select List continue to deliver capacity and timely response to UASC arrivals - Other suppliers are upskilled to be able to offer support to UASC - UASC are supported to access EET soon after they become CiC	<i>To be reported annually</i>

				- Targeted use of Home Office Annex A grant to support service capacity - Ongoing development of in-house, commissioned and community support to the UASC cohort	
		ii	Former-UASC care leavers are supported effectively and are accommodated in high quality suitable accommodation	- Effective links with the Home Office and legal representatives result in timely asylum decisions - Former-UASC care leavers are supported to remain in EET whilst they await their asylum claim outcome - Maintain and develop suitable accommodation options for former-UASC care leavers awaiting a decision on their asylum claim - Establish clear and affordable move-on options for the cohort	<i>To be reported annually</i>
5	Care leavers	i	Deliver an effective and appropriately resourced Leaving Care Service	- Review existing commissioned Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service to determine delivery from April 2025 - Consistently high numbers of care leavers in suitable and safe accommodation - Care leavers are supported to access education, employment or training (EET) to increase future opportunities and independence - Work with local and regional partners to embed care leaver local connection entitlement - Supported Lodgings are developed and supported - Targeted use of Rent Gap agreements to support care leavers experiencing short-term financial difficulties - District Councils offering priority for housing for care leavers including Council Tax relief - Ongoing development of the Care Leaver Local Offer and social media communications/platforms	<i>To be reported annually</i>
		ii	Care leavers are well equipped for independence by the age of 21 as they step down from full service	- Care leavers have the resources and skills to manage their own accommodation needs, have good mental health, have supportive networks and relationships and are financially secure - Develop mechanisms to enable care leavers to remain close to, or in contact with, networks and areas of their choosing - Links with other LAs re: Local Connection and reciprocal support for care leavers	<i>To be reported annually</i>

A2 Market Position Statement 2023-24

The Market Position Statement 2023-24 can be considered a starting point for the Sufficiency Strategy 2023-27, providing a baseline for future updates.

The Market Position Statement 2023-24 is available on the [Lincolnshire County Council website](#) and will be refreshed annually following the annual review of progress against the Key Priorities (*see section 4*) using the Action Plan template (*Appendix A1*).

Appendix B

B1 Glossary of Acronyms

C2L	Caring to Learn / Caring2Learn
CAMHS	Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group – <i>now Integrated Commissioning Board</i>
ChAT	Children’s Services Analysis Tool
CiC	Children in Care - <i>formerly referred to as Looked After Children (LAC)</i>
CiN	Child(ren) in Need
CLAS	Care Leaver Apprenticeship Scheme
CMA	Competition and Markets Authority
COL	Closed Ordered List
CPM	Corporate Parenting Manager
CQC	Care Quality Commission
CWD	Child(ren) with a Disability
CYP	Children and Young People
DCS	Director(s) of Children’s Services
DfE	Department for Education
DLUHC	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
DOLs	Deprivation of Liberty Order(s)
EET	Education, Employment or Training
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
F4Me	Future4Me
FSD	Family Services Directory
HMIP	His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation
HML	Healthy Minds Lincolnshire
ICB	Integrated Care Board
IFA(s)	Independent Fostering Agency(ies)
IHM	Intense Housing Management
INMS	Independent Non-Maintained (Special) Schools
INSA	Intense Needs Supported Accommodation
JDP	Joint Diversionary Panel
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
LA(s)	Local Authority(ies)

LAC	Looked After Child(ren) – <i>now referred to as Children in Care (CiC)</i>
LAIT	Local Authority Interactive Tool
LCC	Lincolnshire County Council
LLCS	Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service
LPFT	Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust (NHS)
LSCP	Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership
LSU	Lincolnshire Secure Unit
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
NEST	Nacro Education Support and Transition (commissioned Youth Housing contact)
NTS	National Transfer Scheme for UASC
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
OSL	Open Select List
PiP	Partners in Practice
PMM	Placement Management Meeting
RAA	Regional Adoption Agency
RCC	Regional Care Co-Operative(s)
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
SGO	Special Guardianship Order
SLIP	Sector-Led Improvement Partnership
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child(ren)
UASC COL	UASC Closed Ordered List
V4C	Voices for Choices
VC	Valuing Care
VfM	Value for Money

Children's Strategic Commissioning

Children's Services Independent Placements

Market Position Statement 2023-24

Executive Summary

Lincolnshire County Council's Market Position Statement 2023-24 accompanies the Council's Sufficiency Strategy 2023-27 and will be updated annually to highlight changes in placement demand for Lincolnshire Children in Care (CiC) and children and young people requiring independent (special) school placements.

The Council hopes the Market Position Statement will serve as a tool for independent providers, detailing the placements and services we need for our children and young people.

