



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Planning Committee

28 August 2025



S23/0404

Proposal:	Proposed Office and Production Building
Location:	Land Off Hards Lane, Frognall
Applicant:	Garford Farm Machinery Ltd
Agent:	G R Merchant Ltd
Application Type:	Full/Major
Reason for Referral to Committee:	Member call in Cllr Phil Dilks – Impact on the character and appearance of the area
Key Issues:	Principle of development, Scale of development, Design/layout, Impact on residential amenity, Drainage, Highway safety, Sustainability
Technical Documents:	(i) Planning, Design & Access Statement (ii) Flood Risk Assessment

Report Author

Kevin Cartwright – Senior Planning Officer



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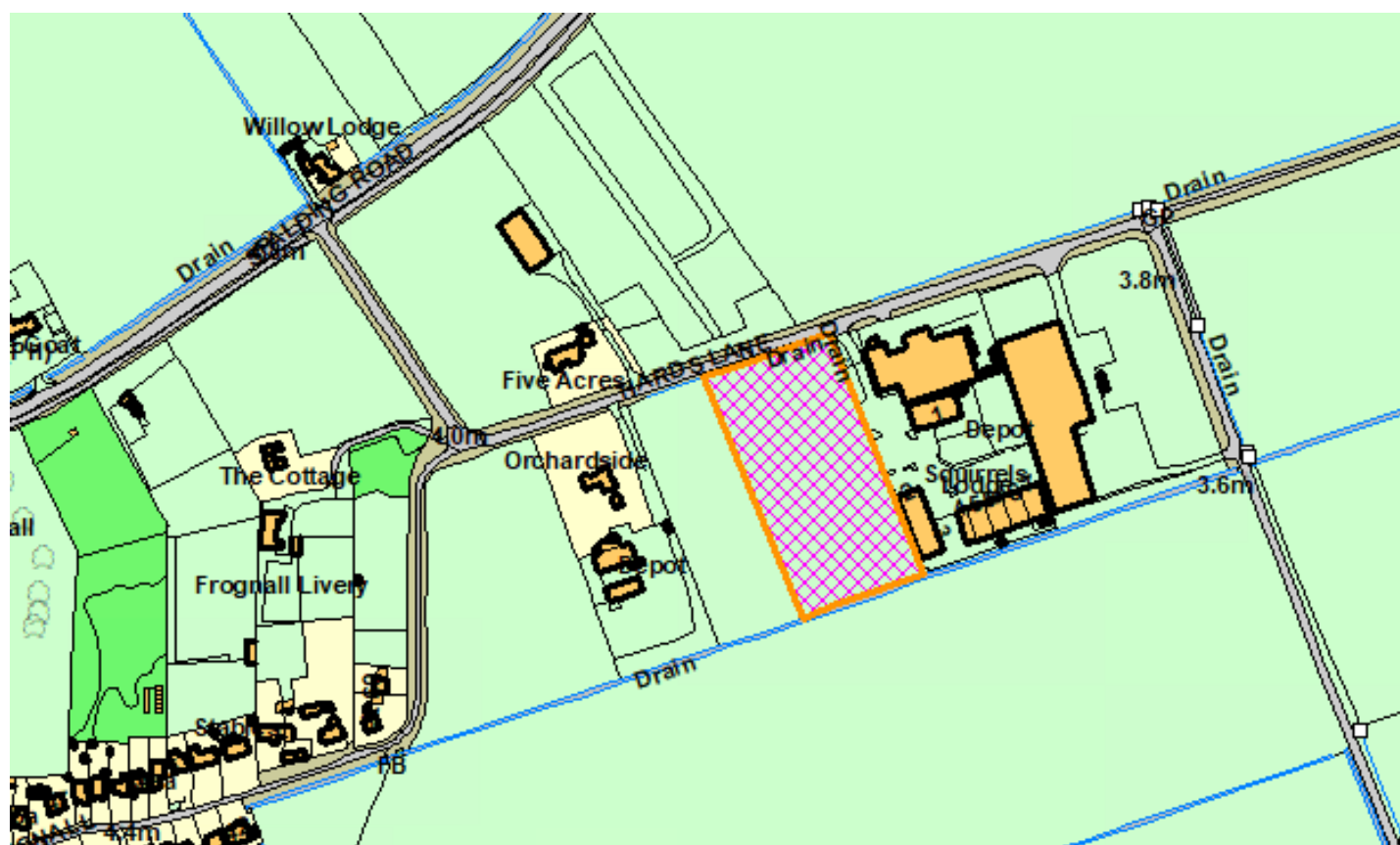
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Corporate Priority:	Decision type:	Wards:
Growth	Regulatory	Deeping St James
Reviewed by:	Phil Jordan – Development Management & Enforcement Manager	15 August 2025

Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

That the application is approved conditionally

S23/0404 - Land Off Hards Lane, Frognall



1 Description of Site

- 1.1 The application site is situated on the south side of Hards Lane, the unclassified public road leading east from Frognall out into agricultural land.
- 1.2 The ground is generally flat; the site is a long rectangular field stretching south from Hards Lane to a linear field drain (site length approximately 164m, width 87m = 1.42 hectares). There are no enclosures or trees on the site of any note.
- 1.3 To the west is the remainder of the gap site between the current application site and a well-established industrial/commercial area 'This site/area includes a dwelling known as Orchardside.
- 1.4 To the east is the industrial/commercial site currently occupied by Garford Farm Machinery (main occupier) and a range of subsidiary businesses in smaller units.
- 1.5 Further to the east is the large commercial site operated by Kyoto Futons Ltd.
- 1.6 On the opposite side of Hards Lane is 'Five Acres' – a farm including an agricultural dwelling.
- 1.7 The gap mentioned in 1.3 above is also the subject of a current application, planning ref. S23/0401, for an industrial park. The application was submitted at the same time as S23/0404; and is considered elsewhere within this agenda.
- 1.8 There are no specific planning constraints relating to the site.

2 Description of Proposal

- 2.1 The submitted documentation indicates that the site would be developed for a single commercial building having a gross internal floorspace of 7324m². This would be occupied by Garfords Farm Machinery Ltd.
- 2.2 Within the Planning, Design and Access Statement, it is stated: *"The aim of the new warehouse and offices is to combine the two premises they have one to the North of the site along Hards Lane and a premises at Spitfire Park 4.5 miles away. Along with the combining of the two premises will include expansion and allow for future expansion when required."*
- 2.3 The submitted plans show that the building would occupy a substantial part of the overall site with its footprint being aligned with the western site edge, and its longest dimension being north-to-south. At its longest, the building would be 121m; at its widest (across the front elevation) it would be 71m.
- 2.4 The building would in effect be three conjoined blocks with the front section being 10.1m in height to a parapet roof edge; the remainder would have a maximum ridge height of 10.1m and eaves height of 8m. The roller-shutter doors in the east elevation would each be 5m high.

- 2.5 The accommodation is arranged so that the production section would occupy the rear two-thirds of the length (although this is the narrower part of the building); the widest front section would provide flexible office/utility/training space; and the section in between would be for storage and sub-assembly.
- 2.6 The office section would extend over two floors, over the entire footprint of this 'block'; with a small amount of floorspace above that again to provide additional w/c facilities via stairs and a lift. Although the intended purpose of each room is identified on the drawings, it is clear that the layout would be flexible and therefore it is not necessary to set out in detail which rooms would be designated for specific purposes.
- 2.7 The access point for the overall site would be situated to the west of the row. It would be shared with the development proposed under ref. S23/0401 to the west.
- 2.8 External colours are all stated within the application form to be grey/dark grey.
- 2.9 Enclosures are generally formed using 1.8m high green weldmesh fencing.
- 2.10 81 Parking spaces are proposed within the site to serve the development for staff and visitors. These would be within a single car park between the buildings and the road.
- 2.11 The application form indicates that the development would connect into a sewage treatment plant rather than the mains sewer; and that surface water would be diverted to an underground water harvesting tank. These elements are reflected in the site plans.
- 2.12 The plans indicate that a 9m x 87m wildflower meadow would be created on an easement strip at the southern end of the site. With limited landscaping along the frontage of the site. No specific landscaping details have been provided in relation to planting along the frontage of the site.
- 2.13 Air conditioning, solar panels and electric car charging points would be included/provided, although as yet no details of these items have been provided.
- 2.14 Within the Conclusion section of the Statement it is stated: *"This development will combine two premises which needs to work more efficiently with an expanding business. They have looked over the last few years whether to invest where they currently are or invest abroad such as Germany or the USA. They have chosen to invest in this area and have managed to purchase a field next to their current and long standing premises"*
- 2.15 Garford's Farm Machinery have experienced expansion over a number of years with the number of employees increasing from thirty-two in 2017 to sixty-two in 2023.

