TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING
(ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017

EIA SCREENING OPINION REQUEST

MR G. MERRICK

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR ERECTION OF 2 No. BROILER POULTRY UNITS (MEAT PRODUCTION) WITH FEED SILOS, ANCILLARY BUILDINGS AND HARDSTANDING UPON LAND OFF REDBOURNE ROAD, REDBOURNE, GAINSBOROUGH

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In accordance with Regulation 6(1) of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, the 'screening opinion' of North Lincolnshire Council is sought with regard to a proposal for erection of 2No. broiler poultry houses with ancillary feed silos, staff amenity building/office; water storage tank; deceased bird store; sub-station; pump house; back-up generator, LPG tank and hardstanding upon Land off Redbourne Road, Redbourne, Gainsborough (Easting: 498956, Northing: 398947).

1.2 Under *Schedule 1(17a)* of the *Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017*, installations for the intensive rearing of broilers will only necessitate an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) if the proposed unit(s) will house in excess of 85,000 birds. The total number of birds to be accommodated by the proposed poultry houses, being just under 73,000 broiler chickens, is significantly below this threshold.

1.3 However, intensive livestock units with a floor area exceeding 500 square metres are classed as 'Schedule 2' development within the EIA Regulations. National Planning Practice Guidance outlines criteria and thresholds for Schedule 2 agricultural development, which indicate that 'installations designed to house more than 60,000 broilers' should be screened under Schedule 3 of the Regulations. Evidently, the number of bird places supported by the proposed scheme is over of this indicative threshold. The NPPG also emphasises that: '*…it should not be presumed that developments above the indicative thresholds should always be subject to assessment, or those falling below these thresholds could never give rise to significant effects, especially where the development is in an environmentally sensitive location. Each development will need to be considered on its merits*.' In this context, particular consideration must be given to the characteristics of the development including its impact in terms of odour, traffic and waste handling.

1.4 EIA Regulation Schedule 3 outlines criteria against which to appraise whether development meeting thresholds in Schedule 2 will necessitate an EIA. Key considerations are detailed within Schedule 3, Section 1:

Characteristics of development

1. The characteristics of development must be considered with particular regard to—

(a) the size and design of the whole development;

(b) cumulation with other existing development and/or approved development;

(c) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;

(d) the production of waste;

(e) pollution and nuisances;

(f) the risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;

(g) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).

1.5 The following comprises information required under Regulation 6(2). This document should be read in conjunction with the submitted plans and reports noted below:

- Site Location Plan (CG-REDB-SLP); Proposed Site Layout Plan (CG-REDB-SP); Block Plan (CG-REDB-BP); Unit Floor Plans (CG-REDB-DSFP); and Unit Elevation Plans (CG-REDB-DSE).

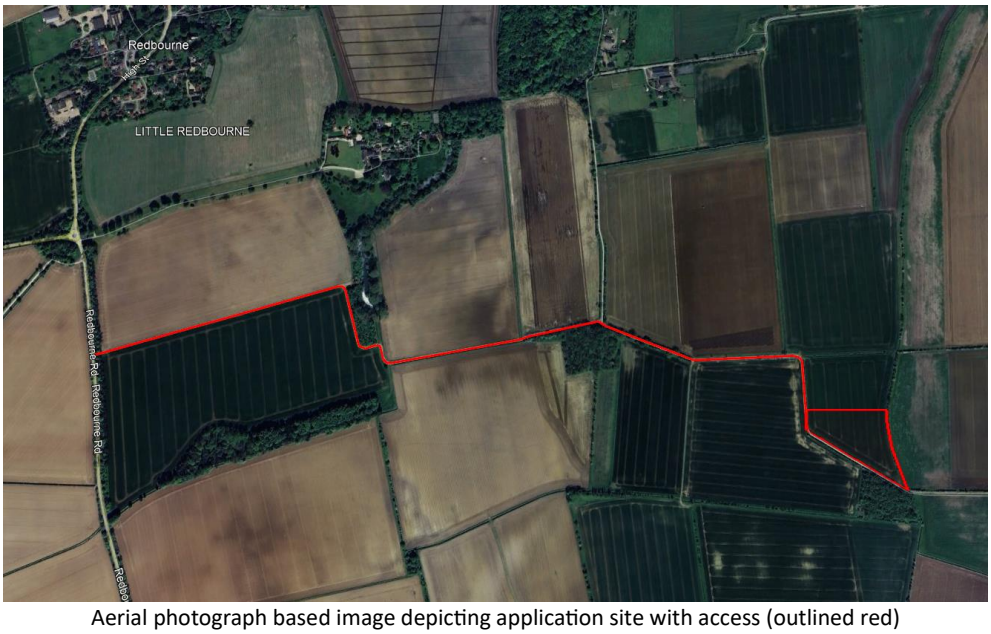
- AS Modelling & Data Ltd, 2025, A Dispersion Modelling Study of the Impact of Odour from the Proposed Poultry Houses at Land off Redbourne Road, Redbourne, Gainsborough in Lincolnshire.

- AS Modelling & Data Ltd, 2025, A Report on the Modelling of the Dispersion and Deposition of Ammonia from the Proposed Poultry Houses at Land off Redbourne Road, Redbourne, Gainsborough in Lincolnshire.

- Archer Ecology Ltd, 2025, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal – Land near Redbourne, Gainsborough.

The Site

1.6 The application site, which occupies an area of approximately 2.0 hectares, encompasses the southern half of a wider 4.7 hectare 'Grade 3a' arable field. The site is situated amidst the applicant's wider farm holding with neighbouring land to the north, east, west and southwest also being in arable agricultural use. It can however be noted that a small 1.1 hectare block of woodland is located to the immediate south of the site (evident in aerial photograph included below). A building associated with water utility infrastructure (pumping station) is located adjoining the southwestern corner of the wood and a private access extends northwards therefrom in order to juncture with the main farm access/carriageway. The application site's western and southern boundaries are delineated by mature hedgerow. The northern boundary is not yet physically defined. An IDB maintained land drain runs a course parallel with the site's eastern boundary/field periphery.



Aerial photograph based image depicting application site with access (outlined red) relative to surrounding land uses.

1.7 Access to the proposed site will be facilitated via formation of new concrete surfaced hardstanding connected to an established farm track via a short section of private carriageway positioned to pass through an existing gap within the site's western boundary hedgerow. The compacted aggregate surfaced farm track will allow vehicles to progress 170 metres northwards along a route parallel with the site/wider field boundary before turning westward and progressing approximately 1.8 kilometres to a point of juncture with Redbourne Road. The existing private carriageway/highway junction will need to be improved to better facilitate HGV access. It should be noted that the North Lincolnshire 'definitive map' identifies that a 600 metre section of the farm track located closest to the application site also comprises the route of a public footpath.

