



Planning Committee

3 April 2025

S24/2106

Proposal:	Installation of Air Source Heat Pumps and evaporator decks and erection of timber fencing enclosure to rear of the main leisure centre building
Location:	Grantham Meres Leisure Centre, Trent Road, Grantham, NG31 7XQ
Applicant:	South Kesteven District Council
Agent:	Leisure Energy Technology Centre, Walter Nash Road West, Kidderminster, DY11 7HJ
Application Type:	Full Planning Permission
Reason for Referral to Committee:	South Kesteven District Council are the applicant
Key Issues:	Design and external appearance Impacts on residential occupiers Biodiversity Net Gain
Technical Documents:	

Report Author

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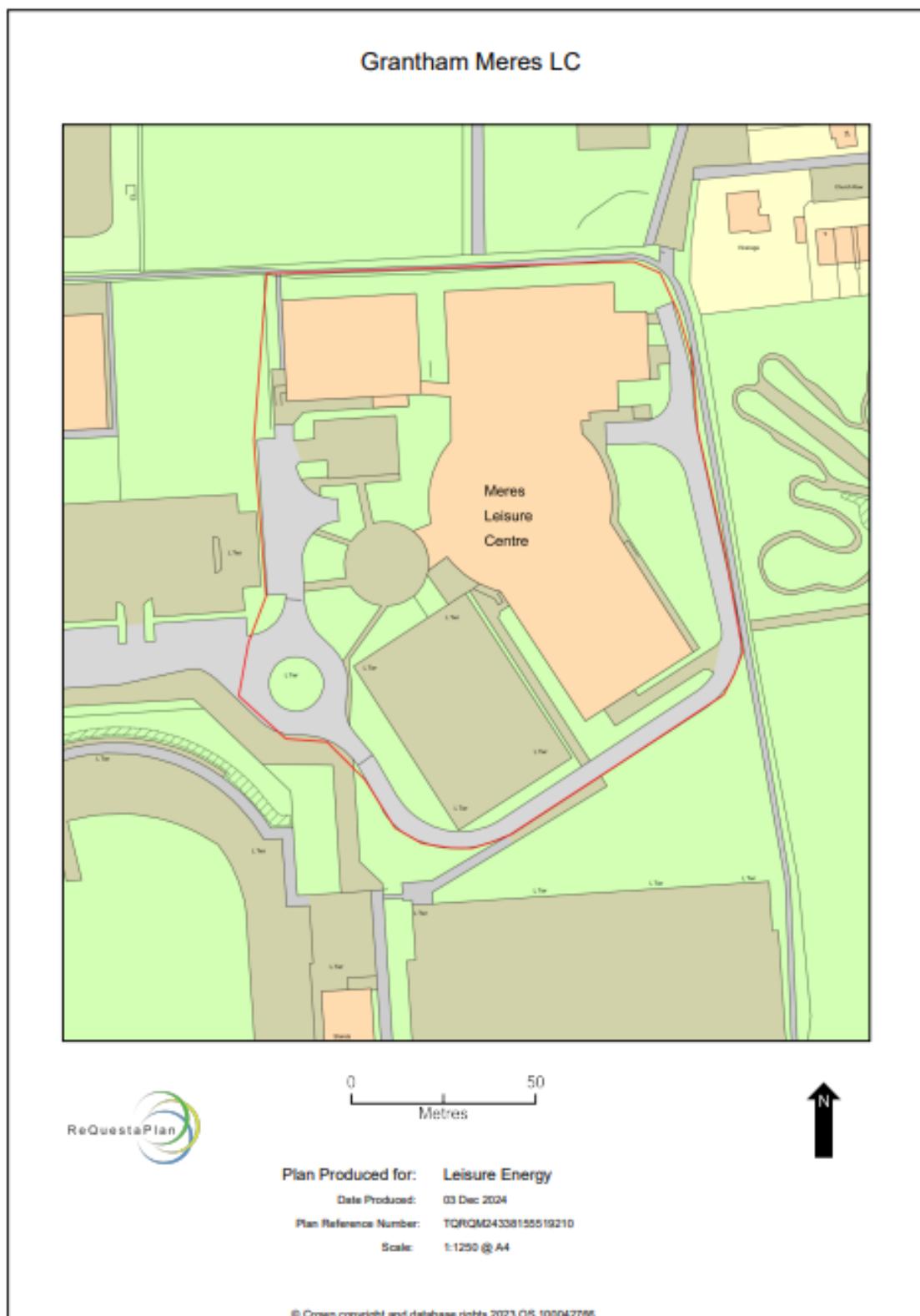
Corporate Priority:	Decision type:	Wards:
Growth	Regulatory	Grantham Earlesfield