3 Relevant History

- 3.1 None relevant to the current application site. Although this application should be read in conjunction with S23/0401 considered elsewhere within this agenda.

4 Policy Considerations

- 4.1 **SKDC Local Plan 2011 - 2036**

Policy E5 – Expansion of Existing Businesses
Policy E7 – Rural Economy
Policy EN1 – Landscape Character
Policy EN2 – Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Policy EN4 – Pollution Control
Policy EN5 – Water and Flood Risk Management
Policy ID2 - Transport and Strategic Transport Infrastructure
Policy DE1 - Promoting Good Quality Design
Policy SB1 – Sustainable Building
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

4.2 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

Section 4 – Decision making
Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport
Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

4.3 **Deepings Neighbourhood Plan**

Policy DNP4 – Protecting Local Employment Opportunities
Policy DNP9 – Promoting best practice in design

5 Representations Received

5.1 **Environmental Protection Services (SKDC)**

5.1.1 Requested Noise Assessment; conditions recommended relating to (i) provision of a construction management plan; (ii) potential site contamination; (iii) limitation of operational hours.

5.2 **LCC Highways & SuDS Support**

5.2.1 22.3.23 - Requests further information – Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Statement

5.2.2 12.09.24 – No objection subject to a planning condition in relation to a Construction Management Plan.

5.3 **Welland & Deepings IDB**

5.3.1 No objection stated; advises regarding use of SUDS for surface water drainage; and requirements relating to its own consent regime.

5.4 **Environment Agency**

30.3.23 – Objects on the basis that the proposed development as submitted involves the use of a non-mains foul drainage system in circumstances where it may be reasonable for the development to be connected to a public sewer; no justification has been provided for the use of a non-mains system.

19.09.23 - This additional information includes drawing 'Drainage General Arrangement Extended View' (drawing number: 0336-JCE-00-SI-DR-C-3002, dated 01 August 2023)

which confirms the development will connect to the main foul sewerage network rather than use a package treatment plant. Following this we can therefore remove our objection to this application.

5.5 Heritage Lincolnshire

5.5.1 11.4.23 - Advises that the site is of archaeological potential and that an evaluation should be undertaken on site (during consideration period i.e. pre-determination).

5.5.2 22.05.24 - The archaeological report dated 1st May 2024 is satisfactory and has been approved by this office.

5.6 Deeping St James Parish Council

5.6.1 Supports the application in principle; suggests several issues require further consideration: (i) highway safety (ii) parking arrangements for this & adjoining site (iii) improved landscaping.

6 Representations as a Result of Publicity

This application has been advertised in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and 1 no. letter of representation has been received. This item has been submitted by the Deepings Neighbourhood Plan Group, and identifies that the principle is supported notwithstanding that it may be a departure from the development plan; also that a number of matters require resolution, namely:

- archaeological evaluation
- improvement of landscaping
- undertaking of ecological assessment
- improvement to local road network
- provision of improved access for all users e.g. pavement/path/lighting to connect to Frognall

7 Evaluation

7.1 Principle of Development

7.1.1 The application site is relatable to the adjoining commercial site, and other nearby sites by virtue of its intended usage, scale, layout, orientation and road frontage. It would occupy part of what is effectively a gap created by previous development in a location already partially re-characterised through implementation of commercial developments. There is, therefore, logic in seeking to augment existing circumstances by adding relatable development in between. This could not be described as an exception to local, previously applied approaches to supporting economic development; and the land is to some extent contained either side by existing development.

7.1.2 The site is within the open countryside and therefore although the principle could potentially accord in a broader sense with the development plan (for example, Local Plan policies SP1, E5, E7) in terms of siting, scale, location and context, Policy SP5 of the Local Plan would need to be satisfied in terms of justifying the need for the development to be in this location.