The Council wants to work in partnership with independent placement providers, especially those in Lincolnshire or in directly adjacent counties, and wants to increase supply across all our independent placement strands.

One of the things we wish to explore during 2023-24 is the block commissioning of placements, and we would like to start a dialogue with providers who are interested in working more closely with us and provide high quality placements for Lincolnshire young people that are as close to home and existing communities as possible.

By working closely with providers in the independent sector, Lincolnshire County Council aims to unlock capacity and develop effective relationships that will be transformational for our children and young people, and we would very much like to hear from you if you would like to be part of the conversation.

Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services is keen to build relationships with independent providers of accommodation and education for children in care, care leavers and children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans.

Through this Market Position Statement we will set out the needs of our children and young people, our vision for the support we would like them to receive and how we plan to work in partnership with the independent market through the effective and appropriate use of independent placements.

In Lincolnshire, the Council's Children's Commissioning Team supports Children's social care and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) teams to broker placements in independent accommodation for Lincolnshire Children in Care (CiC) and independent education for children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

Placements are made when in-house provision cannot meet the specific needs of a child including where there may not be capacity.

Lincolnshire services

Lincolnshire County Council's Children's Services directorate is highly regarded and prides itself on being an innovative service with integrated health services that means we can wrap multi-disciplinary support around children and young people to meet their needs.

The Council has continued to invest in preventative and early intervention services and so there is a rich offer of early help.

The Council is also the lead commissioner of mental health services in Lincolnshire, on behalf of the local Integrated Care Board, and this enables us to wrap local mental health expertise into both in-house and commissioned provider services.

Lincolnshire children and young people at the end of March 2023:

391 children and young people with a 'Child Protection' (CP) plan

728 Children in Care (CiC)

6968 children and young people with an EHCP

418 care leavers

Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services
is rated **Outstanding** by OFSTED.

We take great pride in our innovative and
highly skilled workforce who deliver excellent
services to Lincolnshire children, young
people and families.

Lincolnshire demographics

Lincolnshire is the fourth largest county in England with diverse communities dispersed across a large and diverse, predominantly rural landscape. Approximately 21.5% of the total population is aged 0-19 years (163,550), of which 16.4% (124,565) are school aged.

Area	Total Population	0-19 Population	5-19 Population	0-19 % Population	5-19 % Population
East Lindsey	141727	26496	20308	18.7%	14.3%
Boston	70173	16199	11949	23.1%	17.0%
South Holland	95019	20223	15091	21.3%	15.9%
Boston and South Holland	165192	36422	27040	22.0%	16.4%
Lincoln	99299	23596	18085	23.8%	18.2%
West Lindsey	95667	20194	15489	21.1%	16.2%
Lincoln and West Lindsey	194966	43790	33574	22.5%	17.2%
North Kesteven	116915	24907	19032	21.3%	16.3%
South Kesteven	142424	31935	24611	22.4%	17.3%
North and South Kesteven	259339	56842	43643	21.9%	16.8%
Total Lincolnshire	761224	163550	124565	21.5%	16.4%

Source:
Office of National
Statistics (ONS)
mid-2020
population
estimates

Based on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019, 6.7% of Lincolnshire's population live in the 10% most deprived areas of England.

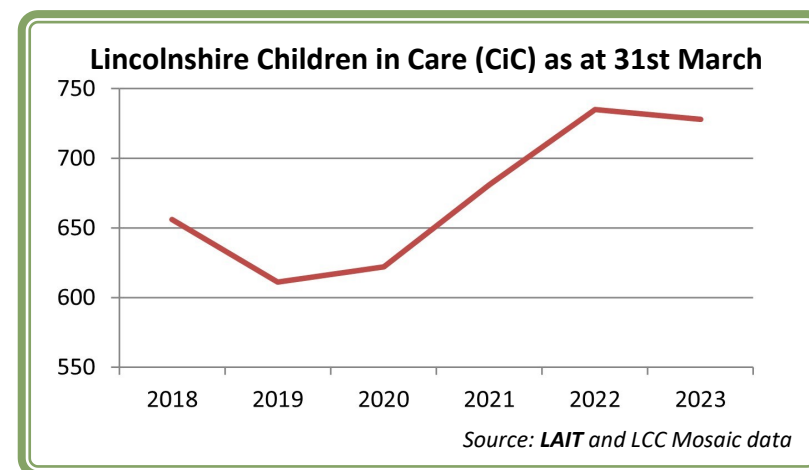
Lincolnshire Children in Care (CiC) numbers

As is the case nationally, the number of CiC has increased over the past 3-4 years and the support these children and young people require is more complex and intense.