Reviewed by: Adam Murray – Principal Development Management Planner

25 March 2025

Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

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



1 Description of Site

1.1 The application site is the Grantham Meres Leisure Centre and Sports Complex located on the east side of Trent Road, Grantham. It is proposed to locate the Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) and associated housing and screening on an area of land that comprises grassland and hardstanding to the east of the main building.

2 Description of Proposal

2.1 The application is for full planning permission for the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps and evaporator decks. The proposal includes an Air Source Heat Pump box/cover which would be surrounded by a timber fence enclosure. The built-form, comprising 3 x evaporators and 1 x net zero pod would cover an area measuring approximately 15.5m wide by 5.2m deep (80.6sqm) and would be surrounded by a timber fenced enclosure.

3 Policy Considerations

3.1 SKDC Local Plan 2011 – 2036

Policy SD1 'The Principles of Sustainable Development in South Kesteven'
Policy DE1 'Promoting Good Design'
Policy EN2 'Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity'
Policy RE1 'Renewable Energy Generation'

3.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Chapter 2 'Achieving sustainable development'
Chapter 12 'Achieving well-designed places'
Chapter 14 'Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change'

3.3 Supplementary Planning Document:

Design Guidelines for Rutland and South Kesteven (November 2021)

4 Representations received

4.1 LCC Highways & SuDS

4.1.1 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 is acceptable and accordingly, does not wish to object to this planning application.

4.2 Grantham Town Council

4.2.1 No comments.

4.3 Cadent Gas

4.4 No objection as the High pressure gas pipelines in the area would not be affected by the application.

4.5 **Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust**

4.6 Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust wishes to place a HOLDING OBJECTION pending the inclusion of plans to achieve the mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The BNG Metric submitted with this application shows a projected overall biodiversity loss of 2.87%, falling outside of BNG regulations that state that developments must achieve a minimum of 10% net gain.

We understand that planning permission can be granted with conditional BNG, but it would be our recommendation that BNG should be integrated into the design of the site. Consideration of how the biodiversity will be created, enhanced, managed and monitored - for a minimum of 30 years – is more effective when it is a part of the design process.

4.7 **Environmental Protection**

4.7.1 No comments received

5 Representations as a Result of Publicity

5.1 This application has been advertised in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and no letters of representation have been received.

6 Evaluation

6.1.1 The proposal relates to the installation of an Air Source Heat Pump and evaporator decks and associated equipment as a means of generating energy for the public leisure centre. This proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle and in accordance with Policy SD1 (Principles of Sustainable Development in South Kesteven) of the adopted Local Plan subject to assessment against site specific criteria. These include the impact of the proposal on the character or appearance of the area, impact on the residential amenities of neighbouring occupiers, and impact on highway safety, which are discussed in turn as follows.

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

6.2.1 The proposed pump and its housing would be located to the rear (east) of the leisure centre complex and would not be readily visible from public car park at the front of the building, however it would be visible to users of the public footpath that runs along the eastern edge of the leisure centre. Despite its visibility from the public footpath, the scale of the ASHP and its housing, combined with the fenced, screened area, is considered to be modest, particularly when compared to the size of the host building. It is the Officers assessment that the structure would not appear out of keeping given the context of the site. Considering the size of the site, its existing character and the modest scale of the proposal it is considered that the proposal would be in keeping with the host building, the streetscene and surrounding context in accordance with the NPPF Section 12, and Policy DE1 of the Local Plan.