- 7.1.3 Local context and circumstances cannot be ignored, and with precedents already active on land adjacent to this gap, with established businesses operating there is a noteworthy logic for infilling.
- 7.1.4 The intention to develop this, and the neighbouring site has been generated by existing businesses operating locally. It seeks to use existing momentum and to build on the existing resource. Enabling a strong and well-established business to both expand close to its existing premises and to remain in the District are important factors.
- 7.1.5 The applicant has provided the following information in support of the application:
- 7.1.6 “Garford Farm Machinery wish to invest in manufacturing capacity to fulfil increased demand for our products in markets around the world. They also desire to return to a single site, for efficiency reasons, which can accommodate the required operation. This is the reason the site has been chosen for this planning application which is immediately adjacent to the existing factory on Hards Lane, Frognall”.
- 7.1.7 “In the process of selecting the site for the application many alternatives were investigated in the surrounding areas of Market Deeping, Bourne, Peterborough, and sites internationally. After consideration of many options, the desire to maintain continuity with the existing staff skills and experience, was a key factor in the selection of the proposed site as our preferred option”.
- 7.1.8 “However, meeting and discussions have taken place for several years meaning that if Planning Permission is not sought on this site, then the business would have to re-locate further afield even overseas to other offices and warehouses across the world. If the Planning Application is successful there may be a further expansion into the units to the rear of Planning Application S23/0401, which will be then owned and managed by Garford Farm Machinery”.
- 7.1.9 Taking into account the above matters it is considered that any tension in relation to local plan policy SP5 is outweighed by the need and logic for the site adjacent to the existing operations to be used to enable expansion of the business.
- 7.1.10 In relation to the Deepings Neighbourhood Plan, Policy DNP4 criteria 1(a) to (f) are planning considerations that are discussed elsewhere in this report including design, access, amenity highway safety and capacity and drainage.
- 7.1.11 In relation to criteria 2, it is considered that that this is not engaged in that the site is not part of existing employment safeguarded land, and in any event the proposal itself is for an employment generating use.

7.2 **Scale of the development**

- 7.2.1 The scale of the proposed development is relatable to adjacent buildings, although arguably it could tend to be the most obvious and dominant development in this section of ‘street scene’. The intention of the design appears to be to introduce an element of statement building within the street-scene so that the premises would make a strong ‘presence’ statement.

- 7.2.2 It is considered that the proposal would occupy a site with an evident relationship with existing development, including the shared access arrangement. On this basis it would not be out of the ordinary, having regard to the way earlier projects have re-characterised the south side of Hards Lane.
- 7.2.3 As such there is no fundamental or overriding planning concern with regard to the scale of the development in this specific scenario, which would enable it to be a reasonable fit in terms of local economic development.
- 7.2.4 The application, therefore, would not be in conflict with Policies E5, E7 and DE1 of the Local Plan in respect of development scale. Neither would it be in conflict with The Deepings Neighbourhood Plan, in particular Policy DNP4.

7.3 **Design/Layout**

- 7.3.1 The layout and design of the site loosely follows the approach taken for the Kyoto site, east of the existing Garfords premises. Aerial photography demonstrates that the Kyoto footprint is comparable with that of the new development proposed under this application.
- 7.3.2 There is no fundamental difference to this approach than has been previously taken, and the arrangement of the buildings and their appearance would not be fundamentally out of character with existing developments.
- 7.3.3 Noting the concerns of the Parish Council and the Deepings Neighbourhood Plan Group), in that landscaping is not integral to the development proposals and noting the existing developments along this side of Hards Lane are fairly well landscaped in terms of their roadside presence. It would, therefore, be highly desirable for a consistent approach to be taken with this new proposal.
- 7.3.4 An amended plan has been received in relation illustrating how access to the site would be shared with the adjacent property and an area, albeit limited landscaping along the frontage of the site. The actual details and species of this landscaping could be secured by an appropriately worded condition.

With this in mind, the application would be able to accord with the objectives of Policies E5, E7, DE1, SD1 and SP5 of the Local Plan, and with commensurate sections of the NPPF; and with the Deepings Neighbourhood Plan

7.4 **Impact on Residential Amenity**

- 7.4.1 The proposed development would be located adjacent to the existing employment uses along Hards lane and planning application S23/0401 that is considered elsewhere within this agenda. As such it is considered that there would be an appropriate relationship with the adjacent occupiers and adequate separation to Orchardside and Five Acres.
- 7.4.2 On this basis it is considered that the proposal would not result in conflict with the development plan in this regard, in particular E5 and E7; also DE1 and EN4. It is also not in conflict with Policy DNP4 and DNP9 of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan.