1.8 The proposed site is remote from sensitive receptors such as land in residential use. The most proximate dwelling comprises a farmhouse located circa 840 metres to the north. Properties at Redbourne Hall are situated marginally over 1 kilometre to the northwest of the proposed units. The next closest dwellings are located over 1.1 kilometres to the southwest and 1.13 kilometres to the northeast respectively. The periphery of Redbourne is over 1.6 kilometres to the northwest of the proposed site.

1.9 It can be noted that the site is not within the curtilage of a Listed Building or Conservation Area boundary or any statutory or non-statutory area of landscape/wildlife importance (such as SSSI's, AONB's, LWS etc). Designated heritage assets comprising Redbourne Hall (Grade II* Listed Building) with listed curtilage structures and historic parkland/grounds are however situated 1+ kilometres to the northwest of the proposed site.

1.10 The entirety of the application site is flat, being devoid of any notable variations in gradient or topographical features. Given the site's historic agricultural use, there is no reason to believe that the land is contaminated. The Environment Agency flood hazard map depicts the proposed site within Flood Zone 1, which indicates no risk of fluvial or sea flooding. As aforementioned, it can however be observed that a land drain runs a course along the application site's eastern boundary and the proposed development must maintain an easement of 9.0+ metres therefrom. There is no evidence to suggest that the site has been subject to localised flooding or drainage problems attributed to surface water discharge.

The Development/Operation

1.11 The applicant is seeking to diversify his established arable farming enterprise through introduction of 2 No. broiler poultry rearing units. The proposal will capitalise on an opportunity within the UK market that has arisen due to introduction of new higher animal welfare standards.

1.12 In January 2023, a number of major UK supermarkets entered into the 'Better Chicken Commitment' (BCC), which resulted in all supplying farms having to implement a significantly lower broiler stocking density of 30kg/m^2 compared to the previous industry standard of 38kg/m^2 (poultry mass/square metre of internal unit floor space). This has delivered a substantial increase in internal aviary area per chicken, thus promoting superior physiological and psychological welfare (resultant in high quality meat and lower mortality rates). Although poultry producers are now paid more money

per broiler chicken reared, there has been a significant UK wide drop in production of circa 20%. In addition, demand for higher welfare domestically reared poultry continues to grow. It is thus anticipated that an additional 600 poultry units will be required in England alone to bring production back to levels achieved prior to implementation of the BCC standards. It is for this reason that the applicants' have been presented with an opportunity to enter into a broiler chicken supply contract with Moy Park Ltd.

1.13 To facilitate the above, 2 No. new higher welfare poultry houses will be required with ancillary feed silos, buildings and hardstanding. Each poultry house will have a capacity of 36,486 broiler chickens (combined 72,972 bird places). Details and specifications of the various buildings/structures requiring planning consent are listed below and depicted upon the site layout plan extract included thereunder:

- 2 No. Poultry units: These east to west orientated steel portal framed buildings will have external dimensions measuring 110.28 metres by 24.684 metres with linked control rooms. The ridge height of the low profile units will be just 5.89 metres. The gross external floor area of each unit (including 20.625 m^2 control rooms) will therefore be 2742.77 m^2 (square metres). Roof and elevation cladding will comprise polyester coated profiled steel sheeting coloured 'Juniper Green'. 18 No. Ridge mounted ventilation fans (efflux velocity of 11m/s) will assist with climate control and odour reduction. The eastern elevations will include 6 No. emergency fans to assist with cooling during periods of extreme hot weather. The design and construction of the units promotes high levels of functionality, energy efficiency, longevity and environmental control.

- Subterranean foul water storage tank: with 15,000 litre capacity required for storage of foul water resultant from cleaning of units prior to collection by a specialist contractor who will dispose of it at an authorised site.

- 3 No. Feed silos: Comprising cylindrical structures measuring 7.8 metres high and 2.5 metres in diameter supported by steel frames mounted on concrete plinths. The silos are integrated with the poultry houses, releasing food via chutes as required.

- Private service hardstanding and carriageway: will be necessary to facilitate vehicular access to the site and manoeuvring therein. The hardstanding adjacent to the poultry house western elevations will be surfaced with concrete. A wheel wash (biosecurity measure) will be situated adjacent to the private carriageway in the south-western corner of the hardstanding. The hardstanding will connect via the western boundary to an existing farm track, which will be used to facilitate highway access.

- Deceased bird store: comprising a refrigerated steel containerised unit (mobile structure) measuring 6.06 metres by 2.44 metres (14.7 m^2) and 2.6 metres in height. The store will be subject to a dark green external finish in order to promote visual congruity.

- Water storage tank: comprising cylindrical galvanised steel structure measuring 2.5 metres high and 6.4 metres in diameter (floor area approximately 32.17m^2) mounted on a single concrete base. The water tank is required to ensure animal welfare

through use as an emergency reserve to counter temporary loss of mains water supply.

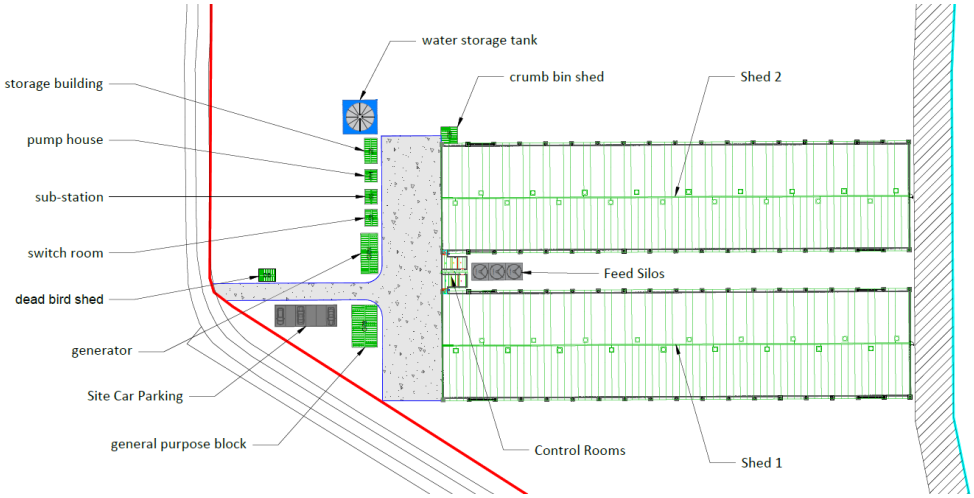
- Pump House: accommodating water pumping plant required for auxiliary water supply, wash water management etc. This steel portal framed structure will measure 4.0 by 3.0 metres with a ridge height of 3.36 metres. Profiled Steel sheeting cladding will be coloured Juniper Green.

- Diesel electric generator & Substation: for use in event of mains power failure. The green clad structure adjoins the poultry house and measures approximately 3.0 metres by 2.0 metres (6.0 m^2) with a height of 1.5 metres.

- Switch Room & Substation: comprising a 2.0 metre by 2.0 metre (4.0 m^2) framed building used to house supporting electrical infrastructure. The 3.36 metre high building will be clad in profiled steel sheeting coloured Juniper Green and sited next to a substation block of comparable appearance and size.