The Council is seeing an increasing need for a strong and effective therapeutic approach in both our in-house and independent placements to support these children and young people in the best way possible.

We are seeing children entering care at an older age. We would like placements that can offer step down options which may include a return back home, move to a foster family or independence.

We are keen to grow capacity in Lincolnshire or as close to the county as possible because this means we can work together with providers to wrap other support services around children and young people. We can also look at building strong partnerships and benefit from sharing our resources such as joint matching, joint training and providing enhanced staffing if a young person is struggling.





Placement planning

Lincolnshire County Council's in-house provision for CiC includes residential children's homes, foster carers and unregulated supported accommodation for 16+ year olds.

We also commission our Youth Housing Service and our Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service (who manage supported lodgings providers).

Lincolnshire County Council always tries to explore in-house options first as we want children to live in Lincolnshire as close to home and their support networks as possible. We also recognise that we need high quality independent providers to work with us to meet both demand and the needs of the child or young person.

Valuing Care

Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services has embarked upon an ambitious CiC Transformation Programme.

Our key goals are to:

- reduce the need for statutory intervention in families lives, by providing the right help to the right children at the right time and for the right duration;
- support families to build on their existing support networks in order to implement their own solutions;
- improve outcomes for Lincolnshire children and young people, by providing care locally within the county rather than care at a distance, to keep them within their own communities where they can be close to their networks.

The Council wants to work more proactively in partnership with independent providers and we would like to continue to build and strengthen relationships with local providers and carers in Lincolnshire.

The Council appreciates there may be times where a placement outside of Lincolnshire is still the best match for a child, especially if it means they can live in a family.

Valuing Care has a number of live workstreams, all focused on different aspects of improving placements for CiC.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) transformation programme

Lincolnshire County Council's **SEND High Needs Strategy 2021-2023** sets out our aims and strategic direction to ensure that children and young people with SEND in Lincolnshire are supported to achieve the best possible outcomes in school and in life.

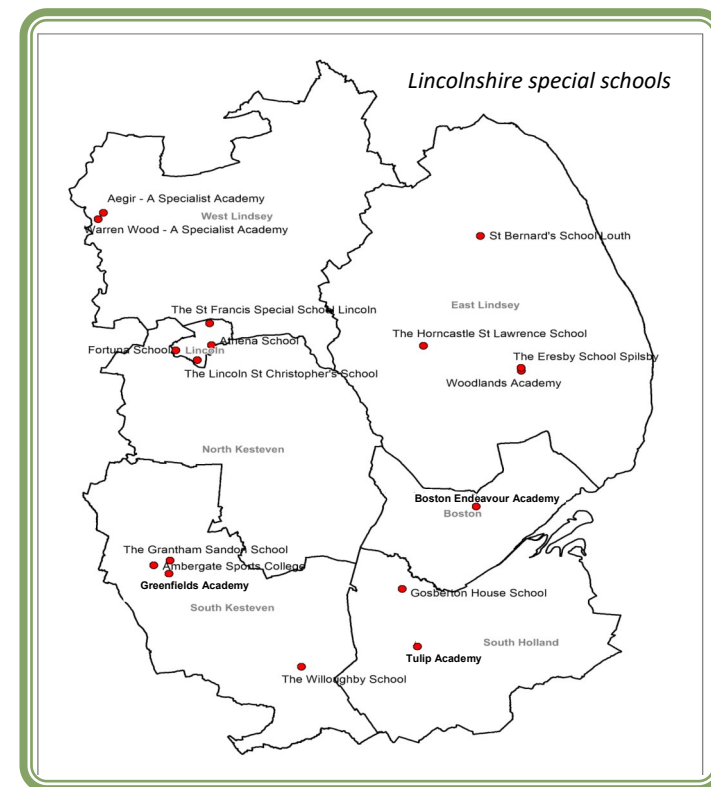
Partners in education, social care and health are committed to working together to establish an integrated school system where children and young people get the right health, care and education, in the right place, at the right time and are able to transition to adulthood and independence when they are ready to do so.

This includes embedding the graduated approach/Inclusion Toolkit and understanding of the support available in Lincolnshire; schools work with families to ensure the home environment reflects the support in school; services will wrap round a child in an inclusive way, reducing school exclusions in recognition that behaviour is a communication of need; and we will have high aspirations for our children and young people with additional needs (higher academic achievement, increased personal resilience, increased socialisation and more resilient adults after education).

Lincolnshire is also strengthening Lincolnshire's **SEND Local Offer**, investing in workforce development, strengthening key times of transitions and facilitating appropriate transitions from special to mainstream schools when access to specialist provision is no longer needed.