7.5 Highway Issues

- 7.5.1 The proposed development has been assessed by the highway authority. Their final comments confirm no objection to the scheme subject to a planning condition in relation to a construction management plan.
- 7.5.2 Taking into account the above comments it is considered that the scheme would be acceptable from a highway safety and capacity perspective and as such accord with local plan policy ID2 and NPPF Section 9.

7.6 Drainage

- 7.6.1 Whilst concerns were initially raised by the Environment Agency in that the proposed development intended to utilise a package treatment plant. Revised details have been provided that demonstrate connection to the main foul sewer network.
- 7.6.2 Compliance with this arrangement can be secured by an appropriately worded condition.
- 7.6.3 Surface water drainage details have been provided this matter can again be adequately addressed by an appropriately worded condition.
- 7.6.4 Taking into account the above matters, the proposal is considered to accord with local plan policy EN5.

7.7 Ecology

- 7.7.1 An explanatory statement in relation to the ecological value of the site. Stating:
- 7.7.2 "This application is only for 63% of the field, the remaining part of the field will be developed under another Planning Application under another owner. The site is an agricultural field and has been in continuous arable rotation for years, the baseline ecology is consistent with intense arable systems, typical of Lincolnshire and its surrounding".
- 7.7.3 "There is a hedgerow of mainly hawthorn and blackhorn on the Western boundary along with an open drain and grass bank to the Southern. The Eastern boundary is of a metal fence with existing planting. The hedgerow, grass bank and existing planting will all remain allowing for additional landscaping and tree planting to be added to the site as per drawing 02D".
- 7.7.4 Whilst this is considered to be a reasonable assessment of the ecological potential of the site it is considered reasonable to require the submission of a formal ecological appraisal.
- 7.7.5 Whilst it is considered that there is limited opportunity for the main body of the site to have any ecological/wildlife merit, it is considered appropriate to require a ecology assessment of the site prior to the commencement of any development. This can be achieved by an appropriately worded condition.

7.8 Sustainability

- 7.8.1 Local plan policy SB1 requires development proposals to mitigate against and adapt to climate change, and to reduce carbon emissions and energy use. On this basis it is considered appropriate to require details in this respect to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This can be achieved by an appropriately worded condition.

7.9 Biodiversity Net Gain

- 7.9.1 This application was lodged with the local planning authority as significant period of time ago. This was before the relevant legislation was in place. In this instance the planning application was made before day one of mandatory BNG on the 12th February 2024 the development is exempt from BNG.

7.10 Archaeology

- 7.10.1 During the life of the planning application investigatory trial trenching has been undertaken. The findings of which have been submitted in support of the application.
- 7.10.2 The Archaeological Trial Trenching Evaluation has been assessed by Heritage Lincolnshire who have confirmed that the report is satisfactory and has been approved by their office

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 Conclusion and Planning Balance

- 10.1 The proposal is in accordance with Local Plan Policies E5, E7, EN1, EN2, EN4, EN5, ID2, DE1, SB1, SD1, SP1, SP2 and SP5 and , (Policies DNP4 and DNP9 of the Deepings Neighbourhood Plan) and Sections 4, 6, 9, 12 and 15 of the NPPF and whilst concerns are raised in relation to visual amenity, highway safety and capacity, ecology and loss of agricultural land they are not considered to outweigh the policies referred to above.

RECOMMENDATION: that the development is Approved subject to the following 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:
 - i. Site Plan Proposed Dwg. No. 02D
 - ii. Ground Floor Plan – Proposed -Dwg. No. 03A
 - iii. First Floor Office – Second Floor Office -Proposed Dwg. No. 06B
 - iv. Elevations Proposed – Dwg. No. 04A

Unless otherwise required by another condition of this permission.