- LPG fuel tank: required for the poultry unit heating system. The tank (not yet depicted on layout plan) will be located upon the northern edge of the new concrete hardstanding close to the site entrance.

- Site office/general purpose building: will be positioned adjacent to the site entrance upon compacted stone hardstanding adjacent to the northern edge of the concrete surfaced hardstanding/vehicle manoeuvring area. This semi-mobile portacabin based structure measures 12.23 metres by 4.0 metres and 2.72 metres in height (48.9 m^2). Elevations will be finished in dark green. Foul water from W.C. will discharge to a package treatment plant.



Proposed site plan extract identifying indicative layout of proposed poultry units and ancillary structures.

1.14 Poultry will be reared within the units for an average duration of 40 days. Thereafter, the 'harvested' broilers are transported from the site via HGV for processing at the Moy Park's Anwick facility. The units will then be cleaned and maintained, typically over the course of 7+ days (sometimes longer if maintenance is required), until the next rearing cycle commences. This results in approximately 7.5 to 7.6 crop cycles per annum.

1.15 After each crop of birds is raised, the units will be cleaned and poultry manure will either be spread upon the applicants' wider arable holdings or exported as fertiliser dependent upon requirements. It will not be stored on-site/within the farm complex. Poultry manure will be transported via tractor with covered trailer (to minimise odour release) then spread upon outlying arable land in accordance with the Code of Good Agricultural Practice (DEFRA, 2009). The new poultry houses/operation will produce approximately 104 tonnes of manure per crop cycle (roughly 780 tonnes per annum).

1.16 With regard to external lighting, low output motion sensor lamps will be installed above the poultry units' western elevation doorways. The luminaire aiming angle of the lamps will be less than 70 degrees, the intensity of the light spill will therefore be very low beyond the immediate confines of the site. Lamps will also only activate when staff members are on-site.

1.17 It is anticipated that the proposed development/operation will require 2 No. new full time employees. In addition, a number of part time jobs will be created to address the requirements of certain phases during each crop cycle. It is also expected that additional off-site jobs will be created indirectly by virtue of the multiplier effect (i.e. jobs associated with haulage, construction/manufacturing, food processing, administration etc., arising as a result of the poultry farm development/operation).

1.18 It is emphasised that the poultry farm will operate in accordance with an Environment Agency IPPC permit, which provides a framework to regulate activities and ensure that environmental protection measures are adhered to.

2.0 POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

2.1 In accordance with EIA Regulation 6(2),(c),(d) and (e), this section provides a brief summary of potential strategic considerations and environmental effects anticipated to arise as a result of the proposed development.

Strategic Impact

2.2 The statutory 'Development Plan' comprises the adopted North Lincolnshire Local Development Framework (LDF) 'Core Strategy' (2011) and the accompanying Housing & Employment Land Allocations Development Plan Document (2016). However, the LDF is still augmented by various 'saved' policies of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan (2003). Significant weight is given to the relevant provisions of the recently updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024.

2.3 Saved North Lincolnshire Local Plan (2003) **Policy RD1** relates to the safeguarding of high quality agricultural land resources. It states that: '*Proposals for the development or change of use of agricultural land will only be permitted where this would not result in the loss of the best and most versatile land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a)…*' The proposed site is located on 'Grade 3a' arable land (based upon Natural England's agricultural land classification map). Surrounding land within the applicant's holding is of higher Grade 2 quality. No previously developed land or land of lower quality is available for the proposed scheme. Furthermore, as discussed in context of Policy RD15 below, the proposed intensive livestock development would not be permitted within an urban

area/near land in residential use. In this context, Policy RD1 notes that: '*For development to be permitted on higher grades of land there has to be an overriding need for the development*.' The proposed scheme comprises agricultural development that is considered necessary to address market demand for UK produced poultry meat. More broadly, the proposal is also necessary to help underpin UK food security. The majority of cereals grown within North Lincolnshire and the wider area do not reach a standard sufficient for human consumption (a situation exacerbated by climate change). Poorer quality cereals not fit for flour milling, brewing etc can however be used for poultry feed and developments such as that in question are consequently key to transforming lower quality cereal harvests into a higher calorie food (table chickens) that is ideal for human consumption. The proposal will not put agricultural land out of productive use.

2.4 Local Plan **Policy RD2** concerns 'Development in the Open Countryside' and notes that such will be restricted unless it is '…*essential to the efficient operation of agriculture or forestry*'. As previously stated, the proposal comprises essential agricultural development and it should thus be deemed acceptable in principle. With general reference to policy criteria 'a – f', it is emphasises that: the open countryside is the only appropriate location and development cannot reasonably be accommodated within defined development boundaries (again, note Policy RD15 below); the proposal accords with other relevant 'saved' local plan policies; the development, which merely seeks two poultry houses with ancillary structures, would not be substantially detrimental to the character or appearance of the open countryside or any nearby settlement in terms of siting, scale, massing, design and use of materials; following access upgrades, the proposal would not have any significant detrimental impact upon highway capacity or safety; and the site has been selected for reason that the livestock units are capable of being readily screened by existing/proposed landscaping. At this early EIA screening stage, the proposal therefore appears to accord with the provisions of saved Policy RD2.

2.5 Saved **Policy RD14** of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan specifically relates to 'Agricultural and Forestry Buildings'. It states: '*Agricultural and forestry buildings which require planning permission or prior notification should be sited in close proximity to existing buildings and designed to utilise existing land forms and vegetation to minimise visual impact*.' The application site is not located near an existing agricultural building complex (and neither can it be) but it does benefit from the presence of existing surrounding screening mature hedgerows and woodland. The scheme will also be complemented by additional tree and hedge planting capable of further reducing both landscape and visual impact in the medium to long term (please refer to corresponding 'Landscape & Visual Impact' section below).

2.6 Saved Local Plan **Policy RD15**, which concerns 'Development of Intensive Livestock Units' is clearly most applicable to the proposed scheme. It stipulates that: '*Proposals for new intensive livestock units and associated structures, or the expansion of existing intensive livestock units will only be permitted provided that:*

i) the units are not located within 800 metres of the Scunthorpe and Bottesford Urban Area, principal or medium growth settlement; or

ii) within 400 metres of a minimum growth settlement; or

iii) *within 200 metres of an individual dwelling, excluding those connected with the livestock operation.*'

2.7 The application site's remote rural location was selected in mind of these spatial requirements. As previously described within 'The Site' section of this statement, the proposed units will achieve levels of separation from land in residential use significantly exceeding the minimum thresholds detailed in Policy RD15.