Lincolnshire special schools are being redesigned to be all-needs schools, with new special schools for Boston, Lincoln and Spalding. The changes will increase school numbers by 500 places, and should be complete by September 2023.

Nevertheless, there will continue to be a need for independent special school placements due to capacity or the particular needs of the child or young person.



Valuing SEND

The Valuing SEND tool is being utilised to map children and young people's educational strengths and needs in the five key domains of: communication and interaction; cognition and learning; social, emotional and mental health; sensory and physical; and independence.

The tool has been designed for use for any child/ young person with additional needs, from birth through to age 25. Consistent use of this tool will allow a clear picture of how needs change over time, both for the individual child or young person, and for the setting as a whole.

Independent Foster Care Placements

Lincolnshire's aims

The Council want an increased choice of foster care placements based within Lincolnshire to be able to support children with complex needs, reducing the number of out-of-county placements made through necessity rather than choice.

The Council wants to plan foster care placements, identifying children we feel would thrive in a family environment and support both them and their carers with a well-planned transition, and work with Independent Foster Agencies (IFAs) to support resilient and effective placements that meet the needs of our children.



In-house provision and capacity

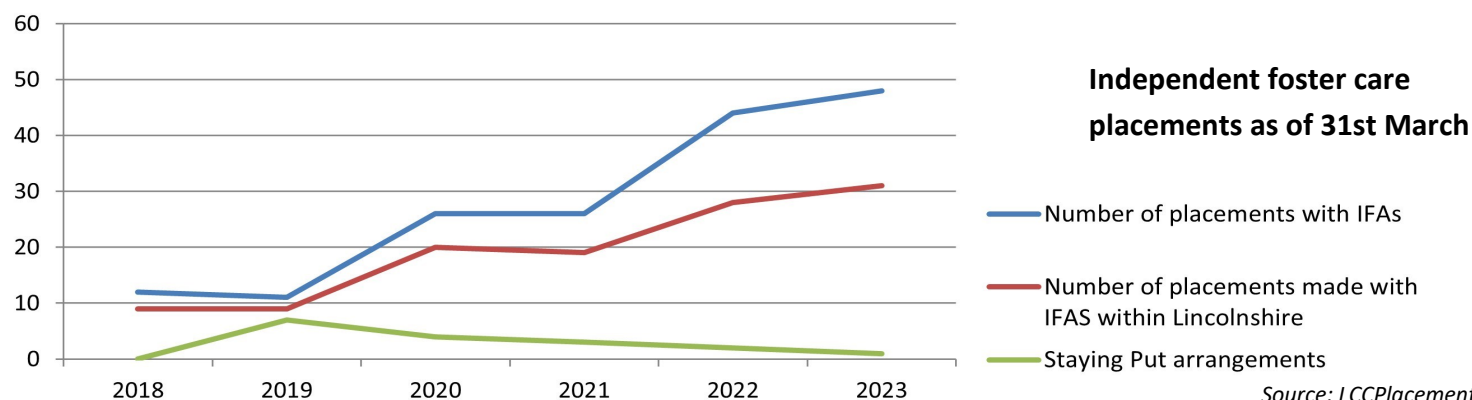
In comparison to other Local Authorities, Lincolnshire County Council have a very high proportion of in-house foster carers. They are highly trained, well supported and very well used.

The increase in both CiC numbers and children and young people coming into care with more complex needs has reduced our in-house foster care capacity, resulting in more children and young people being placed with IFAs.

Current issues

Due to the rise in older children coming into care, Lincolnshire, along with many other Local Authorities, have seen a decrease in foster carers willing or with the experience to take older children or those with more complex needs.

Some IFAs new to Lincolnshire may be developing their networks within our area and may be building the number of foster carers that they have available.



Source: LCCPlacements data

Independent Foster Care Placements *cont.*

Building relationships

Lincolnshire County Council wants to build strong relationships with IFAs who are proactive and creative in working with us, finding solutions to maintain placement stability, including the development of programmes and care plans that, if appropriate, will support the individual child to achieve permanence.

The Council wants to work closely with IFA's that provide appropriate support to their foster carers, including a wide range of training and support, a peer network of other carers and access to respite when required.

The Council wants to develop our awareness of Lincolnshire foster carers as, by placing more young people in-county, we can offer wraparound services and targeted support to the whole family and support placement stability.

Parent and Child

The Council has occasional need for independent foster carers able to offer a Parent and Child assessment placement for up to 12 weeks.

These foster carers need to provide a homely environment, effective support and guide the parent to independently care for themselves and their child and provide assurance of safe parenting post-placement.

Staying Put

Lincolnshire County Council wants to offer our children and young people the opportunity to remain with their foster carers under **Staying Put** arrangements. As such, we want to place our children and young people with foster carers who are willing to support the child placed with them, as they would their own, beyond 18.