6.3 **Impact on the neighbours' residential amenities**

6.3.1 No neighbour objections/concerns have been raised to date.

6.3.2 No objections were raised by the environmental protection team to the proposed installation and given the separation distances between the equipment and the nearest residential property, it is considered that on the basis of the information provided, that the pumps would not result in unacceptable levels of noise nuisance to neighbouring occupiers and the

proposal would be in accordance with the NPPF Section 12, and Policy DE1 of the Local Plan.

6.4 Biodiversity Net Gain

6.5 The site does not lie within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Special Area for Conservation (SAC). The applicants have submitted an BNG small sites metric. The baseline habit value of the site is stated to be 4.08 of area-based habitat units within the proposed development resulting in -2.8% area-based net loss.

6.6 Thus, the project is not considered to meet the legal obligation to achieve a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain in England and Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust have objected on this basis. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that should the proposal be recommended for approval, an appropriately worded condition would be included in order to secure on-site BNG. Consideration should be given first to the creation, enhancement, management and monitoring of on-site enhancement or failing that on land that is within the ownership of the applicant, before off-site BNG is considered.

6.7 Whilst a BNG Assessment has been submitted to accompany the application, a further BNG Plan is required to be submitted prior to the commencement of the developments per paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, in order to discharge the deemed condition. The plan must be submitted in writing, no earlier than the day after planning permission has been granted. The statutory framework for biodiversity net gain requires a Biodiversity Gain Plan to be submitted and approved by the planning authority to discharge the biodiversity gain condition prior to the commencement of development.

6.8 Consequently, subject to the appropriate deemed condition, it is considered that the proposed development would be acceptable and in accordance with Policies EN2 of the SKLP and Section 15 of the NPPF.

7 Crime and Disorder

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

8 Human Rights Implications

8.1 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.

9 Conclusion

9.1 The Local Planning Authority considers that the proposal is appropriate for its context and is in accordance with the NPPF (Sections 2, 12 and 14) and Policies SD1, DE1, EN2 and RE1 of the South Kesteven Local Plan. There are no material considerations that indicate otherwise although conditions have been attached.

10 Recommendation

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

Approved Plans

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

Site Location Plan received 12 February 2025

Drawing No.PLO7 Rev P01 External Pod Location

Drawing No.E.2100 Rev P01External Site Services

Unless otherwise required by another condition of this permission.

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

During Building Works

3. Before any of the works on the external elevations for the building(s) hereby permitted are begun, samples of the materials (including colour of any render, paintwork or colourwash) to be used in the construction of the external surfaces shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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

Before the Building is Occupied

4. Before any part of the development hereby permitted is occupied/brought into use, the external surfaces shall have been completed in accordance with the approved details.

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

Informatics

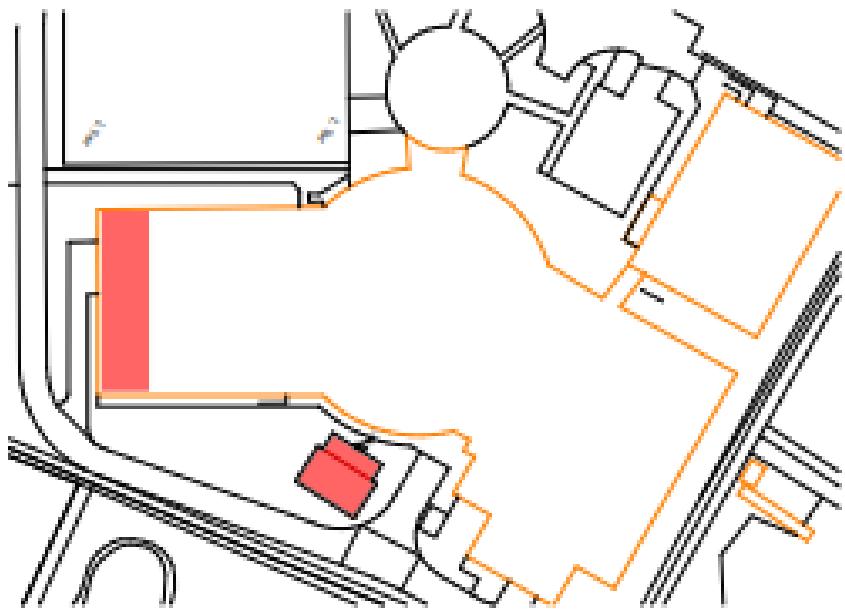
- 1) The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition") that development may not begin unless:
 - (a)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

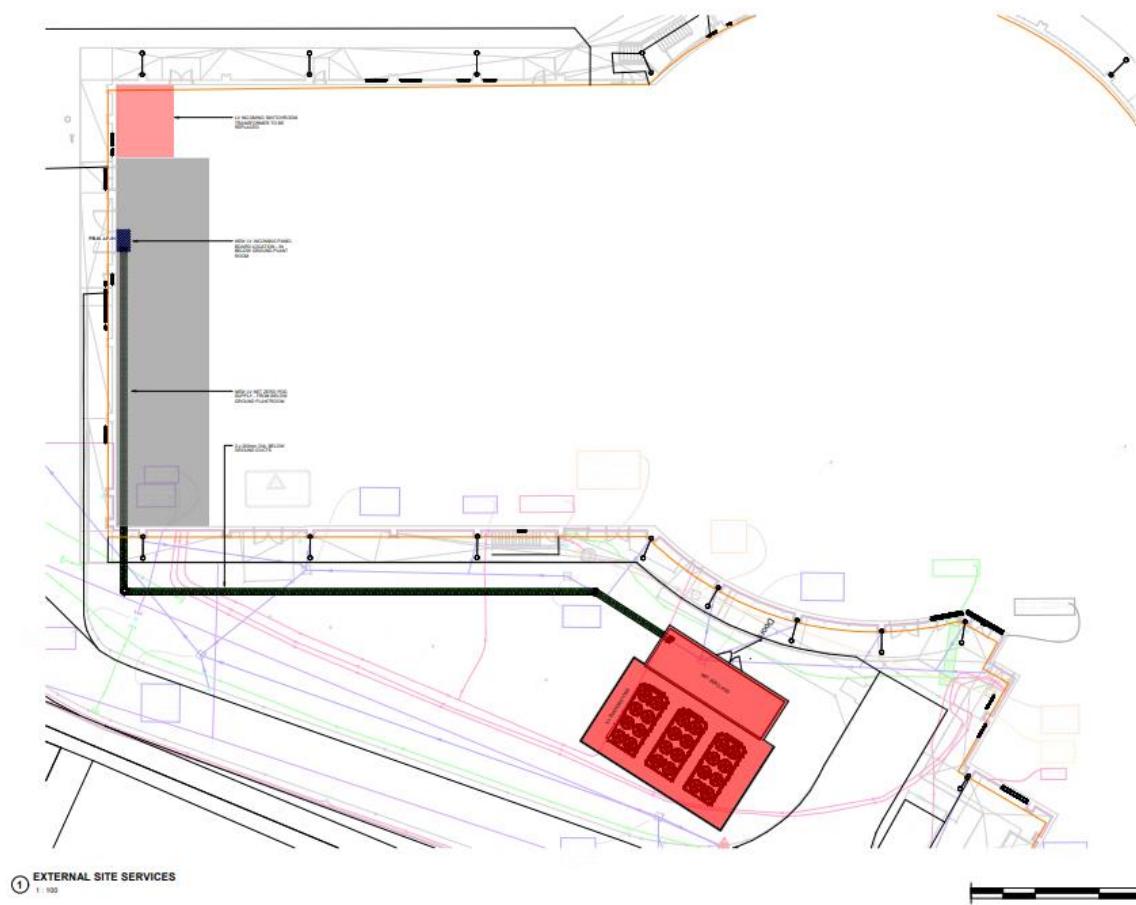
Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements listed are considered to apply.

Proposed Site Plan



② KEYPLAN
1 : 1000

Proposed Block Plan



Proposed Elevation