2.8 **Policy RD16** relates to 'Cumulative Effects of Intensive Livestock Units' and that: '*If the existence of a number of intensive livestock units in a locality means that any further units would cause an increase in adverse environmental effects to an unacceptable degree or seriously restrict reasonable expectations of further development of a settlement, then additional units will not be permitted.*' The application site is remote from outlying intensive livestock development. The next most proximate livestock farm is situated over 2.1 kilometres to the north. No applications for livestock development have been identified upon land surrounding the proposed site. An initial examination of in-combination effects arising from ammonia emissions/deposition indicated that all existing local livestock farms are accounted for within background APIS data sets. Cumulative air quality assessment is not therefore required. As expanded upon below, the proposal is not anticipated to give rise to any other cumulative effects and compliance is thus achieved with Policy RD16.

2.9 National Planning Policy Framework (2024) **Paragraph 8** expands upon the term 'sustainable development' in light of its economic, social and environmental components noting: '*Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways…*' The proposed scheme is considered to address the economic, social and environmental dimensions of 'sustainable development' for reason that it will allow an established poultry farm business to diversify into broiler poultry rearing, thereby maximising its long term functional and financial viability. This in turn enables the farm to remain competitive, continue to support a number of employees and create new job opportunities. The application site primarily comprises an area of intensively farmed arable land (plus existing access) and it is not considered to be an environmentally sensitive location. No sensitive ecological receptors are located nearby. The proposal will not have any adverse impact upon land of notable habitat or biodiversity value. Indeed, the proposal will help to deliver biodiversity net gain. The site is sufficiently remote from land in residential and recreational use. The proposal will not compromise levels of amenity afforded by neighbouring land users. The Juniper Green coloured profiled steel sheeting clad poultry units will appear visually congruous against the backdrop of adjacent woodland and high mature field boundary hedgerows. One would typically expect to see poultry farm development in a rural location such as that in question and the proposal will not substantially affect the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape. The agricultural development is arguably sustainable for reason that it will meet the social and economic demands of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. On this basis the proposed scheme should be considered to accord with the strategic emphasis of Paragraph 8.

<u>Landscape & Visual Impact</u>

2.10 Natural England identify the application site and its surroundings as being within '*National Character Area: 45 - Northern Lincolnshire Edge with Coversands*.' The site is situated amidst a remote rural landscape characterised by fields subject to arable use

bounded by drainage ditches and mature hedgerows. The field systems are interspersed with copse/woodland areas and tree belts (note aerial photograph below).

Aerial photograph depicting proposed site and existing access (outlined red) amidst wider agricultural landscape.

2.11 The impact of a development upon the fabric of the landscape is effectively appraised in light of the degree to which the resultant changes will alter the perceived landscape character and landform. It can be observed that proposed buildings/structures will occupy a relatively small area and the site's development will not result in significant loss of farmland or land of habitat value. The fabric of the landscape will nevertheless change as a result of the proposal. This is inevitable given that the undeveloped application site will accommodate 2 No. poultry houses and ancillary structures, thus built form will be introduced to an otherwise arable landscape setting. However, GLVIA3 assessment criteria indicate that the proposed site and surrounding landscape should be regarded as exhibiting moderate sensitivity to change and one would typically expect to see agricultural buildings in a location such as that in question. The local landscape features are aesthetically pleasing, though also relatively ubiquitous and robust. The development scheme will not therefore significantly erode the established local landscape character.

2.12 Landscape impact is also minimised by established surrounding screening copse areas, tree belts and sections of mature hedgerow/tree delineated field boundaries. These substantially limit the perceived geographic extent of the development's landscape impact. The scheme will only be experienced very locally rather than across the wider surrounding landscape character area. The development scheme will not therefore significantly erode the established local North Lincolnshire Edge landscape character. At this early stage, on the basis of Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (GLVIA3) criteria, it is therefore reasonable to conclude that the overall landscape impact of the proposed development will be of small magnitude. It is evident that the new poultry houses and ancillary development will only entail small scale changes to established landscape elements.

2.13 With regard to visual impact, the proposed poultry houses and ancillary feed silos/structures are clearly agricultural in character and one would typically expect to

see buildings of this nature within a remote farmland setting. The locality is host to relatively few visual receptors. At this early stage, it has been identified that only people travelling along an adjoining footpath (runs along part of existing access) will be able to clearly see the development. Views of the proposed units will not readily be gained from residential receptors (isolated dwellings) located over 0.8+ kilometres to the north due to screening imparted by outlying mature field boundary trees/hedgerows. The changes to visual baseline conditions arising from the development will also typically affect a small area of the vistas available from the identified sensitive receptors. In light of GLVIA3 criteria, the scale and geographic extent of the proposed development's visual impact is therefore considered to be small.

2.14 The proposed development will be accompanied by a comprehensive tree and hedge planting scheme. This will have a limited screening effect in the short term but, in the medium (4-9 years) to long term (10+ years), the associated planting scheme is expected to substantially mitigate any visual impact resultant from development of the poultry farm. Screening landscaping measures aside, the proposed units' roof and elevations will be clad in Juniper Green coloured profiled steel sheeting with gable ends clad in traditional timber weatherboarding, which is designed to promote visual integration with the site's countryside surroundings. It should also be noted that the proposed units will not include any notable external lighting (low output motion sensor lamps over front elevations). Adverse visual effects resultant from radiance/light pollution will therefore be avoided. At this early EIA screening stage, based on GLVIA3 assessment criteria, the proposed development's visual impact appears to be of small magnitude.

Transportation

2.15 Vehicular activity is essentially orientated around trips derived from a maximum 7.6 crop cycles per annum. This effectively represents the farm operating at its maximum potential throughput. The farming operation can essentially be divided into two key phases: 1) poultry rearing over a duration of between 38 and 40 days; and 2) unit cleaning and maintenance over a period of approximately 7 days. A typical crop cycle will therefore be completed every 46 days. Each cycle involves the following operations:

- Delivery of woodchip bedding;
- Delivery of LPG fuel;
- Delivery of feed;
- Delivery of chicks
- Crop thinning/removal of deceased birds;
- Catching of reared birds; and
- Removal of waste.

2.16 It is anticipated that the proposed units will need to be serviced by approximately 33 goods vehicles (HGV's) per crop cycle. Accounting for access and egress (return journeys), each 46 day crop cycle will therefore generate 66 goods vehicle derived trips. With a maximum of 7.6 crop cycles each year, it is reasonable to assume that the proposed units will account for approximately 502 delivery vehicle trips (including return journeys) per annum.