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

Pre-commencement

- 3 No development (including any site clearance/preparation works) shall be carried out until a Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. Details shall provide the following, which shall be adhered to throughout the period of development:
 - a) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
 - b) loading/unloading and storage of construction materials
 - c) wheel cleaning facilities and road cleaning arrangements;
 - d) measures to control the emission of dust and noise during construction;
 - e) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from site preparation and construction works;
 - f) hours of construction work, site opening times, hours of deliveries and removal of materials; and
 - i) routeing of construction traffic

Reason: To minimise detrimental effects to the neighbouring amenities and the amenities of the area in general, having regard to Local Plan Policy DE1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 4 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted details demonstrating how the proposed units would comply with the requirements of Local Plan Policy SB1 and SD1 must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of how carbon dioxide emissions would be minimised through the design; the provision of charging points and a timescale for implementation.

The approved sustainable building measures shall be completed in full, in accordance with the agreed scheme prior to the occupation of each unit.

Reason: To ensure the building includes sustainable building measures in accordance with Policy SB1 of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan.

- 5 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted an ecological survey of the site shall be undertaken, the findings of which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Any identified mitigation shall be undertaken in accordance with details to submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details

During building works

- 6 The surface and foul water drainage works shall be undertaken in accordance with Dwg No. 0336-JCE-00-SI-DR-C-3000 and Dwg. No. 0336-JCE-00-SI-DR-C-3001 with Drainage General Arrangement Extended View Dwg. No. : 0336-JCE-00-SI-DR-C-3002.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory means of drainage including connection to the mains system.

- 7 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.

- 8 Notwithstanding the submitted details before any construction work above ground is commenced, details of any soft landscaping works shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include:

- i. planting plans;
- ii. written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment);
- iii. schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate;

Reason: 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.

Before the development is occupied

- 9 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.

- 10 Before the end of the first planting/seeding season following the occupation/first use of any part of the development hereby permitted, all soft landscape works shall have been carried out in accordance with the approved soft landscaping details.

Reason: 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.

- 11 Before any part of the development hereby permitted is brought into use, the external elevations shall have been completed using only the materials stated in the planning application forms unless otherwise agreed 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.

Ongoing Conditions

- 12 The external areas of the development hereby permitted shall be use for parking, turning and unloading. There shall be no manufacturing or fabrication undertaken outside of the buildings hereby permitted.

Reason: To define the permission, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

- 13 Within a period of five years from the first occupation of the final dwelling/unit 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.

Notes to Applicant:

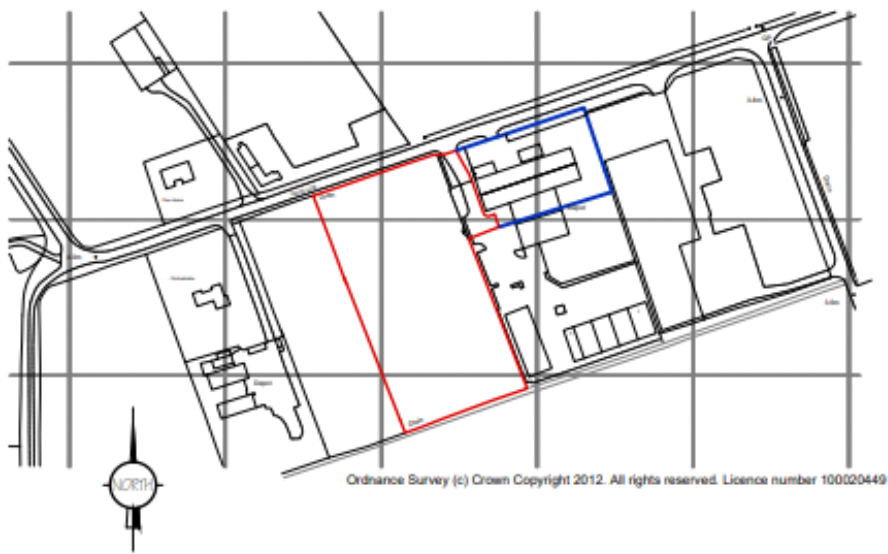
- In reaching the decision the Council has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner by determining the application without undue delay. As such it is considered that the decision is in accordance with paras 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Please contact the Lincolnshire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