What we need...

Lincolnshire County Council believes children and young people thrive best in a family environment; sadly older or children with more complex needs are often harder to place in foster care.

Lincolnshire children and young people need independent foster carers who are resilient when faced with challenging behaviour issues and who are skilled in de-escalation techniques.

The Council want to place with independent foster carers who are trained to understand childhood trauma, risks of absconding, risk of CSE, criminal exploitation, challenging behaviours and learning disability and autism.

The Council wants our children and young people to maintain contact with family and friends wherever possible, including reunification with families when safe and appropriate, so whilst Lincolnshire believe long-term, planned placements are best and most effective for the majority of our children and young people, for others foster care is just one part of their care journey.

Lincolnshire County Council therefore also values independent foster carers who are able to offer short-term, respite or emergency placements, as well as those that can take sibling groups and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children under 16 years old.

Lincolnshire County Council needs independent foster carers that have the flexibility and understanding to be able to support children who have reduced school timetables/attendance and who may be excluded from school.

Residential Children's Homes

In-house provision and capacity

Lincolnshire has four in-house residential children's homes spread across the county, supporting a total of twenty-nine children and young people aged 5 to 18 years, plus two residential respite homes for children with disabilities. Two new homes will open in 2023 and 2024 for a further ten young people.

Most are for children with a mix of ages and abilities, apart from The Beacon in Grantham which specialises in supporting children and young people with disabilities. Lincolnshire are currently developing two new children's homes which are due to open in 2023 and early 2024.

Lincolnshire seeks to broker independent residential placements where in-house provision cannot meet the specific needs of a child including where there may not be capacity.

Secure placements

Lincolnshire Secure Unit (LSU) has one welfare bed which, subject to Court approval, can be used for very complex young people exhibiting high risk behaviours, though secure placements can be made across the UK where there are vacancies. The DfE has approved funding for a new purpose-build 28-bed secure children's home and planning is now underway.

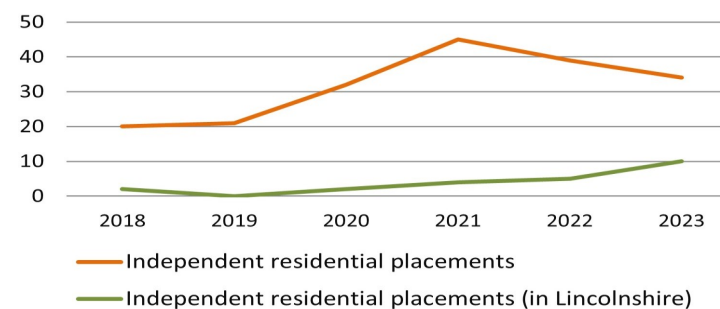
Lincolnshire's aims

We want to build strong relationships with independent residential providers who are able to offer positive outcomes for our children and young people who require complex care packages at the highest end of the continuum of need.

Working together, we strive to achieve the outcomes for our children and young people to enable them to return home or transition to either foster families or to independence.

We want to develop our links to Lincolnshire independent residential children's homes as, by placing more young people in-county and reducing the recent increase in out-of-county placements, we can offer wraparound services and targeted support to enhance placement stability.

Lincolnshire independent residential children's home placements by year to end 31st March



Placement costs

Lincolnshire County Council needs to work with providers whose costs are fair, with sustainable profit margins, whereby we only pay for the support that is required and delivered and which is reduced as the child or young person becomes more stable and grows in independence.

Some children and young people in independent residential placements have complex needs; Lincolnshire want to work with providers who understand these young people and who will work with us to help them transition into a less intense support package that reflects their changing needs.

Residential Children's Homes cont.

Regulation & inspection

In line with our high aspirations for our children and young people, Lincolnshire County Council seeks to place with residential providers who are rated good or outstanding by Ofsted and who are registered in line with **Care Standards Act 2000** and operates in accordance with the **Children's Home (England) Regulations 2015** and the nine **Quality Standards**.

Lincolnshire does not use unregulated independent placements for children and young people under the age of 16 years old.



Older children in care

Lincolnshire County Council, in line with the national trend, is seeing a rise in older young people entering care i.e. 13+ years.

This older cohort presents some challenges in terms of behaviours and as a result may experience more placement instability and breakdown than younger children.

We want appropriate and innovative support solutions for these young people, given their time in a residential setting may be short before they move into the next stage of their time in care or on to independence.

What we need...

Lincolnshire children and young people need resilient providers and carers with experience of working with childhood trauma, are resilient when faced with challenging behaviour issues and who are skilled in de-escalation techniques. Lincolnshire wants to build effective working relationships with providers, working together to overcome any challenges in placement to avoid breakdown.