Operation	Vehicle Type	Vehicle Numbers Required Each Crop Cycle	Anticipated Days of Trip Occurrence During 46 day cycle	Vehicle Trips Per annum (two way trips - access and egress)
Delivery of Chicks	16 tonne HGV	3	Day 1	22.8 (45.6)
Delivery of Feed	38 tonne HGV	10	Approximately every 7 days	76 (152)
Delivery of Bedding	38 tonne HGV	1	Day 45	7.6 (15.2)
Removal of Deceased Birds	16 tonne HGV	1	As necessary from days 1-40	7.6 (15.2)
Catching of Birds	21 tonne HGV	13	Days 38 - 40	98.8 (197.6)
Removal of Waste	25 tonne HGV	4	Days 41-43	30.4 (60.8)
LPG Fuel Delivery	25 tonne HGV	1	As necessary from days 1-46	7.6 (15.2)
Total	n/a	**33**	n/a	**250.8 (501.6)**

Table 1: Operational Vehicle Trip Data

2.17 Taking the above into account, on average it is reasonable to anticipate that over the course of any given year, 1 No. HGV will access the poultry farm every 1.5 days. The vehicle trip data included in Table 1 does not account for employee derived commuter traffic. The proposed scheme will create 2 No. full time jobs. This is likely to generate between 4 and 6 vehicle trips (private car/van) per day. The number of employee derived trips associated with the proposed development/operation will therefore be of minor significance.

2.18 It should also be noted that vehicle trips associated with LPG fuel deliveries will reduce during late spring, summer and early autumn months. Average real world HGV activity is therefore likely to be marginally lower than outlined in Table 1.

2.19 The operational trip generation data does not take into account the proposed development's construction phase. This will be a short term event (less than 5 months). Trip data is currently unavailable.

2.20 As aforementioned within the introductory 'The Site' section of this statement, access to the proposed development will be facilitated via formation of new concrete surfaced hardstanding connected through a gap within existing hedgerow to an established farm track. The compacted aggregate surfaced farm track will allow vehicles to progress 170 metres northwards along a route parallel with the site/wider field's boundary before turning westward and progressing approximately 1.8 kilometres to a point of juncture with Redbourne Road. The existing private carriageway/highway junction will need to be improved to better facilitate HGV access. Though trips associated with the broiler rearing operation are logistically managed to avoid two HGV's accessing/egressing the site at the same time, it is anticipated that passing places will need to be included along the private carriageway to assist with traffic arising from the development's construction phase. It should be noted that the North Lincolnshire 'definitive map'

identifies that a 600 metre section of the farm track located closest to the application site also comprises the route of a public footpath.

2.21 At this preliminary EIA screening stage, it is considered that the public highway can amply accommodate the level of vehicular activity indicated above without adverse effects upon highway safety or traffic congestion subject to improvement of the existing private carriageway.

Noise

2.22 Operation of the proposed poultry units will give rise to various potential sources of noise. These include: vehicular activity; ventilation fans; feed silo operation; and noise generated by the actual poultry.

2.23 Each poultry unit will incorporate 18 No. electrically powered high velocity (11 m/s) roof ridge mounted ventilation fans (36 fans in combination). The fans comprise part of an automatic climate control system that regulates temperature in the units. The fans typically generate a sound level of 55dBA (recorded at a distance of 7 metres). The units will also incorporate gable end fans. These are not however ordinarily active, their purpose being emergency cooling during periods of extreme hot weather/failure of roof mounted fans. There are no sensitive noise receptors within 400 metres of the proposed units. The closest residential property comprises a farmhouse situated over 800 metres to the north of the site. This lack of proximate sensitive receptors (e.g. land in conventional domestic use) indicates that the relatively low levels of noise generated from these sources will not prove to be of nuisance (or indeed perceptible). The impact of ventilation derived noise emissions is not therefore anticipated to be significant.

2.24 Noise attributed to the actual poultry is not typically audible outside of the poultry units and can therefore be discounted. Feed silo operation also comprises a low level noise emission that is unlikely to be detectable beyond the immediate confines of the poultry units. The filling of the feed silos generates noise characteristically audible beyond the immediate confines of the application site. However, this operation is both brief, infrequent and only undertaken during conventional daytime working hours. Noise disturbance from these sources is not therefore anticipated.

2.25 As detailed within the above Transport section of this document, a number of HGV's and tractor/trailer units are required to service the development. The frequency of vehicular activity is relatively low and noise attributed to such will be notably less than one would typically expect to arise from the use of surrounding roads/arable field cultivation. Noise generated by vehicular activity is not considered to be of significance given that the site and access road are remote from outlying dwellings.

2.26 In context of the above, it is summarised that the proposed site is remote (0.8+ kilometres) from sensitive receptors, such as dwellings in conventional residential use. The proposed development is not synonymous with operations/systems known to generate significant noise pollution. It is not therefore anticipated that the proposed scheme will give rise any detrimental daytime/nighttime noise impact (under BS4142) either in the short, medium or long term.

Air Quality

2.27 Adverse impacts upon air quality arise from gaseous, particulate and volatile organic compounds. All of these can result in foul odour and pollution. Odour, gaseous and particulate emissions from poultry units typically derive from a number of sources. Primarily, they are caused by the breakdown of faeces and urine in combination with waste food spilt onto floors, the scent glands of animals and the actual animal feed. The following factors also typically contribute to gaseous, odorous and particulate emissions from poultry units:

- Any build-up of manure on concrete areas around buildings;
- The removal and disposal of dead animals;
- The maintenance of drains;
- The cleanliness of bedding;
- The cleanliness of the poultry house;
- The management of drinking systems, with particular emphasis on frequently adjusting nipple and drip cups to birds eye level to avoid spillage and wet litter;
- The stocking density;
- The moisture content of the litter;
- The insulation of the buildings and the long-term maintenance;
- The ventilation system;
- The type of heating; and
- The composition of the feed, particularly its oil and fat content.

2.28 In light of the above, it can be noted that the floors of the proposed units will be constructed of impermeable concrete and poultry litter accumulating thereon will be removed at the end of each 38 day rearing cycle. The unit will be automatically temperature controlled via LPG heating combined with a series of vents and roof mounted ventilation fans, which are designed to regulate air flow through the unit. The electrical fans integrated into roof mounted chimney stacks will facilitate high velocity extraction. This system reduces the levels of odour and ammonia emissions by facilitating excellent plume dispersion and ensuring that the litter has a low moisture content of below 40%.

2.29 Particulate matter/dust pollution will be minimised by 'control at source' measures. In accordance with EA guidance, these include: the use of wood shaving bedding (as opposed to wheat or barley straw); use of feed pellets (where ingredients are less dusty by virtue of being bound together), and good management including rigorous cleaning of units at the end of cycles and, when birds are in situ, via regular use of industrial vacuum cleaner systems to remove dust build up. DEFRA guidance on local air quality indicates that, given the enclosed nature and scale of the proposed development/operation and the application site's remoteness from sensitive receptors, adverse effects arising from release of particulate matter are considered to be highly improbable.

2.30 As previously stated, new contractual animal welfare requirements came into force in 2023, following implementation of the Better Chicken Commitment. This has resulted in a new lower 30kg/m^2 stocking density standard being applied across most of the UK. At this density, each of the proposed units will be capable of rearing up to 36,486 broiler

chickens (combined 72,972 bird places) every crop cycle (with 7.5 cycles per annum). For simplicity, this figure has been rounded up to a combined 73,000 birds per cycle for the purposes of air quality assessment.

2.31 Air quality specialists AS Modelling & Data Ltd were commissioned at the project's inception in order to assess the potential odour impact of the proposed development/operation upon outlying sensitive receptors. Attention is drawn to the submitted odour impact assessment report: *AS Modelling & Data Ltd, 2025, A Dispersion Modelling Study of the Impact of Odour from the Proposed Poultry Houses at Land off Redbourne Road, Redbourne, Gainsborough in Lincolnshire*.

2.32 Odour emission rates from the proposed poultry houses have been assessed and quantified based upon an emissions model that takes into account the likely internal odour concentrations and ventilation rates of the poultry houses. The odour emission rates so obtained have then been used as inputs to an atmospheric dispersion model (ADMS) which calculates odour exposure levels in the surrounding area.

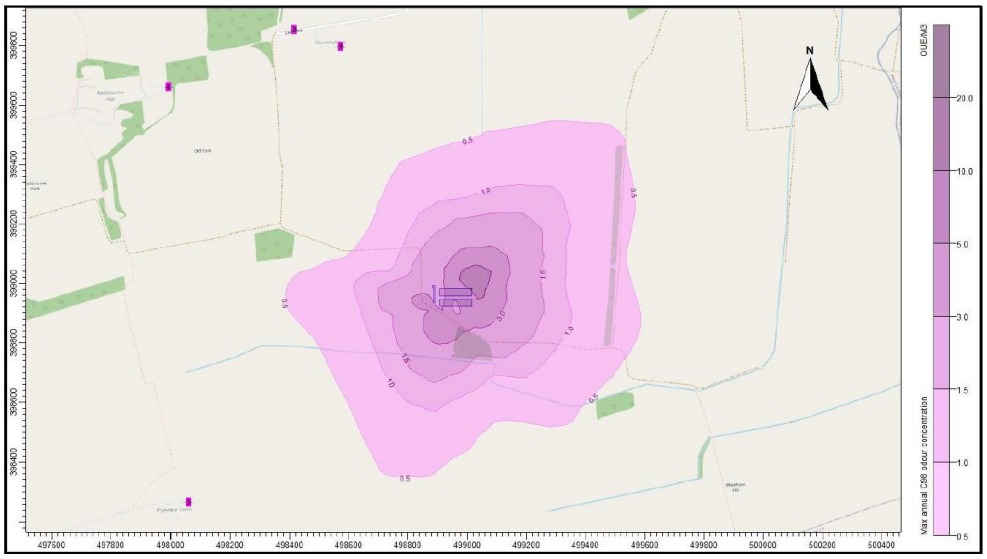


Figure 7 extract: Predicted maximum annual 98th percentile hourly mean odour concentration

2.33 As evident within Sections 5 and 6 of the submitted report, ADMS predicts that there would be no exceedances of the Environment Agency's benchmark for moderately offensive odours, which is a maximum annual 98th percentile hourly mean concentration of 3.0 ouE/m3 at any of the sensitive residential receptors considered. Indeed, the contour diagram (figure 7 extract included above) clearly shows that the most proximate receptors (dwellings 1 – 4) will experience no tangible change over baseline conditions. The proposed development's odour impact will thus be insignificant.

2.34 With regard to ammonia emissions, it should be noted that NH_3 is a well-known by-product of poultry farming. Concentrations of gaseous ammonia are hazardous to both human health and the welfare of flora/fauna habitats. Factors leading to the production of ammonia are noted to comprise: the amount of degradable nitrogen in the litter which is influenced by the rate of conversion of feed based nitrogen to muscle; and the conditions within the litter to facilitate microbial activity, which is influenced by the moisture content of the litter as well as temperature.

2.35 Ammonia emissions have the potential to adversely affect areas of ecological/habitat value. It has been identified that there are nine areas designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within 10 kilometres of the proposed site (the normal screening distance for statutory sites). No areas of Ancient Woodland (AW) or Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) have been identified within 2 kilometres of the site (the normal screening distance for non-statutory sites). There are also no internationally designated sites within the statutory screening distance. Air quality specialists AS Modelling & Data Ltd were accordingly commissioned to investigate whether ammonia emissions arising from the proposed broiler poultry farm/rearing operation (stocked with a maximum of 73,000 birds per cycle) would give rise to adverse environmental effects at outlying ecological receptors. Reference should duly be made to the submitted report: '*AS Modelling & Data Ltd, 2025, A Report on the Modelling of the Dispersion and Deposition of Ammonia from the Proposed Poultry Houses at Land off Redbourne Road, Redbourne, Gainsborough in Lincolnshire*.'

2.36 Ammonia emission rates derived from the existing and proposed broiler poultry units have been assessed and quantified based upon the Environment Agency's latest (January 2024) ammonia emission factor of 0.024 kg-NH_3/bird place/year. The consequent ammonia emission rates have then been used as inputs for an atmospheric dispersion and deposition model, which calculates ammonia exposure levels and nitrogen and acid deposition rates in the surrounding area. Section 5 of the submitted ammonia impact assessment includes full data for the model runs undertaken and subsequent results. A copy of 'Figure 7a' is included below for quick reference. It can be observed that maximum annual mean ammonia concentrations are very low beyond the immediate confines of the proposed site and that the plume does not encroach near any outlying statutory ecological sites.

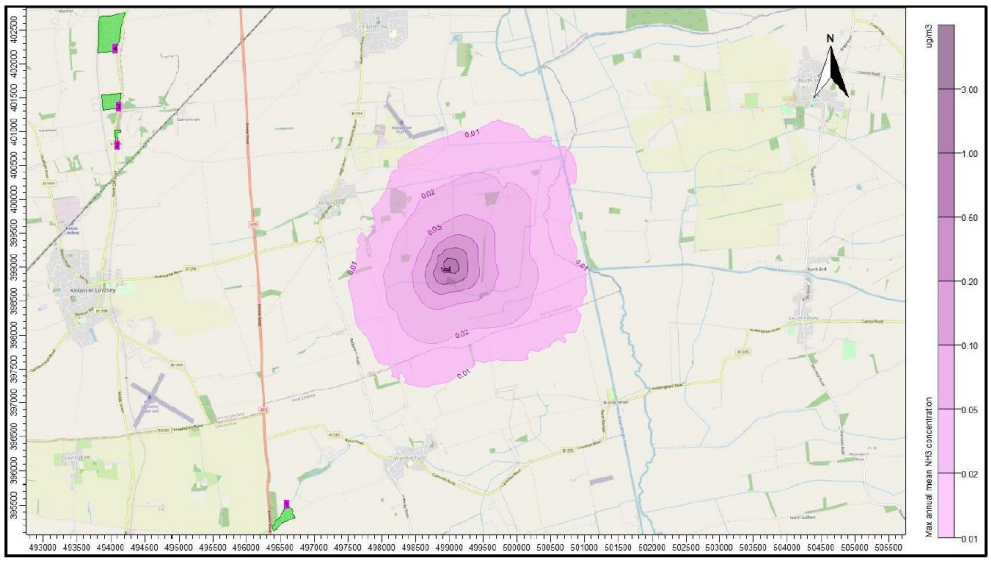


Figure 7a extract: *Maximum annual mean ammonia concentration*

2.37 As stated within Section 6 of the submitted report, the modelling predicts that, at all the wildlife sites considered, the process contribution to ammonia concentration and nitrogen deposition rate would be below the relevant Environment Agency lower threshold percentage of the relevant Critical Level or Critical Load. It is also evident that the process contributions would be significantly below 1% of the relevant Critical

Level or Critical Load at all sites. Natural England's standard methodology also indicates that there will be no requirement for 'in-combination' assessment.