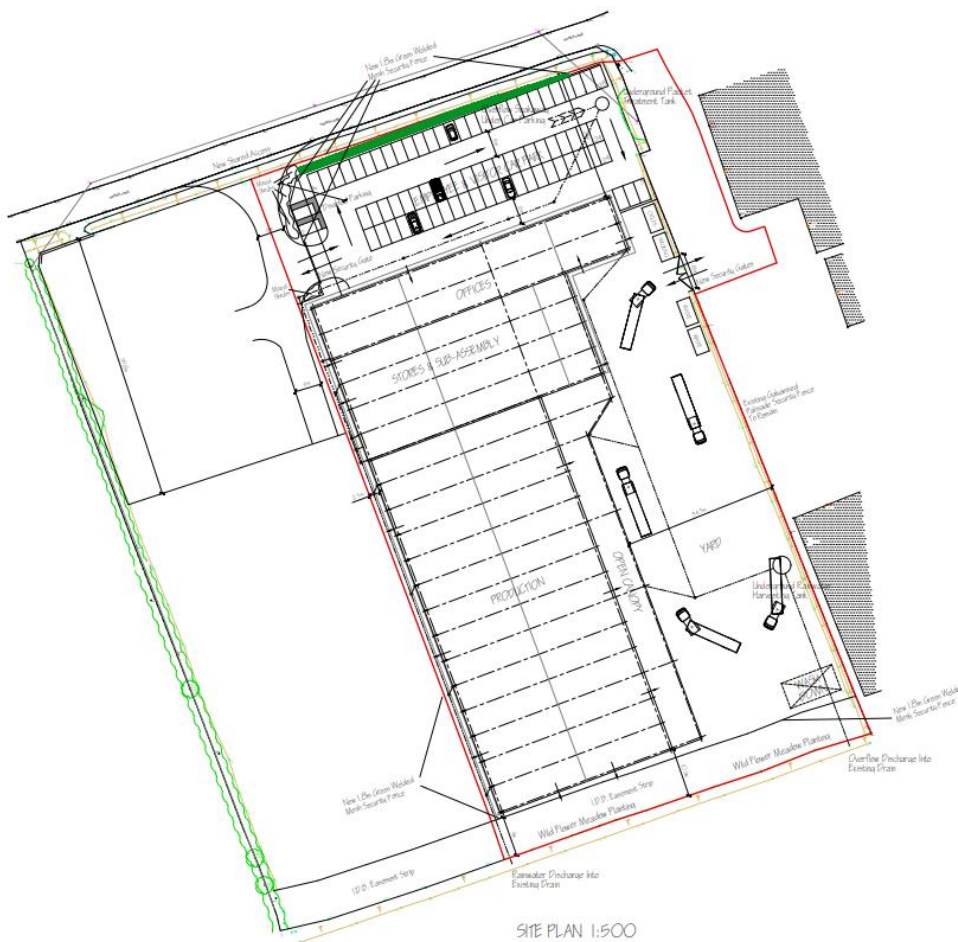
Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun as the application was made before day one of mandatory BNG on the 12th February 2024.

Location Plan

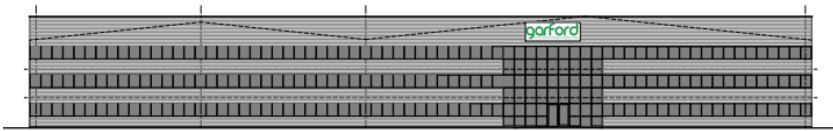


LOCATION PLAN 1:2500

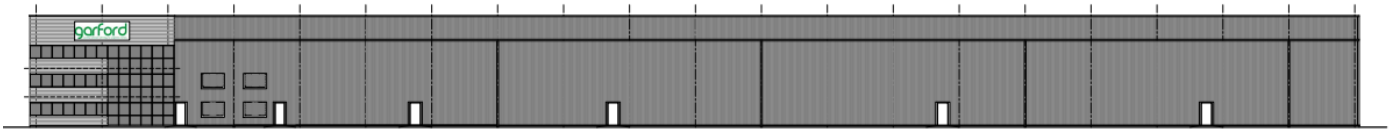
Site Plan



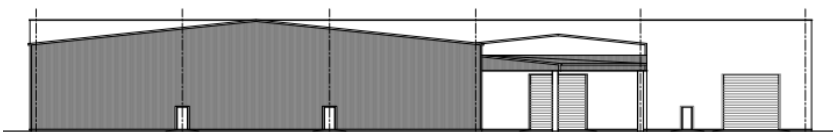
Elevations



FRONT ELEVATION 1:200



SIDE ELEVATION 1:200



REAR ELEVATION 1:200



YARD ELEVATION 1:200