Lincolnshire children and young people need carers who are skilled in de-escalation techniques that minimise physical interventions, as well as carers who are able to provide children and young people with clinical therapy, mental health and behavioural support as determined within their care plan.

Ideally, we feel our children will thrive better in smaller homes that can provide a realistic homely environment, with the excellent intensive support programme the children and young people require, and we are increasingly focused on placing our young people within, or as close to, Lincolnshire as possible so they can access Lincolnshire social care and Leaving Care support as well as other Lincolnshire services such as CAMHS and Virtual School.

Above all, Lincolnshire County Council wants to work with independent residential providers that are able to care for our children for the longer term, and who are able to work with our social care and Leaving Care teams to make a real difference in terms of behaviours, outcomes and stability, as well as work with us to step young people down into less intensive accommodation and support.

Independent (Special) Schools

Lincolnshire Special Schools

Lincolnshire has seventeen maintained/academy Special Schools spread throughout the county supporting children and young people with a range of complex SEND.

However, due to either a child or young person's specific need and/or lack of available appropriate school placements within our own maintained/academy (special) school settings, Lincolnshire County Council does place with the independent sector for day and residential (special) school places.

Use of Independent (Special) School placements

All placements that Lincolnshire County Council commissions are expected to meet the outcomes and needs as outlined in the child and young person's EHC Plan.

These placements seek to meet and exceed identified needs through innovative care and a robust curriculum, demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement through the school's, and where applicable the home's, internal quality assurance procedures.

The delivery of the service will be consistent with the school's function, as approved by the Regulatory Body.

All providers will need to comply, where appropriate, with the **SEND Code of Practice, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015** including the Quality Standards 2015 and the **Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014**.

Current Independent Placements

As of 31st March 2023, Lincolnshire County Council has 353 children and young people with an EHC Plan placed in Independent day and residential (Special) Schools throughout the UK:

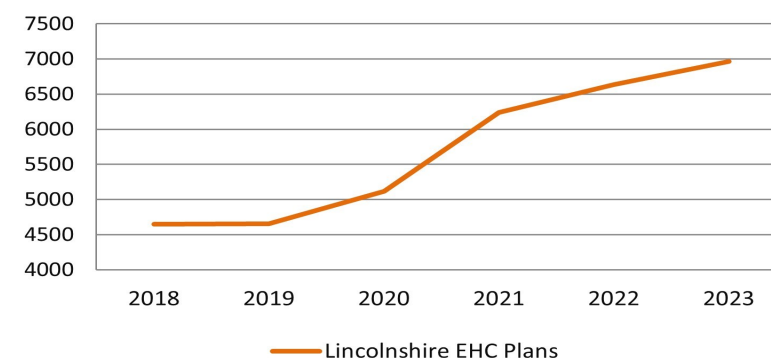
Placement type			
52 weeks <i>Education & Residential</i>	38 week 'weekly' <i>Education & Residential</i>	38 week 'termly' <i>Education & Residential</i>	Day placement <i>Education only</i>
12	17	9	315

Source: LCCPlacements data

Lincolnshire's SEN data

Similar to the regional and national picture, the number of children and young people for whom Lincolnshire maintains an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan under the **Children and Families Act 2014** has been rising, with an increase of 2408 EHC plans between 2018 and 2023.

As of 31st March 2023, there were 6968 EHC plans, an increase of 334 in 12 months.



Source: Children's Services performance data

Lincolnshire Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans

Lincolnshire children and young people with an EHCP, by age group and % of cohort:

SEN2 Return Year	2020		2021		2022		2023	
	Total	% of population	Total	% of population	Total	% of population	Total	% of population
Under age 5	228	4%	217	3%	191	3%	187	3%
Aged 5 to 10	1652	32%	2250	36%	2318	35%	2440	35%
Aged 11 to 15	1821	36%	2195	35%	2430	37%	2712	39%
Aged 16 to 19	1170	23%	1261	20%	1394	21%	1380	20%
Aged 20 to 25	248	5%	305	5%	301	5%	249	4%
Total	5119		6228		6634		6968	

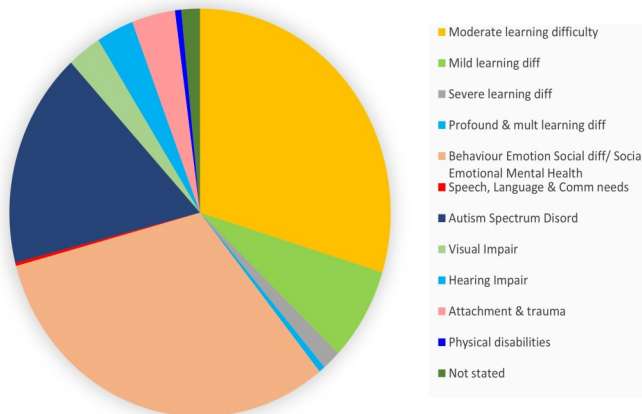
Source:
LCC SEN2 SFR
data

Lincolnshire children and young people with an EHC Plan, by age group and locality at end March 2023:

SEND Locality Team	Under Age 5	Aged 5 to 10	Aged 11 to 15	Aged 16 to 19	Aged 20 to 25	Total
Boston/South Holland	52	575	622	296	49	1594
East Lindsey	26	407	544	288	51	1316
Lincoln/West Lindsey	54	681	737	369	56	1897
North/South Kesteven	55	777	809	427	93	2161
Total	187	2440	2712	1380	249	6968

Source:
LCC Mosaic
data

Lincolnshire independent (special) school placements by primary need at 31st March 2023



Source: LCCPlacements data

What we need...

Lincolnshire County Council wants to ensure we have access to effective and holistic specialist provision that supports the diverse needs of our children and young people with SEND aged from 5 to 25 years.

We have seen an increase in placements for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) over the past few years, though the cohort is ever changing.

Lincolnshire's SEND team continue to work with mainstream schools in Lincolnshire to support our children and young people to remain in (or return to) mainstream schools wherever possible, but we recognise that this is not always practical or the best environment, so we want to develop strong relationships with Lincolnshire providers that offer value for money.

Other SEND placements and support services

Post-16 education placements

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) provide core funding (Element 1) and additional needs funding (Element 2) for High Needs learners aged 16 years and above with special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) who are attending a Further Education establishment, more commonly referred to internally as Post-16.

Lincolnshire County Council provides additional 'top up' funding to learners (known as Element 3) where the costs to support the learner's needs are higher than the amount provided by the ESFA. The choice of Further Education establishment is determined by the learner.

Open Select List for SEND support services

Lincolnshire County Council commissions the following SEND support services:

- **Domiciliary Care:** supporting children and young people with disabilities, most usually in their own homes, with personal and intimate care, leisure and community activities, life skills, transition support, social and communication skills, and low-level nursing not requiring a qualification.

Providers of Domiciliary Care must be **CQC-registered**. Independent domiciliary care services will be sought through the OSL when there is insufficient capacity through the block commissioned contract to deliver domiciliary care to 0-18 year olds living in Lincolnshire with profound and significant learning and/or physical disabilities or life-threatening illnesses.

- **Short Breaks:** offering children and young people with disabilities an enjoyable experience away from their primary carers to enhance their personal and social development, whilst parents and families are provided either with a valuable break from their caring responsibilities or with help accessing the community with the young person.

Short breaks can occur at different times – during the day or evening, overnight or on weekends, and can span a few hours or a number of days.

- **Alternative Provision:** supporting pupils in schools years Reception to Year 13 (or up to age 25 years where applicable) who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The aim is to engage pupils who may be disengaged from education through a broad and flexible curriculum offer.

The OSL for SEND services re-opens annually to allow new suppliers to apply.

Supported accommodation for 16+ year olds

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In-house provision

Lincolnshire County Council has two in-house accommodation projects based in Grantham and Gainsborough, jointly accommodating up to 10 16-17 year old CiC or care leavers who are usually in transition from residential and foster care placements.

Young people can stay in these projects for up to 9 months to develop their independent living skills.

Commissioned services

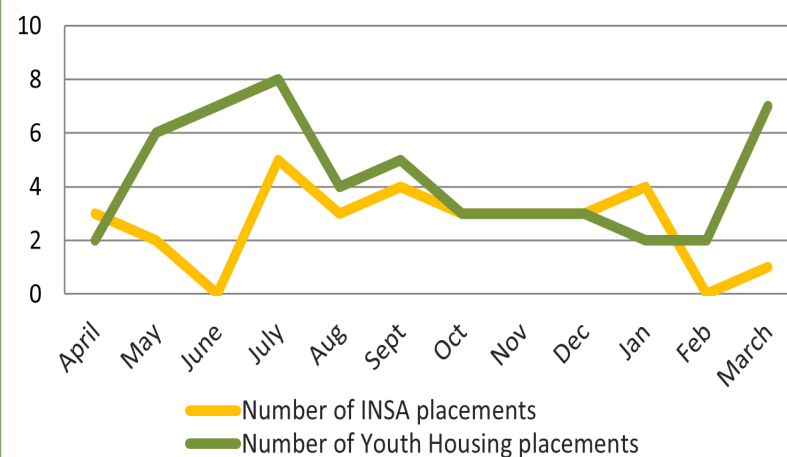
Lincolnshire County Council currently commissions seventy-two bed spaces in Lincoln, Boston and Grantham as part of the Youth Housing Service designed to accommodate 16-17 year olds (including CiC) and Care Leavers up to 21 years old who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

This contract is in place for up to five years to the end of 2026. Young people are supported to live independently or to return home to family wherever it is safe and possible to do so.

There are also around 18 Supported Lodgings providers offering nearly 30 family-based placements for 18+ year olds care leavers; these are managed by Barnardo's who deliver our commissioned Leaving Care Service which is contracted for up to five years to March 2025.

Lincolnshire also commissions placements for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) aged 16-17 years old through our Closed Ordered List arrangements which are designed to respond quickly to spontaneous arrivals. The current UASC Closed Ordered List is in place to October 2027.

Number of new supported accommodation placements made from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023



The chart demonstrates that demand for supported accommodation is sporadic but the Youth Housing Service receives the majority of referrals.



Supported accommodation for 16+ year olds (cont.)

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Additional Supported Accommodation

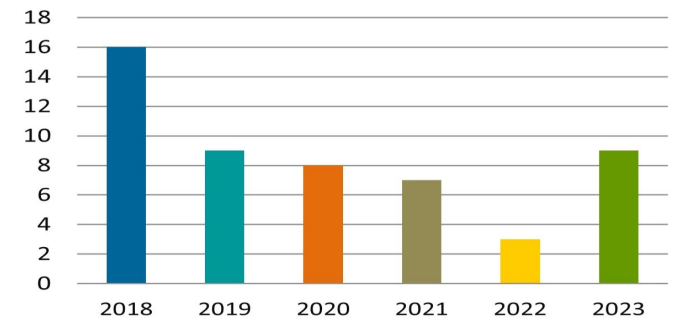
Lincolnshire County Council does have occasional need to place young people aged 16-17 years old in Supported Accommodation (SA) when suitable placements in Youth Housing are unavailable.

This may be as a result of short-term capacity challenges or due to the need to undertake some specialist work with young people before they can move into other accommodation.

SA placements are usually individual units of accommodation with high level support packages due to the nature of the cohort, including young people with significant emotional, social or behavioural needs.

Demand for SA fluctuates and is often unpredictable or is on an emergency basis; requirements have steadily declined over the past five years in line with the introduction of the Youth Housing commissioned service and in-house supported accommodation options, alongside a focus on working with young people to either support them to remain at or return home.

Number of young people in supported accommodation placements as at 31st March



Source: LCCPlacements data

Regulatory changes

OFSTED have confirmed that supported and semi-independent accommodation will be regulated i.e. inspected and meet minimum standards. More detail can be found at www.gov.uk. Suppliers are able to submit applications from April 2023, and will be inspected from April 2024 onwards.

What we need...

Lincolnshire County Council needs access to affordable accommodation offering flexible support hours on occasions where Youth Housing is unavailable. Young people need tailored support to suit them, and not 24-hour surveillance which limits a young person's ability to become independent.

Most young people in supported accommodation are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), so accommodation needs to be available in areas which offer good transports links with opportunities for education, employment and training.

Supported accommodation should aid young people to step forward to more independent living. Lastly, it is important that all young people within supported accommodation have a clear exit plan in place to either transition into our in-house or commissioned contracts, or to move to an independent tenancy.

Placement Commissioning

Lincolnshire County Council Children's Strategic Commissioning Team operate an Open Select List (OSL) procurement process to broker placements with independent providers.

New OSL arrangements started in September 2022 and new suppliers can join the list annually.

Providers are asked to submit business-level information such as accounts and/or evidence of financial standing along with a self-declaration application form. Subject to approval, the provider joins the relevant strand of the OSL; there are regulated (independent fostering agencies, independent residential children's homes and independent (Special) Schools as well as Supported Accommodation (soon to be subject to regulation) and SEND Services (domiciliary care, alternative provision and CWD short breaks) strands.

Providers on the OSL are notified of a suitable referral before other providers not on the OSL, and have the opportunity to make an offer regarding the placement.

The LCCPlacements team who administer the OSL process, issue contracts and Individual Placement Agreements (IPAs) and oversee payments.

Commissioning Officers then monitor contract performance and undertake meetings/visits to providers periodically.

If there are any concerns, Commissioning Officers liaise with social care and SEND, in regard to either placement stability or the support package being delivered, and work with placement providers to develop strong relationships that are mutually beneficial.

All placements will operate, where applicable, within the [Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) Child Protection Guidelines including compliance with [Section 11 of the Children Act 2004](#).

Contact us:

**Children's Strategic Commissioning Placements
Team**

Lincolnshire County Council

County Offices

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