2.38 On this basis it can be concluded that ammonia emissions arising from the proposed development/operation will have no significant environmental impact in the short, medium or long term.

Hydrology & Flood Risk

2.39 The Environment Agency flood risk map indicates that the site is located within Flood Zone 1. It is not therefore identified as being at risk of fluvial flooding. The locality has not historically been subject to localised flooding or surface water drainage issues. As depicted upon the proposed site layout plan, the development scheme accounts for an easement of at least 9.0 metres from the IDB maintained land drain adjoining the site's eastern boundary, thus ensuring ease of future access.

2.40 Nevertheless, paragraph 181 (footnote 63) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 stipulates that a site specific flood risk assessment will be required when an application site exceeds an area of 1.0 hectares. The entirety of the application site, which includes the existing access, encompasses an area of 2+ hectares. Accordingly, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will need to be undertaken in support of any future planning application. This will inform the surface water drainage scheme and demonstrate that the proposed development will not give rise to localised flooding/drainage problems.

2.41 It is operationally desirable for the uncontaminated surface water drainage and attenuation system to avoid the creation of large swales or ponds for reason that these can attract wildfowl, which presents a biosecurity risk in the form of Avian Influenza. In light of this requirement, it is intended that the proposed scheme will be served by a subterranean PVC crate attenuation system. This will effectively comprise a cellular crate soakaway/storage void located around the perimeter of the proposed units. Roof water will be collected and discharged thereto by a series of gutters and drain pipes. Under heavy or prolonged rainfall, the crate system will provide sufficient storage capacity to allow excess roof water to discharge at a controlled rate of 5.0 litres/second into the adjacent land drain. If the cellular crate soakaway proves unsuitable at the detailed design phase, an alternative open attenuation basin system will be utilised.

2.42 With regard to water resource protection/pollution prevention measures, it should be noted that all water used for cleaning out the poultry units will drain into a sealed 15,000 litre tank located beneath land to the immediate west of the poultry units. The foul water will be collected and removed from the farm via a specialist contractor then disposed of as manure for spreading upon farmland in accordance with the Code of Good Agricultural Practice (DEFRA, 2009). The proposed development will not give rise to contamination of groundwater. The site will be regulated via an Environment Agency IPPC permit.

Ecology & Nature Conservation

2.43 The application site was historically subject to intensive arable use for many years. Continuous ground preparation, crop growing and harvesting has resulted in the

application site exhibiting limited habitat value (low biodiversity baseline). The development will not require the removal of any trees/hedgerows or features of habitat significance.

2.44 However, in order to address the requirements of recently introduced Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the site and its surroundings will be subject to ecological assessment and a landscaping scheme implemented to deliver 10+% biodiversity net gain. There is every reason to believe that BNG is readily deliverable.

2.45 At this early EIA screening phase, it was considered appropriate to undertake a 'Preliminary Ecological Appraisal' (PEA) encompassing both the proposed site and wider associated field in order to better understand ecological baseline conditions and inform the layout/positioning of the proposed development. Specialists Archer Ecology Ltd were accordingly commissioned to undertake the PEA and attention is duly drawn to the submitted report: *Archer Ecology Ltd, 2025, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal – Land near Redbourne, Gainsborough*.

2.46 As noted within Section 3 of the submitted PEA report, a UKHabs Survey and ecological walkover of the application site and wider associated field was carried out by Senior Ecologist Kiran Johal MZool (Hons) ACIEEM on 10th January 2025. The walkover was supplemented by records of protected species, priority habitats and statutory/non-statutory designated nature conservation sites falling within 2-10 kilometres of the application site.

2.47 Section 5 of the submitted PEA outlines a series of conclusions and recommendations. In relation to 'Habitats and Biodiversity', paragraph 5.1.1 emphasises that: '*The proposed development plan has been designed to minimise impacts on habitats with biodiversity value. The access track will utilise an existing access gap within H1* [western boundary]*, furthermore an easement will be incorporated at the site which will act as a buffer to H2* [eastern boundary] *and its associated drain. It is considered that the only habitat that will be impacted by the proposed works is the arable land which is of low value to nature conservation*.' In accordance with the associated recommendations outlined in paragraphs 5.1.2 to 5.1.4, any subsequent planning application will utilise the Statutory Biodiversity metric calculation tool to appraise the impacts of the proposed works on the existing biodiversity of this site. At this early stage, it is intended that the triangular area of land within site's southern confines will be used to provide good quality mitigating BNG landscaping. Additional boundary landscaping will also be provided to deliver visual screening etc, though this will be outside the specific scope of BNG mitigation. It is also emphasised that the proposed development will seek to safeguard existing habitats including boundary trees and hedgerows. The proposal will not give rise to ground/water pollution (with a number of safeguards being in place to ensure this).

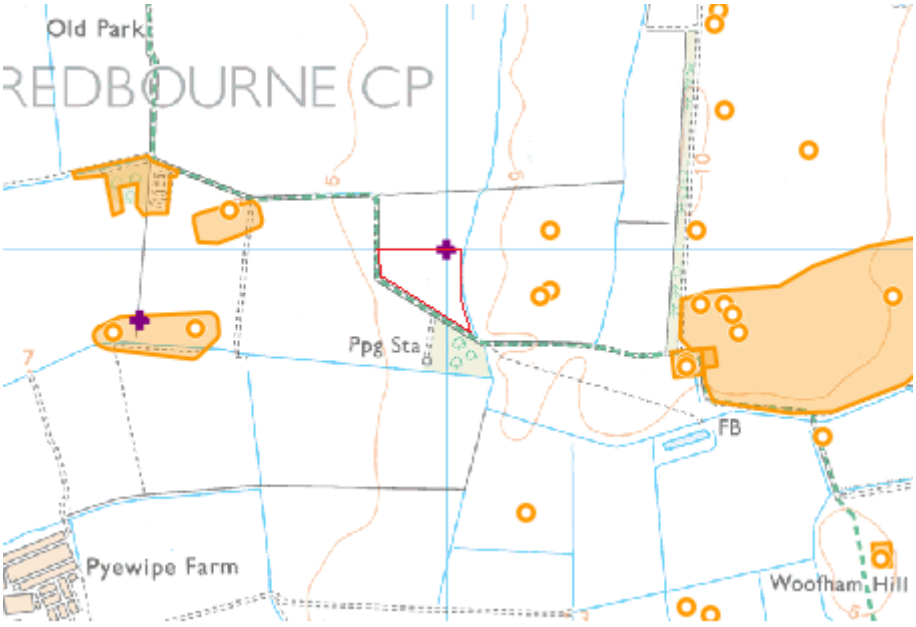
2.48 Consideration was also given to the potential impact of the proposed development upon birds, bats, badgers plus other small mammals (such as otters and water voles), amphibians and reptiles. As stated within section 4.3 of the submitted PEA, there was no clear evidence of protected species occupying the site, though it is possible that boundary areas host to hedgerows and drains could be used for foraging/future occupation. A series of safeguarding/mitigating measures are thus outlined within sections 5.4 to 5.6 of the submitted PEA.

2.49 At this EIA screening stage, there is no evidence to suggest that the proposed development will have any significant ecological impact in the short, medium or long term. There is also good reason to believe that the proposal is capable of delivering habitat enhancement exceeding the statutory minimum of 10% BNG.

Archaeology & Heritage

2.50 Paragraph 207 of the recently updated National Planning Policy Framework (2024) stipulates that: '*In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.*'

2.51 A search of the North Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record (HER) has highlighted the presence of various archaeological features within the landscape surrounding the proposed site.
The OS based image from the 'Heritage Gateway' database depicts the application site (outlined red) relative to areas of know archaeological potential (orange circles and shading).



Heritage Gateway database depicting locations of identified archaeological features/remains relative to proposed site (outlined red).

2.52 It is evident that there are three features/artefacts recoded circa 170+ metres to the east of the proposed site. These comprise an early Neolithic to early Bronze Age flint flake (HER Ref: 19371) and possible evidence (cropmark) of an enclosure of unknown date (HER Ref: 2380). Similarly, cropmarks of unknown date (HER Ref: 10764) indicating historic enclosures/field systems are situated approximately 280+ metres to the west of

the site and 300+ metres to the southwest (HER Ref: 19441 – enclosure of possible Roman origin). The Humber Wetlands Survey (Ancholme and Lower Trent Valleys) uncovered Roman Pottery sherds in the locality of the proposed site and wider area. It is thus concluded, at this early stage, that there is some potential for Neolithic, Bronze Age and Roman era features/remains to be present within the defined site boundary.

2.53 A search of Historic England's database has identified that there are no designated heritage assets in or adjacent to the proposed site. The most proximate designated heritage assets comprise Redbourne Hall (Grade II* Listed Building – LEN: 1083715) with four Grade II listed curtilage structures and historic parkland/grounds. These are situated 1+ kilometres to the northwest of the proposed site. Nevertheless, initial examination suggests that the degree of spatial separation and presence of multiple screening features (topography, woodland area and mature field boundary hedgerows) will result in extremely limited/no intervisibility between the designated heritage assets and proposed development. The new agricultural buildings will not have any physical impact upon the fabric/curtilage of the listed buildings. Neither will they intrude within key views (foreground or background) available from vantage points including the listed buildings/structures and associated historic grounds. At this preliminary EIA screening stage, it is reasonable to state that the proposal will not adversely affect the settings of the designated heritage assets.

2.54 On the basis of the above, for the purposes of EIA screening, it is concluded that there are no known archaeological resources/features within the application site. However, site is considered to have some archaeological potential on the basis of data contained within the Historic Environment Record. It is also evident that the proposal is unlikely to have any tangible impact upon the fabric or wider setting of designated heritage assets. For these reasons, it can be stated that adverse archaeological/heritage impacts arising from the proposal are likely to be of low significance and capable of mitigation.

Population

2.55 A concern commonly associated with intensive livestock units is their potential impact upon levels of residential amenity afforded by surrounding occupants. Under normal conditions, the effects of pollution typically diffuse as the distance from the source increases. Although controls (regulated in accordance with the site's EA permit) will be in place to minimise adverse effects, it is reasonable to state that potential impacts will be more tangible in closer proximity to the agricultural development. The proposed site is therefore considered to exhibit preferential spatial attributes by virtue of its remote location. No land in residential use or other sensitive receptors (schools, places of employment etc) are located within 400 metres of the proposed site.

2.56 The most proximate settlement comprises the village of Redbourne, which is located 1.6+ kilometre to the northwest of the proposed site. The closest sensitive receptor comprises an isolated dwelling located well in excess of 0.8 kilometres to the north of the proposed units. Other outlying dwellings are situated circa 1+ kilometres from the site. As detailed within the 'Air Quality' and 'Noise' sections of this EIA Screening Opinion Request document, the remoteness of these receptors indicates that the development/operation is unlikely to have any tangible impact upon existing levels of residential amenity.

2.57 With regard to concerns over potential nuisance arising from flies, it is emphasised that the poultry units will be regularly cleaned at the end of each crop cycle and fly infestation is not considered to be an issue in modern high welfare poultry units (of the type proposed). The litter will have a low moisture content which will reduce the ability of flies to breed. Flies require a source of food, water and an organic substrate to lay their eggs. This organic matter needs to have a moisture content of between 40% and 70% in order for their eggs to be viable and allow for metamorphosis from egg to larva, pupa and adult fly to progress normally. The climatically controlled units will achieve an average bedding/litter moisture content of less than 40%. This environment is therefore unsuitable for fly breeding.

2.58 In context of the above, it is reasonable to state that the proposed development is not anticipated to give rise to any environmental effects (in isolation or cumulation) that might prove detrimental to levels of residential amenity or human health.

3.0 SUMMARY

3.1 The Local Planning Authority's 'Screening Opinion' is sought under Regulation 6(1) of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 for a scheme seeking development of two 36,486 bird capacity broiler units (under 73,000 combined bird places) with ancillary structures and hardstanding upon Land off Redbourne Road, Redbourne, Gainsborough.

3.2 An initial assessment of the proposed site and its wider context indicates that the agricultural development will have a negligible environmental impact with no tangible cumulative effects. Subject to access improvements, it is not anticipated that the development will give rise to traffic problems or compromise highway safety. Neither will it result in adverse effects such as harmful levels of nitrogen deposition, odour nuisance, water/ground pollution or harm to the locality's biodiversity. Environment Agency IPPC permit compliant site management and engineering solutions will avoid problems arising from dust, odour, noise, or flies. The proposed units will have a limited zone of visual influence and surrounding existing/proposed landscaping can predominantly screen views the development in the short, medium and long term. The development's magnitude of landscape and visual impact is therefore anticipated to be small. The proposal appears to align with the relevant provisions of the statutory Development Plan and national planning policy. Such will not therefore undermine strategic or environmental policies/set an unwelcome precedent.

3.3 In context of the above, though the size of the proposed development indicates that screening is required under Schedule 2, an examination of Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations and National Planning Practice Guidance suggests that an Environmental Impact Assessment would not ordinarily be required. Nevertheless, clarification is sought from the LPA before a planning application is advanced further.