

## DELEGATED ASSESSMENT

**Application no:** PA/2025/776

**Proposal:** Planning permission to erect single-storey farm office building

**Location:** Mendle Farm, Holme Lane, Holme, Scunthorpe, DN16 3RF

**Applicant:** Mr John Richardson

**Officer:** Jennifer Ashworth

## POLICY

**National Planning Policy Framework:** Chapter 2 – Achieving sustainable development, Chapter 4 – Decision making, Chapter 6: Building a strong, competitive economy, Chapter 9 – Promoting sustainable transport, Chapter 11 – Making effective use of land, Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed places, Chapter 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding, and coastal change.

**Saved Policies of the Local Plan (2003)** – RD2: Development in the open countryside, DS1: General Requirements, DS3: Planning Out Crime, DS7: Contaminated Land, DS14: Foul Sewage and Surface Water Drainage, DS16: Flood Risk, T2 – Access to Development, T19: Car Parking Provision and Standards and Appendix 2

**Core Strategy (2011)** – CS1: Spatial Strategy for North Lincolnshire, CS2: Delivering More Sustainable Development, CS3: Development Limits, CS5: Delivering Quality Design in North Lincolnshire, CS17: Biodiversity, CS19: Flood Risk

**Housing and Employment Land Allocations DPD (2016)** - The site lies within the open countryside outside the development limits as shown on the proposals map.

## CONSULTATIONS

**Environmental Protection:** No objections subject to a watching condition being applied.

**LLFA Drainage:** The LLFA requested a surface water design and drainage strategy to be submitted to ensure the site could be adequately drained. The applicant prepared and submitted the required information and the LLFA have since reviewed and consider the submitted information to be acceptable. The agent has also confirmed that the soakaway is within the applicant's ownership as was questioned by the LLFA through discussions. A compliance condition is recommended.

**Highways:** No objection. Vehicle movements will be minimal and associated with the existing use of the property.

## **PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL**

Messingham Parish Council has no objections.

## **PUBLICITY**

A site notice was displayed on 25/06/2025 in accordance with article 15 of the DMPO 2015.

## **Comments**

- No comments received.

## **MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Planning History**

- PA/2019/1860 - Application for approval of reserved matters (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to outline application PA/2019/547 dated 31/07/2019 to erect an agricultural workers dwelling - Approve with Conditions - 24/12/2019
- PA/2019/547 - Outline planning permission to erect agricultural workers dwelling with all matters reserved - Approve with Conditions - 31/07/2019
- 7/1977/0776 - Planning permission to make alterations to a dwelling to erect a two storey extension comprising kitchen, dining and bedroom accommodation and to erect a detached domestic garage - Approve with Conditions - 11/11/1977
- PA/2025/405 - Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed small single storey office building - withdrawn
- PA/2025/548 - Planning permission to erect single-storey farm office building - withdrawn

### **Planning Designations / Considerations**

The site lies within the open countryside outside the development limits.

The site is not located within a Conservation Area and there are no TPO's or Listed Buildings within the site. Two TPO trees are located east of the site outside the redline boundary east of the access track to the wider farm.

The site is located within SFRA Flood Zone 1 which is considered to be low risk of flooding.

## **THE SITE / PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

### **PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

Planning permission to erect single-storey farm office building. A separate planning application is also sought for the erection of an agricultural workers dwelling to the south of the site, which has previously being granted permission in a slightly different location.

The site is part of a wider farming business. The unit consists of 638 acres of arable land around Home, Scawby and Sturton, together with an additional 2000 acres of crop harvesting and baling in the north Lincolnshire area. The business has been in operation for almost thirty years and can support up to 5 full time workers. The applicant currently lives in a rented property near Sturton, but the tenancy is coming to an end and the applicant wishes to build a dwelling to serve the agricultural unit on land that is in his ownership. There is no other dwelling on the unit, and no nearby dwellings available for sale or rent. The site at Mendle Farm is a small but established complex of farm buildings with existing access on to Holme Lane. It is set back from the main road and is difficult to see from most public views.

## **PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT**

The development plan for North Lincolnshire comprises three parts: those policies of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan (2003) (LP) which were saved by a direction of the Secretary of State in September 2007, the North Lincolnshire Core Strategy DPD (2011) (CS), and the Housing and Employment Land Allocations DPD (2016) (HELAP).

The combined effect of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that a planning application should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Due to its location outside of any defined development boundary, the application site is considered to be in the open countryside for the purposes of planning. Residential development is only permitted in the open countryside by policy RD2 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan where, employment related development appropriate to the open countryside are permitted subject to certain criteria being met. In this instance it is considered that the proposed office building is justified in that it relates to the existing Mendle Farm operations and is of a scale which is considered appropriate for the proposed use and existing operations at the site.

The appraisal confirms that the business has been operating for nearly thirty years and since those early days, the business has continued to be a profitable and growing business. Operating from the farmyard at Station Farm, Sturton Mr Richardson has operated as a sole trader. He has now been joined by his daughter Emily who has recently gained a degree in agriculture. Emily is now a partner in the business with her father. This gives opportunity for the business to grow. The business supports three employees in addition to Mr Richardson. The work force has grown over the years from 1 to 5 and the applicant seeks for this to continue to increase as the business grows. There is office located at the site and the office will be accessed both from the garden of the property to the south and the access track serving the wider farm.

The supporting appraisal sets out a clear need for an office on site to be used for administrative tasks linked to the wider farming business.

The information submitted with the application demonstrates that the business is long established and viable.

Planning policy, both local and national seeks to limit development in the open countryside to that which is essential for the functioning of the open countryside. It is considered that the applicant has demonstrated that an office relates to the existing use of the wider site and is appropriate within this countryside context and as such accords with Policy RD2 of the Local Plan.

### **Residential Amenity**

Policy RD2 requires development not to be detrimental to residential amenity. The proposed office is single storey in height and to be positioned to the rear of the existing property on site (subject to a separate planning application PA/2025/777) There will be no physical boundary between the office and dwelling. The office will be used by occupants of the dwelling and those working within the wider farming business. Access is via the existing farm access and direct from the rear garden of the property.

Given the residential property is to be occupied by the applicant and will include an agricultural occupancy tie, the provision of an office linked to the farming operations is considered acceptable. It is not considered that the erection of the office will generate very many additional vehicle movements in the area as the admin is largely to be undertaken by Mr Richardsons daughter and occupants of the existing dwelling.

It is not considered that there would be any residential amenity issues as a result of the development given the agricultural tie linked to the property.

It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with policies RD2 and DS1 of the Local Plan.

### **Layout / Scale / Appearance and Design**

It is considered that the siting of the proposed development is acceptable, the office is sited adjacent existing agricultural buildings and to the north (rear) of the proposed residential property.

The building is single storey in height measuring 7m in length by 4m in depth and will include an admin area, store room and wash room / WC. The building will include four windows, two on the southern elevation and one the western and eastern elevations. Access is from the east.

The development includes the following materials:

- Brickwork – Heritage blend or similar brickwork
- Roof Tiles – marley Edgemere grey slate or similar
- Windows – off white UPVC foil wrapped
- Rainwater goods – Black upvc

It is considered that the development would accord with the relevant development plan policies and the NPPF.

### **HIGHWAYS / ACCESS**

Policy T2 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan is concerned with access to development and states that all development should be served by a satisfactory access. Policy T19 of the Local Plan is concerned with parking provision as well as general safety and is also considered relevant.

The site is accessed via the existing track which serves the wider farm. The dwelling includes sufficient off-street parking to serve the office and highways have no objections.

It is considered that a safe access can be achieved at the site. Vehicle movements will be minimal and associated with the existing use of the property.

It is considered that the proposed scheme would be acceptable and accords with the relevant policies of the development plan.

### **Contamination**

The Environmental Protection department commented on the discharge of conditions application (PA/2020/828) where remediation was required, however the new proposed office building has now changed the requirements of the previously agreed soft landscaped areas that required remediation. A watching condition is recommended to address potential for contamination at the site during the development period.

It is considered that with the recommended condition the proposed scheme would be acceptable and accords with the relevant policies of the development plan.

### **Drainage**

The site is located within Flood Zone 1.

The LLFA Drainage have reviewed the proposals along with the drainage information and consider the information is acceptable and provides an appropriate drainage solution for the site. A compliance condition is recommended to ensure the proposed drainage strategy is implemented in accordance with the submitted information. The applicant has confirmed in writing that the proposed soakaway will be located within land which whilst outside the redline boundary is within the applicants ownership.

It is considered that with the recommended condition the development is acceptable in flood risk and drainage terms.

### **Ecology**

Policy CS17 of the North Lincolnshire Core Strategy is concerned with biodiversity. It seeks to achieve a net gain for habitat wildlife networks and general biodiversity improvements. It is reinforced by paragraph 170 of the NPPF which is also relevant.

Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021) provides that every grant of planning permission shall be subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met, further subject to exemptions. This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat.

The Planning Policy Guidance further provides that Change of use schemes will be subject to BNG, although sites covered in 'existing sealed surfaces' (e.g. tarmac or existing buildings) will have a zero baseline score - and 10% of zero is still zero. Whilst BNG will not be required, planning authorities and a developer's stakeholders may still require biodiversity improvements to be made.

There are, however, specified exemptions to the BNG requirement which are set out in the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, and which includes the de minimis exemption which states:

“4.—(1) The biodiversity gain planning condition does not apply in relation to planning permission for development which meets the first and second conditions.  
(2) The first condition is that the development does not impact an onsite priority habitat.  
(3) The second condition is that the development impacts—  
(a) less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value(1) greater than zero; and  
(b) less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat.”

The applicant states that the above exemption applies in this case, given that the development relates to an area less than 25 sqm. It is agreed in this case that exemption 4 of the above Regulations does indeed apply and BNG is not applicable in this case.

### **Conclusion**

The principle of development on the site is acceptable. The applicant has justified the need for an office building on site to serve the wider business and the LPA is satisfied that the development accords with the statutory development plan at this time.

It is considered that the development has been designed to a high standard and quality and there are no technical reasons to refuse development. It is therefore recommended that this planning application is approved, subject to the recommended conditions.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Grant Planning Permission subject to the following conditions: