APPLICATION NO	**PA/2025/643**
APPLICANT	Elsham Tech Park Ltd
DEVELOPMENT	Outline planning permission for the construction of a data centre park, including ancillary offices, internal plant and cooling equipment, emergency backup generators with associated fuel storage, district heating centre, flexible commercial/amenity building(s) (Use Classes E, F1 and F2) and construction of buildings for agricultural purposes; other works include means of access, internal roads and footpaths, cycle and car parking, hard and soft landscaping, security gatehouses and perimeter fencing, lighting, drainage, pumping station, electricity substation(s), energy generation/storage, undergrounding of overhead power lines and other associated works, infrastructure and ground remodelling including creation of landscaped bunds, with all matters reserved for subsequent consideration - each phase of the development to be a severable component
LOCATION	Land adjacent to Elsham Wolds Industrial Estate, North Lincolnshire
PARISH	**ELSHAM**
WARD	Brigg and Wolds
CASE OFFICER	Dean Watson
SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION	**Minded to approve subject to the resolution of National Highways' holding objection and signing of s106 agreement**
REASONS FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE	Departure from the development plan Objection by Elsham Parish Council

POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

2 Achieving sustainable development

4 Decision-making

6 Building a strong, competitive economy

8 Promoting healthy and safe communities

9 Promoting sustainable transport

11 Making effective use of land

12 Achieving well-designed places

14 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

North Lincolnshire Local Plan (NLLP):

RD2 Development in the open countryside

LC1 Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites

LC5 Species protection

LC6 Habitat creation

LC7 Landscape protection

LC12 Protection of trees, woodland and hedgerows

T1 Location of development

T2 Access to development

T3 Transport assessments

T6 Pedestrian routes and footpaths

T8 Cyclists and development

T15 Highway improvements and new highway construction

T18 Traffic management

T19 Car parking provision and standards

DS1 General requirements

DS3 Planning out crime

DS9 Development of land in the vicinity of established hazardous installations and pipelines

DS11 Polluting activities

DS12 Light pollution

DS13 Groundwater protection and land drainage

DS14 Foul sewage and surface water drainage

DS16 Flood risk

DS21 Renewable energy

HE9 Archaeological evaluation

North Lincolnshire Core Strategy (NLCS):

CS1 Spatial strategy for North Lincolnshire

CS2 Delivering more sustainable development

CS3 Development limits

CS5 Delivering quality design in North Lincolnshire

CS6 Historic environment

CS11 Provision and distribution of employment land

CS13 Lifelong learning and skills

CS16 North Lincolnshire's landscape, greenspace and waterscape

CS17 Biodiversity

CS18 Sustainable resource use and climate change

CS19 Flood risk

CS20 Sustainable waste management

CS22 Community facilities and services

CS23 Sport, recreation and open space

CS24 Health care provision

CS25 Promoting sustainable transport

CS26 Strategic transport infrastructure

CS27 Planning obligations

Housing and Employment Land Allocations Development Plan Document:

PS1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CONSULTATIONS

This section of the report provides a summary of the consultation responses received on the application. Full copies of the consultation responses can be found on the council's website.

NLC Economic Growth

Response received 12/06/2025: Strongly supports the proposed Elsham Tech Park, which represents a nationally significant investment and aligns with both the UK government's AI Opportunities Action Plan and North Lincolnshire's Economic Growth Plan.

Headline positive impacts:

- £5.5bn to £7.5bn capital investment, making this one of the largest inward investment projects in UK digital infrastructure

- Up to 5,100 construction employment jobs per year, supporting regional recovery and job creation over a multi-year build phase

- Over 600 high-value permanent jobs created post-construction, with average salaries of £55,000 to £61,000 (significantly above local and national averages)

- £1.65bn to £2.25bn injected into the local economy via a 30% local supply chain sourcing target, supporting SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) and regional manufacturers. Officers note the draft s106 seeks to ensure the future owners of the site shall use reasonable endeavours to provide opportunities for businesses operating within a 30 mile radius of the site to bid for tender for sub-contracting opportunities and the supply of goods and ensure a minimum of 30% of the build costs (excluding fit-out costs are contracted to these businesses.

- Establishment of a regional AI Accelerator Hub, supporting start-ups, R&D [research and development], skills development, and digital entrepreneurship. Officers note the draft s106 refers to the provision of an AI and Data Education Scheme providing training relating to new employment opportunities created by the Development via a new multi-functional facility.

- Supports national and local economic policy, aligning with the UK government's AI Opportunities Action Plan and North Lincolnshire's Economic Growth Plan 2023–2028

- Use of district heat network to power on-site greenhouses, supporting sustainable food production and partially offsetting agricultural land loss

- Compatible with regional clean energy and decarbonisation projects, including Viking CCS, offshore wind, and grid stability initiatives

- Strong engagement with local training providers (CATCH, DN Colleges, University of Lincoln), ensuring upskilling and workforce readiness

- Major uplift to the construction and energy sectors, with job creation, increased demand, and wider local economic stimulus.

Headline constraints and risks:

- Permanent loss of over 430 acres of productive farmland, with implications for food security and rural character

- Environmental considerations, including energy intensity, land disruption, and potential biodiversity impacts

- Potential pressure on local labour and accommodation infrastructure, particularly during peak construction periods

- Uncertainty around future water usage, should air-cooled systems be revised at reserved matters stage to require higher water inputs. *Officer note: this matter has been clarified and a condition imposed to secure consumption.*

The loss of agricultural land is noted but mitigated through the inclusion of on-site food production via district-heated greenhouses, supporting food security and a circular economy. The scheme also aligns with regional decarbonisation efforts and offers scope for future innovation and skills growth, including a potential AI accelerator. Overall, recommend the proposal for approval, subject to appropriate controls and ongoing collaboration to maximise local benefit.

National Highways (NH)

Response 1 dated 16/06/2025: Recommend a holding position until additional information is submitted as below:

- NH consider that, as the land use of a data centre falls under a B8 classification, the Transport Assessment should also assess the potential for further development to change to a more typical use in the future.

- Unless a condition is sought to remove permitted development rights to ensure that planning permission would be needed to switch to any other use, even if it falls within B8, NH recommend an additional B8 trip generation comparison assessment is required.

NH welcomes the proposed improvements to Barnetby Interchange and recommends that, once detailed plans and modelling are prepared, these are shared with NH for review.

Local planning authority response: The applicants have agreed to the imposition of a condition requiring the data centre buildings to be used as data centres and for no other purposes without the express permission of the LPA should Members be minded to approve the application.

Additional information is being sought in relation to traffic generation and mitigation, and issued for further consultation once received.

Response 2 dated 23/09/2025: A further holding objection placed on the application whilst additional modelling information is assessed relating to the improvements to Barnetby Top Interchange.

Response 3 dated 23/12/2025: NH requires adjustments to the LinSig model for Barnetby Interchange to lane geometry, radii and lane designations to accurately reflect the mitigation scheme drawings. Saturation flows should be recalculated using actual geometric inputs, and lane designations need to be corrected for consistency. Traffic flow values should be clarified and aligned with supporting documentation. The model should then be calibrated and the assessment results updated for final review. A further holding objection placed on the application until the above matters are resolved.

NH have outlined that once the applicants can identify and provide an acceptable design layout that demonstrates compliance with the Design manual for Roads and Bridges standards and a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit, NH will be able to lift the holding recommendation.

Local Highway Authority (LHA)

Response dated 16/07/2025:

Access to the site: The LHA raises no objection in principle to the proposed main vehicular access from Halifax Approach/The Flarepath, supported by an additional pedestrian/cycle/emergency access to Merlin Drive. The surrounding network, including the A15 and industrial estate roads, is considered capable of accommodating development traffic.

Trip generation and distribution: Methodology is considered sound given the emerging nature of data-centre land uses. Full build out is expected to yield 600–1200 FTE [full-time equivalent] jobs with up to 572 employees on site daily. The modelling assumes a worst-case 100% single-occupancy car driver mode share for capacity assessment. Distribution patterns predict 87% of trips to/from the south via the A15.

Network capacity and operational impacts: Assessment of key junctions (including Halifax Approach signals and the A18/Kings Road roundabout) indicates they will operate within capacity with the development in place. Shift patterns (7am/7pm changeover) generally avoid peak hours, although clarification is required regarding potential 7am departures interacting with the AM peak at Barnetby Interchange, where baseline modelling indicates future over-capacity conditions even without the development.

Required mitigation: To address impacts at Barnetby Interchange, the applicants propose signalisation of the M180 off-slip and A15 entry arms, with additional A180 signals if the lorry park does not proceed. The LHA notes that coordination with National Highways' own safety interventions will be essential. The proposed removal of southern A15 laybys requires further internal consideration and should be conditioned to align with the agreed Barnetby Interchange improvements.

A construction traffic management plan will be required by condition.

The site is currently not served by public transport and whilst it is noted there are intentions to provide staff buses through an s106 contribution, it is unclear how attractive these will be to employees. The buses would need to operate from the day of opening; however, as it could take several years for the site to be fully built out, it may be difficult to fully maximise use of bus services. Clarification over funding services is sought as there is a risk that if there is no ongoing commitment/requirement to provide staff buses they will cease as they may be unsustainable.

Whilst a few employees might choose to cycle in summer months, the location of the site in relation to surrounding residential areas means that only a few employees are likely to choose this mode of travel.

Car share would appear to be the most realistic solution, but this would require a suitable database establishing to match lifts and for this to be actively promoted and encouraged to staff.

The LHA does not object in principle but requires additional clarification around potential mitigation measures and delivery mechanisms.

Active Travel (ATE)

Response dated 29/05/2025: Recommends standing advice is imposed.

Environment Agency (EA)

Response dated 17/06/2025: The EA are satisfied that the proposed development will be acceptable if planning conditions requiring the submission of a remediation strategy and verification report are imposed, should Members be minded to approve.

The site is in a sensitive location for controlled waters; groundwater samples are tested for all potential contaminants of concern associated with military airfield use, including per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) if there is any likelihood of these chemicals being used or stored on site.

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

Response dated 12/06/2025: Do not advise, on safety grounds, against the granting of planning permission.

Natural England (NE)

Response 1 dated 17/06/2025: As submitted, the application could have potential significant effects on the Humber Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). NE requires further information to determine the significance of these impacts and the scope for mitigation.

The following information is required to inform a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA):

- Further wintering, passage and nocturnal bird surveys to determine the usage of the application site and adjacent fields by SPA/Ramsar species

- Further information relating to potential impacts on birds using functionally linked land associated with the Humber Estuary SPA/Ramsar.

Response 2 dated 21/10/2025: Based on the plans submitted, NE considers that the proposed development will not have significant impacts on the Humber Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC), SPA and SSSI and has no objection.

NLC Ecology

Response 1 dated 23/06/2025:

- The application could have a likely significant effect on the Humber Estuary SPA/Ramsar site and therefore requires an HRA appropriate assessment.

- Further wintering and passage bird survey information is needed, following standards recommended by Natural England.

- More information on the suitability if fields for SPA/Ramsar birds is required.

- The proposals are likely to affect badgers and nesting birds, including barn owls, and could affect bat roosts.

- Amphibians, reptiles, water voles, dormice, white-clawed crayfish and other protected species are not likely to be affected.

- Planning conditions are proposed to minimise harm to protected and priority species and habitats and to seek a measurable net gain in biodiversity in accordance with policy CS17 [of the Core Strategy], the NPPF and the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

Officers note the proposal appears to have a number of potential effects on the interest features of the designated SPA and Ramsar sites. These include:

- displacement of passage and wintering waterbirds from 'functionally linked land' species such as lapwing, golden plover and pink-footed goose; and

- increase in traffic emissions near the Humber Estuary.

As competent authority, officers are required to carry out a Habitats Regulations Assessment of the project.

Local planning authority response: Additional separate technical notes, data and evidence to be submitted for review.

Response 2 dated 22/10/2025: Officers provided detail of the HRA Stage 1 Significance Test and Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment dated September 2025 that had been submitted to and approved by NE.

The conclusions were as follows:

- Overall, it is possible to ascertain that the proposal will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Humber Estuary SPA and Ramsar site alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

Response 3 dated 18/10/2025: The proposals are likely to affect badgers and nesting birds, including barn owls, and could affect bat roosts.

As badgers are a persecuted protected species, specific survey material has not been published on the public access system for the following reason.

Badgers and their setts (tunnels and chambers where they live) are protected by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. It is an offence to:

- take, injure or kill a badger, or attempt these actions;

- treat a badger cruelly;

- interfere with a badger sett;

- possess or control a live badger;

- mark or ring a badger.

With the above in mind, a pre-commencement condition is recommended requiring the submission of a species protection plan for approval, including details of measures to avoid

harm to badgers, bats and nesting birds during demolition, vegetation clearance and construction works.

In addition to the above, officers recommend the inclusion of conditions relating to the need for the following:

- a biodiversity enhancement plan
- a habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP)
- an HMMP completion report.
- a biodiversity gain plan.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust (LWT)

Response dated 25/06/2025: Based on the information provided, LWT take the position of a holding objection subject to the submission of the results of the phase 2 bird surveys. LWT recommend a substantive and bespoke bird mitigation and compensation strategy is developed.

LWT have also requested additional information to clarify matters relating to (biodiversity net gain (BNG), water quality and sustainable energy.

Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)

Response dated 10/07/2025: The CPRE objects to the proposal, citing its conflict with the adopted development plan and its open countryside location, noting that the site is non-allocated, lies outside settlement boundaries, and comprises predominantly best and most versatile agricultural land. They raise significant concerns regarding the absence of an environmental impact assessment (EIA), insufficient ecological survey data – particularly in relation to red-list bird species, nocturnal surveys for waders and waterfowl, and evidence for protected species such as bats, badgers and great crested newts.

CPRE argue that the scale of the scheme, including buildings up to 23m high and an IT load of up to 1,000MW, would result in major landscape, heritage, energy-use and environmental impacts that cannot be properly assessed at outline stage, and that the development would significantly harm the open rural vistas associated with the Viking Way and adversely affect nearby listed buildings and scheduled monuments. They also raise concerns about groundwater abstraction and pressures on the Winteringham wastewater treatment works, and conclude that insufficient information has been provided to determine the impacts of the proposal.

National Grid Electricity Transmission

Response dated 09/06/2025: No objections.

Cadent Gas

Response dated 07/01/2026: Object due to the proximity of their assets. Request a plan showing appropriate easement provision. Officers note, an updated plan was received from the applicants demonstrating easement provision and this was issued to Cadent Gas for

further review. It is anticipated that this response will be reported to Members via an update sheet.

Exolum

Response dated 13/01/2026: Object due to the proximity of their assets. Request a plan showing appropriate easement provision. Officers note, an updated plan was received from the applicants demonstrating easement provision and this was issued to Exolum for further review. It is anticipated that this response will be reported to Members via an update sheet.

Local planning authority response: Updated drawing issued demonstrating easements around the pipeline.

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)

Response 1 dated June 2025: The review process involved a desk-based review along with a site visit to check the baseline information, including viewpoint information and the findings of the assessment. The site and surrounding area were visited by a Chartered Landscape Architect on 18 June 2025 (Tetra Tech on behalf of North Lincolnshire Council).

The LVIA is presented with separate sections for landscape and visual assessment. The LVIA includes Zones of Theoretical Visibility to identify receptors and provides assessment tables for each of the receptors listed. Viewpoint photographs are provided along with visualisations of the development proposals and these help to communicate the baseline with the review of the assessment.

Although the LVIA follows recognised guidance in principle, additional rationale, clarification and justification has been requested, particularly in relation to visual receptors and this was sought by officers.

Applicants' rebuttal (received July 2025): On receipt of the comments, a review of the submitted LVIA and submitted appendices was undertaken by the Chartered Landscape Architects who undertook the field work and assessment.

This has resulted in the LVIA being updated in response to the review comments. The updated LVIA comprises:

- The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Version 4) (July 2025)
- Updated LVIA Appendix A (Version 3) Methodology (July 2025)
- Updated LVIA Appendix C (Version 3) Figures (July 2025)
- Updated LVIA Appendix D Photomontages (July 2025).

In addition, Indicative Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan drawing 23217.305 has been updated (to revision C) in response to comments on mitigation proposals raised in the review.

Review of updated LVIA (response 2 dated November 2025): A review of the above rebuttal was undertaken by Tetra Tech on behalf of North Lincolnshire Council and the following conclusions noted.

In relation to Landscape effects, the LVIA concludes that: At operational phase the development is assessed to have a substantial adverse effect at year one on the landscape character of the site itself, which reduces to a residual (year 15) substantial moderate adverse with establishment of internal site landscape mitigation. The loss of open arable land within the site itself cannot be mitigated.

Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape would not suffer any harm at either the construction or operational phase of the proposal.

*In relation to visual effects, the LVIA concludes that: O*verall, the LVIA presents a clear correlation between distance from the development proposal and the level of potential detrimental visual harm that arises prior to any of the mitigation objectives being achieved.

Visual effects at year one are substantial or substantial moderate adverse for a number of potentially close visual receptors (listed below); however, mitigation reduces to residual levels of harm that are acceptable in the context of the characteristics and value of the landscape.

Visual receptors considered to be affected by the operational development are identified below; however, it is acknowledged that the levels of harm are considered to be acceptable in the context of the location.

Taking into account the proposals for a development of this scale in a landscape of medium sensitivity, Tetra Tech are satisfied that the supporting documents provide and appropriate assessment for this location.

In order to secure satisfactory mitigation, the following conditions are recommended should Members be minded to approve the application:

- landscape scheme submission
- maintenance and management plan
- advanced planting and bunding where necessary (Officers note that this will be secured via the landscaping element of future reserved matters submissions).
- building colour and materials
- photomontage compliance
- green infrastructure delivery.

NLC Archaeology (HER)

Response dated 02/07/2025: The site may contain prehistoric and Roman remains, based on desk-based assessments from earlier applications, and as such it is recommended that trial trenching evaluations should be carried out to clarify the extent and significance of any surviving archaeology; these potential remains are of high archaeological significance.

The proposed development may also impact the setting of scheduled monuments in the surrounding landscape; these are designated heritage assets of the highest importance.

The structural and below ground remains of RAF Elsham Wolds WWI and WWII airfields are historic heritage assets with communal value.

HER do not object to the development outright, but conditions are likely to be imposed requiring archaeological investigation before construction.

If significant remains are found, preservation in situ or excavation/recording may be required. If minimal remains are found, development can proceed with limited intervention.

Additional information is sought to adequately assess the potential impact of the development on the aforementioned assets.

Officers note that the applicants have provided a Report for Archaeological Fieldwalking and HER have assessed the findings and provided comments that allow for any further archaeological fieldwork to be undertaken prior to the submission of reserved matters, the first application which would consist of enabling works and open the site up for development.

A list of conditions have been identified to secure the future programme of works necessary to deliver the site for future development.

NLC Environmental Protection (EP)

Response dated 25/06/2025:

Contaminated land: EP have reviewed the following information:

- Lucion – Preliminary Geo-Environmental Risk Assessment dated May 2025
- MHP Design Ltd – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment dated May 2025
- Landscape Strategy Plan – 24239 111 Rev B.

EP note the site may contain areas of historic contamination and recommend the imposition of the standard condition, should Members be minded to approve, requiring the submission of four elements including:

- site characterisation
- remediation scheme
- implementation of approved remediation scheme
- reporting of unexpected contamination.

Importation of top soil: The landscape strategy incorporates the creation of a landscaped planted woodland bund to the east and south of the site, which is approximately 10m in height and 50m in width. Therefore, large volumes of soils and materials may need to be imported to site. Officers note the applicants have confirmed the cut and fill programme for the site indicates imported soil will not be required, although to ensure this programme is accurate and not subject to modification, accept EP's recommendation below.

EP therefore recommend a condition ensuring imported soil is safe and suitable for use on the site via a top soil verification plan.

Unexploded ordnance (UXO): A preliminary UXO report has been undertaken, and recommends further detailed UXO risk assessment work is carried out due to the historical former airfield use.

EP recommends a condition requiring the submission and approval of a detailed unexploded ordnance risk assessment prior to development.

Air quality: EP have reviewed the following information:

- Elsham Tech Park, North Lincolnshire, Air Quality Assessment dated 16 May 2025.

The report assesses the air quality impacts of the proposed development in relation to road traffic impacts, construction activities and operational activities.

Construction traffic: Given the anticipated additional heavy vehicle movements are less than 100 per day, it is not considered necessary to assess the impacts of traffic emissions during the construction phase and EP agree that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on local roadside air quality as a result of construction traffic emissions.

Construction activities: The construction works will give rise to dust impacts during earthworks and construction, as well as from trackout of dust and dirt by vehicles onto the public highway. To mitigate such impacts EP recommend conditions are imposed relating to hours of construction and the need for a construction environmental management plan.

Energy plant: The proposal involves the installation of both natural gas engines with a combined capacity of just under 50MW and up to 650 2,480kW backup diesel generators. The generators will be required to provide emergency power in the event of loss of power to the site from the national grid. The combination of generators and engines is referred to as an ‘energy plant’.

The engines will be installed with selective catalytic reduction (SCR) technology to reduce NOx emissions and discharged vertically from individual stacks for each engine, exhausting at 12m above ground level.

Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2), PM10 and PM2.5 concentrations as a result of emissions from the energy plant have been predicted and modelled, and the assessment has concluded that the overall air quality effect of the proposed development will be ‘not significant’ as the development-generated emissions will not have a significant effect on local air quality.

In addition, the development will incorporate the following good design and best practice measures:

- provision of electric vehicle charging points

- provision of a travel plan setting out measures to encourage sustainable means of transport (public, cycling and walking)

- provision of pedestrian and cycle access to the new development, including cycle parking

- implementation of a site-specific bus strategy to improve connectivity with Hull and Scunthorpe to encourage the uptake of public transport

- installation of an SCR abatement system for all energy plant

- systems to operate with a minimum efflux velocity of 25m/s to allow for good dispersion of emissions

- exhaust flues that discharge vertically upwards, unimpeded by any fixture on top of the stack

- backup generator flues to discharge at 4m above roof level to ensure good dispersion.

EP are satisfied with the supporting information.

Light: EP have assessed the following document:

- Elsham Tech Park, Lighting Impact Assessment dated May 2025.

The report concludes that the proposed lighting scheme will comply with all relevant British Standards and the Institution of Lighting Professionals lighting guidelines and will serve to ensure safety and security of all areas of the development can be effectively maintained. EP accept the findings of the report and recommend the mitigation measures set out in the assessment are conditioned.

Response 2 dated 03/07/2025:

Noise: EP have assessed the following report:

- MEC Consulting Group, Elsham Tech Park, Acoustics Assessment dated May 2025.

EP recognise that noise generating operations will predominantly consist of fixed external plant, including chillers and generators, along with any contribution from electricity substations, any ancillary equipment and potentially any noise associated with deliveries.

It is reported that the design of the proposed data centre has not been finalised. To minimise any potential impacts arising from commercial noise sources associated with the development, operational noise limits have been set in accordance with BS 4142:2014 to ensure the background sound levels at the existing sensitive receptors are not exceeded.

Historic England

Response dated 12/06/2025: No observations to report.

NLC Conservation

Response dated 10/06/2025: The council's conservation officer has raised significant concerns regarding the adequacy of information submitted at outline stage and the resulting inability to properly assess the impact on designated heritage assets, particularly the grade II listed Threshing Barn and Cartshed/granary Range at Elsham Top Farm, which lie immediately adjacent to the site. The proposal includes no elevation drawings, massing details or detailed design information, making it impossible for the authority to discharge its statutory duty under Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation

Areas) Act 1990 to give *special regard* to the preservation of listed buildings and their setting.

The conservation officer considers the agricultural landscape setting of the listed barns to be of high significance, supported by Historic England's guidance and the Greater Lincolnshire Farmstead Assessment Framework. Although partially compromised by the existing industrial estate, much of the surrounding landscape remains intact and continues to contribute strongly to the barns' significance. The proposed development (comprising large-scale buildings up to 23 m high, extensive infrastructure, and earth bunding) would result in additional cumulative harm, further severing the farmstead from its historic landscape setting. This is assessed as less than substantial harm at a moderate to high level, contrary to the applicants' suggestion of lower–moderate harm.

Proposed mitigation such as bunding and new planting is considered inadequate and potentially harmful in its own right, given the open landscape character of the Wolds and the limited role screening can play under Historic England guidance. The conservation officer concludes that the development would fail to preserve the setting of the listed building, conflicting with local plan policy HE5, Core Strategy policy CS6, and the NPPF (paragraphs 212 to 215), all of which require great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets.

The officer therefore advises that the proposal should be resisted, as the application does not contain the information required to demonstrate that the development would avoid unacceptable heritage harm, nor that such harm could be mitigated.

Further to receipt of these comments, an Enhanced Heritage Assessment dated October 2025 was received providing amendments that recognised that the land farmed was presumably part of Elsham Top Farm, recognising that loss of views would adversely affect the significance of the listed barn complex through changes to its setting. The document was reviewed by the conservation officer who acknowledged the amendments; however, comments received dated *19/12/2025* refer to the previous comments above with no change in advice provided.

The Victorian Society

Response dated 25/06/2025: The Victorian Society has raised serious concerns regarding the impact on the grade II listed Elsham Wold chalk barn and cartsheds, highlighting that while the proposal may not damage the historic fabric, it would significantly harm the setting of this nationally important building.

They note that the proposed landscaping, intended to screen the data centre, would also obscure the listed building, diminishing its historic rural character.

The Society criticises the heritage statement for lacking detail, particularly in assessing the barns' condition and the extent of harm to their setting.

They emphasise that proposals of this scale require 'clear and convincing justification' under NPPF paragraphs 212–215 and urge the authority to assess impacts with great caution.

The Georgian Group

Response dated 26/06/2025: The Georgian Group does not formally object, but raises strong concerns and stresses that more robust heritage-led mitigation is required.

They conclude that significant design revisions – increased separation, reduced massing and stronger visual/light mitigation – may be needed to safeguard the setting and future viability of the listed barn complex.

Historic Buildings and Places (HB&P)

Response dated 24/06/2025: HB&P have not issued an outright objection, but their response makes clear that the proposal results in significant heritage harm. They recommend:

- increased separation between the development and the listed barns;
- reduced building heights near the heritage assets; and
- financial contributions through the s106 for repairs and conservation of the barns.

Their position reinforces the need for stronger heritage-led mitigation to ensure the proposal complies with national and local heritage policy tests.

NLC S106 officer

Obligations under consideration between officers and the applicant in draft s106:

AI and data education	£25,000,000
	A financial contribution of £25,000,000 towards the implementation of the AI and Data Education Scheme The scheme will have the objective of promoting training and employment opportunities in relation to data and artificial intelligence.

Play and recreation	£1,000,000
	A financial contribution of £1,000,000 towards the provision of improvements to play and recreation provision across the local parishes: • Elsham • Worlaby • Wrawby • Bonby • Saxby All Saints • Barnetby le Wold • Barrow • Goxhill

Biodiversity	10% net gain
	A 10% biodiversity net gain will be required on site which will be secured by planning condition. A BNG monitoring fee of £49,524,00 will be requested to monitor the BNG delivery over a period of 30 years.

Highways	£5,000,000
	The sum of £5,000,000 towards road improvements, including (but not limited to): • the replacement of the vehicle restraint system (VRS, aka crash barriers) along the A15 • highway improvements and enhancements along Caistor Road which provide additional connectivity to the site

Active travel	£1,000,000
	The sum of £1,000,000 towards a new cycle path from the development site to Brigg and other surrounding settlements
Shuttle bus scheme	Fully funded by owners, the provision of a shuttle bus service between Brigg and the site

S106 monitoring fee	£86,538.42 to monitor and support the delivery of the s106 contributions Charges are based on the full cost recovery rate for officers involved in the s106 process. The charges reflect the officer time involved in ensuring the contribution is spent. Such tasks include, but not exclusively: • recording the details of the s106 agreement on an IT system; including all clauses, contributions and trigger points; • written approval of schemes as required by the legal obligation; • monitoring the progress of the development to identify when triggers have been met and when obligations are due to be paid;

	• undertaking site visits as required; • invoicing for financial contributions, including calculating indexation uplift and applying interest as per the terms of the legal agreement if the contribution is overdue; • ensuring compliance with the obligations contained within the legal agreement; • recording financial transactions for the purposes of reporting on income and expenditure of developer contributions; • managing the process of allocating and spending developer contributions in accordance with the terms of the legal agreement; • monitoring long-term compliance within perpetuity clauses; and • publishing detailed information on financial contributions within the annual infrastructure funding statement – the s106 report; • working with internal departments, external organisations, parish councils and community groups to ensure the s106 obligations are delivered.

Local business opportunities	Provide local business with the first opportunity to bid or tender for sub-contracting opportunities and the supply of goods and services during construction of the development Ensure that a minimum of 30% of the build cost of the development (excluding fit-out costs) are given to local businesses operating within a 30-mile radius of the development

Humberside Police Force

Response dated 25/06/2025: No objections to the proposal. It is noted that, by implementing Crime Prevention through Environmental Design theory, planning can be used to reduce the likelihood of criminal activity. Should Members be minded to approve the outline application, any future reserved matters applications should consider the following:

- Access and movement: Places with well-defined routes, spaces and entrances that provide for convenient movement without compromising security

- Access control: Both natural and man-made access control measures can be applied in this context to create single, clearly identifiable points of entry to the site or site buildings

- Structure: Places that are structured so that different uses do not cause conflict

- Surveillance opportunity: Ensuring that there are multiple surveillance opportunities (natural, formal and informal) ensures that the development is protected from causal intrusion and opportunist criminals

- Physical protection: This is the application of physical security measures to prevent or deter unauthorised access

- Ownership: Places that promote a sense of ownership, respect, territorial responsibility and community

- Activity: A place where the level of human activity is appropriate to the location and creates a reduced risk of crime and sense of safety

- Maintenance: Ensuring an area remains well maintained in the future will reduce the likelihood of criminality and antisocial behaviour.

Humberside Fire Brigade

Response dated 12/06/2025: Standing advice on access for fire services and water supplies for fire-fighting.

Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

Response dated 29/05/2025: At this stage, the LLFA is supportive of the development in principle and recommends appropriate conditions be attached, should Members be minded to approve, relating to:

- flood risk assessment (FRA) compliance and outline drainage principles

- a drainage scheme

- changes to development design and drainage.

Anglian Water (AW)

Response 1 dated 19/06/2025: Objects to the proposed development due to the intended connection to the public foul drainage network. AW objects to any connection into their foul network from the proposed development, due to capacity constraints and pollution risk. AW also require additional information in relation to non-domestic water demand.

Local planning authority response: The applicants have the right to connect to an existing foul sewer at the nearest practical point on the network where the existing sewer is at least the same diameter as the new sewer to serve the development, under the provisions of section 143 of the Water Industry Act 1991 (as amended).

Under the provisions of the above Act, the developer will need to pay the sewerage undertaker the published sewer connection charges and infrastructure charge, and the sewerage undertaker is responsible for any network reinforcement.

With the above in mind, officers recommend the imposition of a pre-occupation condition requiring the submission of a strategic foul water strategy to be agreed and delivered by AW.

Having regard to the matter relating to estimated water usage, the applicants have submitted a supporting report (Elsham Tech Park Water Requirements Report dated August 2025) following concerns over potential consumption levels.

The report details the usage of water for the site, describing it as minimal, resulting from a closed loop cooling system, which means no water is evaporated or released during the cooling process.

The applicants have also confirmed that daily water consumption for each of the future data centre units will be less than the AW restriction for non-domestic water supply of 20 cubic metres per building per day. This confirmation been provided via water usage for irrigation, humification, waste water drainage and cleaning and can be secured via the imposition of a strategic water resources strategy condition.

Response 2 dated 31/12/2025: Having assessed the additional information provided by the applicants, withdraw their objection and recommend conditions relating to water supply and waste water.

Ancholme Internal Drainage Board

Response dated 30/05/2025: Recommend the imposition of a condition relating to surface water discharge, ensuring that restricted flow measures or attenuation are provided.

PARISH COUNCIL

Response dated 22/06/2025: Objects to the proposal for the following reasons:

- loss of valuable arable land
- proximity to residential area
- ecology/biodiversity
- contrary to policies LC5 and LC12 of the NLLP
- conservation
- acoustics
- highway safety
- greenhouse gas emissions and water consumption.

It is also noted that, should Members be minded to approve the application, contributions should be secured towards providing/improving community assets.

PUBLICITY

This section of the report provides a summary of the third-party responses received on the application. Full copies of the responses can be found on the council's website.

One round of public consultation has been undertaken and the application has been advertised by means of site notices posted close to the site and a press notice.

The initial consultation expired on 26 June 2025. At the close of this consultation period, 394 responses had been received. These comprised 364 letters of objection, 24 letters of support and 6 neutral representations.

The letters of objection raise the following matters, which are addressed below and throughout the technical sections of this report:

- inappropriate **location** for a development of this scale
- excessive building **height and massing**
- impact on rural **landscape** and loss of countryside
- adverse effect on local **character** and **heritage** setting
- encroachment on and **loss of agricultural land** and productive fields
- significant increase in **traffic**, including HGVs
- **highway safety** concerns and inadequate road infrastructure
- **inadequate public transport and walking/cycling access**
- **noise, dust and light pollution**, including 24/7 operations
- **biodiversity** loss, particularly affecting birds and protected species
- insufficient **ecological mitigation** and survey coverage
- concerns about **carbon footprint** and long-term sustainability
- pressure on existing **utilities** and infrastructure (water and electricity)
- questions over long-term **employment benefits** for locals
- general landscape impact and **loss of openness**
- **proximity to residential properties**
- preference for **brownfield** or urban sites instead
- **strain on local digital and power infrastructure**
- **insufficient environmental assessments** and data

- lack of clarity on **flood** risk mitigation
- setting a **precedent** for further industrial development in the area
- **dissatisfaction with cumulative impact assessments.**

The letters of support raise the following matters:

- welcome **private investment** in the local area
- provision of long-term skilled **job** opportunities
- opportunity to **attract further infrastructure upgrades**
- benefits to the **local economy and tax base**
- site is strategically positioned near key **transport links**
- appropriate reuse of **underutilised rural land**
- **well-screened site with scope for mitigation**
- supports digital and **technological growth nationally**
- commitment to sustainability and **biodiversity net gain**
- development seen as **necessary** for future connectivity and data demands.

A further 26 representations have been received following the closure of the initial consultation period. These include 24 objections and 2 letters of support. Additional issues raised include:

- potential for low-frequency **noise** and operational hum
- requests for a full enclosure fence for **security** and screening
- concerns about night-time **glare** affecting local properties
- criticism of **omission of downstream carbon and energy impacts.**

All representations have been fully considered in the assessment of the application and are addressed in the relevant sections of this report.

The application has also been publicised as a departure from the development plan.

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been submitted in support of the planning application. This document outlines the activity undertaken to engage local communities and stakeholders and to inform them of plans for the site.

An exhibition display providing the following information was presented at Elsham Village Hall on 06/05/2025 between 3pm and 7pm. Members of the project team were also in attendance to respond to questions:

- an introduction and context board describing the proposal and its location.
- a data centre board describing their role in the economy.
- a masterplan for the site and the constraints of the site
- the benefits of the site
- an information board providing dates and contacts for representations to be issued.

The above event was advertised through a leaflet drop to 1,408 addresses across the local area, including Elsham Wolds Industrial Estate, Elsham village, Worlaby village and Barnetby le Wold village.

In total 55 people attended the exhibition, of which 11 completed the comments form which was available. A full summary of the responses received is contained within the supporting SCI which is available to view on the council's website.

In addition, briefing sessions were held with local councillors and businesses. Pre-application meetings were also held with officers from North Lincolnshire Council (NLC).

ASSESSMENT

Site and surrounds

Location: The site lies approximately 1km north of the M180 and directly adjoins Elsham Wolds Industrial Estate.

The nearest settlement is Elsham Village, about 1km west across the A15. It sits fully within Elsham Parish.

Site characteristics: The site covers an area of approximately 176ha and comprises nine agricultural fields, mainly open arable land bounded by clipped hedgerows and small blocks of woodland.

The site includes several derelict structures from the former RAF Elsham Wolds airfield, reflecting historic military use.

The land falls topographically from around 70m AOD in the north to around 45m AOD in the southeast.

Heritage context: A grade II listed Threshing Barn and Cartshed/Granary Range at Elsham Top Farm lies adjacent to the industrial estate.

The site also lies within an area of known archaeological interest, including evidence of prehistoric activity and an Anglo-Saxon cemetery to the west.

Surrounding land uses: To the west is Elsham Wolds Industrial Estate, to the east and south there is an open agricultural landscape, with scattered farmsteads and rural

dwellings. To the north is rolling landscape extending towards the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape, although officers note the site is not contained within that landscape.

Access and connectivity: Existing access points are from Middlegate Road (southwest) and from the industrial estate's internal road network. The A15 provides strategic north–south links to Scunthorpe, the Humber Bridge, the M180 and wider national routes.

Public Rights of Way: The Viking Way long-distance trail runs along the southern and eastern boundaries of the site, forming a sensitive visual and recreational receptor.

Environmental context: The site lies within flood zone 1 (lowest risk of flooding). It is not covered by any ecological designations. The nearest statutory site is Wrawby Moor SSSI, approximately 1.95km away. The Humber Estuary SCA/SPA/Ramsar site lies approximately 9km to the north.

Arboriculture: The site presently contains 62 trees, 31 groups of trees and 43 hedgerows.

Residential receptors: A number of single residential dwellings and groups of residential dwellings surround the site. All have been identified within the noise and vibration section of this report along with other receptors that overlook the site covered in the landscape and visual impact section.

Constraints: Existing easements will need to be protected through the site, which route through the centre of the site in a northeast–southwest direction.

Relevant planning history: None.

Proposal

The main components of the scheme are as follows; however, this application is for outline planning permission only, with all matters reserved for subsequent consideration. Parameters for development have been provided for approval.

1. Multiple data centre buildings, each of which would have ancillary offices, substation and security measures. The cumulative processing capability of up to 1 gigabyte of IT load, with a total gross internal area (GIA) of up to 905,000 square metres (16m to 23m tall excluding flues).

2. An amenity building, providing a range of facilities including a creche, café, gym and small shop with a GIA of up to 1,500 square metres (7m tall)

3. An energy centre, to ensure that a proportion of energy usage on site is generated on site (up to 49.9MW and to be secured via condition), with a GIA of up to 20,000 square metres (14m tall excluding flues)

4. Agricultural greenhouses, utilising the excess heat from the data centre buildings with a GIA of up to 71,000 square metres (8m tall)

5. A district heating unit

6. A substation (up to 14m tall).

Building heights parameter – maximum building heights would vary from (up to) 7m and 9 (up to) 23m, excluding flues (which would be up to 4m in height):

1. Primary access from The Flarepath to the south of Halifax Approach

2. Emergency access from Merlin Road, with further emergency foot and cycle access points onto Middlegate Lane and Race Lane

3. Open space, landscaping (including bunding) and biodiversity/ecology enhancements

4. Sustainable urban drainage.

Context

A data centre is basically a warehouse form of development which contains information technology (IT) and telecom infrastructure in the form of racks of computer servers. The data centre essentially processes, stores, manages and disseminates IT capacity and acts fundamentally as a power house for the internet.

There are a variety of types of data centres, enterprise data centres, co-location data centres, edge data centres and hyperscale data centres, each having different locational requirements. The most rapid growth in data centres until very recently has been in ones supporting cloud computing for business and individuals. These required proximity to major centres of business and also to other data centres to provide resilience. The size of these data centres has been increasing rapidly and now, typically, hyperscale data centres require a minimum of 20 to 60MW of IT load in buildings of 15,000 to 50,000 square metres.

The launch of ChatGPT (Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer) by OpenAI in November 2022 has accelerated interest in the development of AI across a wide range of applications. In a similar manner to the birth of wireless radio, television and the internet, government and businesses are now working collectively to consider how to respond to the opportunities and challenges in AI. With this in mind, major tech companies are seeking to develop new and improved AI models. These require large-scale computing power to ‘train’ these models in a safe environment.

Notwithstanding the above, the current proposal seeks to provide data centre capacity on a much larger scale, providing opportunities for multiple data centre operators to cluster in the same location whilst offering a choice of plots and sizes. Potential future occupiers can operate independently from each other, or they can select to locate so as to mutually benefit from close proximity to one another for resilience and/or cross processing. With this in mind, the current application has been designed so that any given plot could come forward for development in any sequence (subject to delivery of necessary infrastructure and mitigation) in order to provide this degree of flexibility and choice.

By their very nature, computer servers produce heat while operating, which in turn means each data centre must be equipped with specialised cooling and humidity control infrastructure, in the form of air handling units (AHUs), chilled water (CHW) pumps and chillers.

Given that a data centre houses sensitive ‘mission critical’ data and computer processes for organisations and individuals, they must incorporate effective security measures. Although vast in overall scale to accommodate the computing power necessary to deliver to the

need, the data centre design ethos is to be invisible given the critical function they deliver for the UK population and businesses.

Proposed site selection and development

Major tech companies are seeking to develop a series of strategically located 'AI GigaSites'. Data centres need to be on a large scale to provide the concentrated computing power and will require a minimum of 200MW of IT load. The current proposal seeks to provide a total output of 1 gigabyte on a site measuring around 176ha.

The search for suitable sites to meet the need of this developing industry is an imminent one and the area of search is on a European and global scale. The scope of the search for a suitable site requires the provision of:

- access to a large-scale supply of power, ideally renewable energy;
- high-speed and reliable connectivity (vital for transferring large volumes of data during AI model training;
- large-scale supply of land, cooler climates and access to water;
- stability of the political and legal landscape; and
- a thriving research and innovation ecosystem.

The last two bullet points operate more at a national level with the UK, in the sense of its stable legal and regulatory framework and strong tech innovation system, providing an ideal place to attract IT training centres. The remaining three bullet points, however, limit the availability of suitable sites.

In a UK context the Elsham area is an ideal location for a large-scale AI training data centre due to its large-scale energy supply from both North Sea gas and now offshore wind. The proposed Viking Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) scheme offers the potential for large-scale net zero energy supply, with construction anticipated to start by 2025. The UK offers few other locations that can provide the scale of power supply and immediate availability, as well as other important location characteristics.

As well as infrastructure requirements, the specific location is important in terms of the physical resilience of the site. This means that sites at risk of flooding, earthquakes, potential accidents (such as airport flightpaths or hazardous processes), and several other factors are not suitable for data centres.

The current proposal has identified that the site at Elsham Wolds Industrial Estate meets all the locational requirements for data centres.

Need for the development

The importance of the digital economy, tech sectors or digital sectors has been and remains a very strong thread that runs through all the recent government's significant economic policies and plans, particularly in respect of enabling innovation and investment. Key policy documents include the following:

The December 2024 revisions to the NPPF introduced for the first time the explicit national policy recognition of data centres. The changes shape how local planning authorities (LPAs) must consider data centre proposals.

NPPF paragraph 86(b) now requires planning authorities to set criteria, and identify strategic sites, for local inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period, whilst paragraph 86(c) seeks to ensure that planning authorities 'pay particular regard' to identifying appropriate locations for data centres, alongside laboratories, gigafactories, digital infrastructure and logistics. This requires a proactive plan for data centre development rather than treating facilities as generic industrial uses.

Paragraph 87 now explicitly references data centres with the requirement to support clusters of knowledge-intensive and tech-driven industries, with an emphasis on the need for a suitable grid location, sites capable of supporting high-capacity power demand and opportunities for co-location with other digital infrastructure.

In addition to the above, the government's 2024 designation of data centres as Critical National Infrastructure increases the weight that LPAs must give to economic resilience and national security, with data centre proposals potentially carrying greater weight in planning balances, especially where other material considerations (traffic, design, landscape etc) need to be weighed against the national need.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

An EIA screening request was made to the LPA on 07/04/2025 on the basis that the applicants considered the proposed development did not constitute EIA development and would not require an Environmental Statement.

On 13/05/2025 the LPA issued a formal Screening Opinion (PA/SCR/2025/5) that confirmed that an EIA would not be required. In reaching this position and following consideration of consultation responses based on the developer's Screening Report on matters relating to transport, noise, ecology, archaeology, air quality, drainage and cumulative impacts, the conclusion stated:

'North Lincolnshire Council advises that in light of the available information and having regard to the location and nature of the proposed development and the selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development as set out in Schedule 3 of the 2017 Regulations, the proposal would be unlikely to have any significant environmental effects.

In addition, in accordance with Regulation 5(5), having regard to the location of the site and the nature of the development, there are not considered to be any features of the proposed development and measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.

The proposed development, although constituting a Schedule 2 development category 10, is not considered to warrant an environmental impact assessment.'

Further to the submission of this application, and following receipt of public consultation responses, additional supporting information (Carbon Footprint Statement Review of Scope 2 Emissions v6 dated 10.2025 by Found Digital) was provided for review which further clarified the CO2 emissions and water consumption requirements for the site and the wider implications for climate change. The LPA reconsidered it's position on screening in light of

this information and concluded that it further supported the LPA's position that the proposal did not constitute EIA development.

Supporting documents

In addition to the Planning Statement, the application is supported by a number of plans and a suite of documents covering the technical aspects of the development proposals.

These include:

- Design and Access Statement
- Acoustics Assessment
- Agricultural Land Classification report
- Air Quality Assessment
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan
- Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
- Economic Needs and Benefits Report
- Energy and Sustainability Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy
- Geophysical Survey Report
- Greenhouse Economic & Strategic Case
- Heritage Assessment
- Preliminary Geo-environmental Risk Assessment
- Lighting Impact Assessment
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Transport Assessment
- Framework Travel Plan
- Waste Management Statement
- Water Requirements Report

Planning issues to be considered

- The principle of development
- Air quality
- Biodiversity/ecology
- Greenhouse gases and climate change resilience
- Geology, soils and contaminated land
- Human health
- Noise and vibration
- Socioeconomics
- Traffic and transport
- Water environment and flood risk
- Materials and waste
- Landscape and visual impact
- Cultural heritage
- Other material considerations
- Planning obligations
- Conclusion and planning balance.

Principle of development

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Such other important considerations include other relevant policy and guidance, particularly national planning policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other relevant government policy statements, as well as that which is provided within the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

The development plan for North Lincolnshire comprises three parts: those policies of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan (2003) (NLLP) which were saved by a direction of the Secretary of State in September 2007, the North Lincolnshire Core Strategy DPD (2011) (NLCS), and the Housing and Employment Land Allocations DPD (2016) (HELADPD). There is no adopted Neighbourhood Plan covering the application site.

The local development plan as identified above was adopted in June 2011 which predates both the current NPPF and the original NPPF. The evidence base that informed this plan is even older. The development plan does not make any specific provision for meeting the need for data centres, which by their very nature are revolutionary in their conception.

The proposal site falls within the open countryside and is not specifically allocated for the proposed use. It is, therefore, not in accordance with the land-use provisions of the current development plan policy CS3. However, the proposals are in broader compliance with the vison and spatial objectives of the adopted Core Strategy for North Lincolnshire.

NLCS policy CS11 is clear in stating that the council will support the continued expansion and improvement of North Lincolnshire's economy in order to create a step change in the area's role regionally and nationally, support being given to development that meets local employment needs and maximises other special locations to support the growth of the local economy.

This is not an ordinary development proposal – it has specific locational requirements and is of a nature and scale that would have an impact on its surroundings. The existing development plan does not specifically plan for the growing need to deliver critical digital infrastructure of the form and scale proposed.

Furthermore, the NPPF, through paragraphs 85, 86 and 87, acknowledges the importance of economic growth and productivity and places a strong emphasis on delivering development that enables areas to build on their strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.

In accordance with paragraph 87, the council is seeking an AI Growth Zone in North Lincolnshire to be designated by central government, bringing the prospect of nearly 10,000 new construction jobs, 1,200 new jobs across the AI Growth Zone and a further 4,000 industrial jobs safeguarded through supply chain opportunities. The AI Growth Zone could lead to £15bn in private investment and 1.5GW of AI processing capacity potential coming to North Lincolnshire, assisting in boosting industries in the region and across the UK. The area is uniquely positioned to attract this opportunity thanks to its industrial base, skilled workforce and the fact that it generates 20 per cent of the UK's total electricity, including 27 per cent of its offshore wind.

The site has been selected primarily due to its proximity to a viable energy supply and grid connection; it is not susceptible to flood risk, is not constrained by ownership and is immediately deliverable. It is located adjacent to the A15 which offers excellent communication linkages to the north via the Humber Bridge and to the south via the M180 and A15.

The proposal includes a substantial horticultural glasshouse which, in general, would be an acceptable land use on agricultural land. It would be heated by excessive heat captured from the data centre and that opportunity will also exist for potential developers and existing units within the industrial estate to tap into.

Officers recognise that the proposal will have a localised impact on the immediate south and north junctions onto the A15 currently serving the Elsham Wolds Industrial Estate and a wider impact on the highway network but mitigation can be provided. It is noted that partial signalisation of the M180/A180 Barnetby Top roundabout is proposed and modelling data is currently under review.

Whilst not allocated for development, the most important Development Plan policies in this case are out of date and the proposal generally accords to national policy and the spatial elements of the development plan, subject to all other technical matters that are addressed below.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **very significantly in favour** of the development for the following reasons:

- Development plan conflict (open countryside location) carries only limited weight because the plan is out of date and does not allocate land for data centres.

- NPPF paragraphs 85–87 place significant weight on supporting economic growth, productivity and data centre specific locational requirements.

- The proposal would be consistent with the Growth Zone bid.

Air quality

Paragraph 187(e) of the NPPF requires planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

‘preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality.’

More specifically on air quality, paragraph 199 makes clear (in part) that:

‘Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement.’

With respect to biodiversity, the NPPF places a heavy reliance on the designation status of sites (for example if they are designated as an SSSI), explaining that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by:

‘protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)’ (paragraph 187).

The most relevant extant development plan policies against which to assess the proposed development’s effect on air quality is ‘saved’ policy DS1 of the NLLP, which requires that development proposals do not result in the pollution of air, water or land; and ‘saved’ policy DS11 of the NLLP, which seeks to prevent development that would result in dangerous levels of polluting emissions.

Within the NLCS, policy CS18 requires developments to improve the quality of air, land and water to protect the environment.

The application has been supported by an Air Quality Assessment, a Carbon Footprint Statement and a Biodiversity Air Quality Screening Assessment, each being reviewed by relevant officers from NLC’s Environmental Protection and Ecology teams.

Assessment

Whilst the proposal is outline in nature, modelling for impacts on air quality has been based on the installation of 20 2,499kW natural gas engines with a combined capacity of just under 50MW electrical power and up to 650 2,480kW backup diesel generators. The generators will be required to provide emergency power in the event of loss of power to the site from the National Grid. It is also noted, as part of the site selection, that the grid stability is very good, hence the generators will not be frequently used, except as part of a regular planned testing regime.

The proposed development will also lead to changes in vehicle flows on local roads, which may impact air quality at existing residential properties along the affected road network.

The supporting assessment covers potential impacts on both human health and biodiversity.

Having regard to human health, the assessment focuses on two phases of development: construction and operational, relating primarily to:

- construction dust and traffic; and
- operational emissions from standby generators and increased vehicle movements.

Construction impacts are limited to temporary dust and particulate emissions (PM10/PM2.5) associated with earthworks across the site, vehicle movements and material handling.

Officers recommend standard mitigation measures covered under a construction environmental management plan sufficient to cover dust, including:

- damping down of haul roads
- wheel washing
- covering of materials and spoil
- speed control for construction traffic.

Through the imposition of the above, impacts on nearby receptors are assessed as short-term, localised and not significant.

At the operational phase, officers recognise that the development would generate low day-to-day traffic compared with other employment uses, reducing long-term emissions associated with vehicle movements.

The proposed emergency backup generators are designed for infrequent use and testing only, and an appropriately worded condition can ensure that emissions are intermittent and tightly controlled.

No exceedance of national air quality objectives (NO2 or particulates) is anticipated at residential or other sensitive receptors.

In summary, the supporting documents conclude that the development would not give rise to unacceptable air quality effects on human health, alone or in combination.

With respect to biodiversity, the assessment has considered the impacts of road traffic and energy plant associated with the operation of the proposed development on the Humber Estuary Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area, Ramsar and Site of Special Scientific Interest and has considered the changes in pollutant concentrations and fluxes in the context of published screening criteria.

The site is not located within or immediately adjacent to any international or national ecological designations; however, the site is located on the periphery of the zone of influence on the aforementioned sites and hence Natural England (NE) was formally consulted on the proposal.

NE have raised no objections on air quality or emissions grounds, confirming that there are no adverse effects on designated ecological sites via air pollution pathways.

Where assessed, increases on nitrogen oxides and ammonia deposition associated with traffic and plant are below critical thresholds used to protect sensitive habitats; subsequently, no change to baseline conditions is predicted for nearby habitats.

Overall, the assessment demonstrates that the changes in pollutant concentrations and fluxes are below screening criteria, and thus the impacts can be discounted as 'not significant'.

Having given due regard to the expert information submitted in support of the application and consultation responses from NLC's Environmental Protection and Ecology officers, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in air quality terms, and the proposed development is in accordance with policies DS1 and DS11 of the NLLP and CS18 of the NLCS.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **neutral** for the following reasons:

- Construction and operational impacts are not significant, with conditions securing mitigation.

- There would be no exceedance of air quality objectives and NE confirms no ecological harm.

Having regard to all the above, it is considered that the representations made in respect of air quality, and covered in the consultations section of this report, have been satisfactorily addressed within this section.

Biodiversity/ecology

The current proposal, raises a number of issues in relation to impact on ecology, in terms of both species and habitats.

The biodiversity issues raised by the scheme have been fully assessed in accordance with the duties imposed on local planning authorities, namely:

NPPF chapter 15 requires planning decisions to:

- protect and enhance sites of biodiversity value in a manner commensurate with their importance;

- establish coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures; and

- incorporate features which support priority or threatened species (such as bats, birds and other protected fauna).

The Environment Act 2021 introduced a statutory requirement for biodiversity net gain (BNG) into the planning system through Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Mandatory BNG has applied to major planning applications since February 2024 and is a material consideration in determining applications.

Key elements include:

- a deemed condition to deliver BNG;

- a minimum of 10% increase in biodiversity value compared to the pre-development baseline;

- biodiversity value must be calculated using a statutory biodiversity metric;

- gains must be secured for a minimum period of 30 years; and

- biodiversity gains may be delivered on site, off site or through statutory biodiversity credits.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Habitats Regulations): Containing five Parts and four Schedules, the Regulations provide for the designation and protection of 'European sites', the protection of 'European protected species', and the adaptation of planning and other controls for the protection of European sites.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006: Section 40 of this Act introduced a new duty on public bodies to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity in the exercise of their functions.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended): This is the primary UK mechanism for the protection of individual species listed within the Act.

Hedgerow Regulations 1997: In England the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 are intended to protect important countryside hedges from destruction or damage.

BS42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

The relevant extant development plan policies against which to assess the proposed development's effect on the natural environment, including protected species, are 'saved' NLLP policies LC1, LC2, LC4, LC5, LC6, LC12 and DS1.

NLCS policies CS5, CS16 and CS17 relate to the protection of biodiversity resources, the maintenance of wildlife networks and green corridors, and ensuring ecological enhancement through good design, respectively.

Assessment

The site is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory ecological designations, or nature conservation designation. The nearest statutory designation is Wrawby Moor Site of Special Scientific Interest approximately 1.95km southwest of the site. The Humber Estuary is approximately 9km to the north, and is subject to overlapping International/European-level designations (the 'Humber Estuary' Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation, Ramsar site, and the underpinning Site of Special Scientific Interest). These designations relate primarily to the coastal and estuarine habitats of the Humber Estuary and the wintering birds they support.

There are no non-statutory Local Wildlife Site (LWS) designations within immediate surrounding proximity of the site, the nearest being the Elsham Chalk Quarry which is approximately 0.52km west of the site.

The site is currently farmland, primarily used for arable crop production, historically managed as part of the former airfield landscape. The agricultural fields which dominate the site are bounded by hedgerows, with other habitats including areas of woodland, a number of trees, scrub, game cover crops, grassland, tall ruderal vegetation, buildings and hardstanding.

The application has been supported by an Ecological Appraisal (EclA), a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, Statutory BNG Metric, Biodiversity Air Quality Screening Assessment, Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and a Lighting Impact Assessment (LIA).

The EclA provides a documented review of the survey work undertaken on habitats and flora, and fauna, evaluates impacts and suggests mitigations that are summarised as residual effects and conclusions.

In terms of habitats and flora, the site supports the following main habitat types:

- arable and improved grassland
- modified grassland and field margins
- hedgerows (priority habitat)
- trees (priority habitat)
- scrub
- former airfield features.

Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006 places duties on public bodies to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. Of the habitats identified above, the hedgerows and woodland are considered to qualify as priority habitats and therefore constitute important ecological features.

Arable and improved grassland: The arable habitat is considered to be of very limited intrinsic botanical diversity, reflecting modern agricultural practices. Species composition is dominated by agriculturally improved grasses and common ruderal or arable weed species. The ecological value is assessed as low due to the intensive agricultural production regime that operates, although the habitats do contribute to the overall wider farmland mosaic.

Modified grassland and field margins: These areas contain a slightly more diverse sward than the adjacent arable land, including common grass species and occasional forbs. Field margins provide local ecological connectivity and limited foraging opportunities, but species diversity remains moderate to low.

Hedgerows are present along field boundaries and access corridors, contributing significantly to the site's ecological structure; however, the majority of hedgerows are species-poor or moderately species diverse, reflecting historic agricultural management, and contain typically woody species including hawthorn, blackthorn, bramble and occasional elder. The proposal seeks to remove one complete hedgerow to facilitate development of the site.

The proposal includes the removal of three individual trees, four tree groups, one section of a tree group and a section from one woodland, all identified within the supporting Arboricultural Impact Assessment dated May 2025.

The site contains a number of small areas of hawthorn, bramble and mixed scrub, along with a number of former WWII buildings, that provide potential bat roosts.

Having regard to the fauna within the site, the supporting EclA has identified the following as forming important ecological features:

- Bats (roosting) – potential habitat within existing trees and buildings
- Bats (foraging/commuting) – moderate potential habitats
- Badger – assessed and findings provided with a confidential report safeguarding locations
- Brown hare – confirmed presence on site
- Hedgehog – recent records on site
- Reptiles – likely absent, although potential habitat present
- Breeding birds – initial results indicate populations of declining farmland species.
- Wintering birds – moderate assemblage, including priority species.

The supporting EclA provides a summary of mitigation, compensation and enhancement proposals following the mitigation hierarchy approach as set out in the NPPF, including the following:

- Hedgerow and tree protection
- New planting to compensate for losses of existing habitats
- Replacement bat roosting provision
- Climbed inspection surveys of any trees identified for removal to confirm the presence of bats

- Sensitive lighting, including light exclusion zones, appropriate luminaire specifications, light barriers/screening, spacing and height of lighting units, light intensity, directionality and dimming and part-night lighting, all in regard to bats
- Badger mitigation
- Habitat manipulation (precautionary for reptiles)
- Nesting bird restrictions
- Small mammal safeguards focusing on construction works.

The losses of arable habitat within the site have been offset by the proposals to deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG). Indeed, the supporting BNG Statutory Metric, that has been fully assessed by the local authority's ecologist, provides the following quantitative results:

Habitats –10.70% BNG; Hedgerows – 13.99% BNG; Ditches (watercourses) – 0% BNG.

To achieve the above uplift, the following ecological enhancements have been identified:

- New planting, trees and shrubs appropriate to the local area
- Wildflower grassland and flowering lawn creation
- Scrub planting establishment along woodland margins
- Wetland features incorporated as part of the site's sustainable drainage system
- Hedgerows creation
- Bat boxes
- Bird boxes
- Habitat piles and refugia
- Bee bricks and insect boxes.

Officers recognise that the delivery of the site will require a significant cut and fill at the early stage of development, to provide the ground levels necessary for the scale of any future development proposed. A landscaping strategy plan has been developed demonstrating how the site may be delivered, with the vast majority of the infrastructure works brought forward at the facilitatory stage to enable parcels to be released.

Should Members be minded to approve the application, it is intended that the improved habitats will be delivered through a site management plan and secured by planning conditions identified within the ecology officer's consultation response; however, all matters are currently reserved and landscaping details will follow as part of the initial reserved matters submissions.

In summary, the site is dominated by arable cropland of very low ecological interest. Boundary habitat features of greater relative interest will, in the main, be retained and

enhanced. The net residual effect of the proposals in terms of the key ecological receptors is anticipated to be neutral or net positive.

Various protected species are present (including badgers, foraging/commuting bats and nesting birds), it is considered, on the basis that effects on them can be avoided or reduced to acceptable and legally compliant levels, where appropriate via licensed mitigation and compensation, that these species are not considered to represent a significant or overriding constraint on development.

The supporting technical reports and surveys have been fully assessed by the local authority's ecologist and their findings found to be robust and sound. The development would not result in significant harm to biodiversity, and offers the potential to deliver measurable net gain. Subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, should Members be minded to approve, requiring the submission of a species protection plan, and a biodiversity net gain and management plan, this element of the proposal is considered to fully comply with both national and local planning policy.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **moderately positive in favour** of the development for the following reasons:

- Baseline arable land low ecological value
- Net gains achieved +10.7% habitats, +13.99% hedgerows, neutral for ditches
- Protected species impacts mitigated to acceptable levels.

Having regard to all the above, it is considered that the representations made in respect of habitat, flora and fauna, and covered in the consultations section of this report, have been satisfactorily addressed within this section.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

The site comprises mainly large arable fields, with log sight-lines unobscured by trees and hedgerows, which were considered to appear suitable to support passage and wintering flocks of birds associated with the Humber Estuary Special Protection Area and Ramsar site. Potential species include lapwing, golden plover and pink-footed goose.

With this in mind, the proposal required screening in relation to the below potential effects on the features of designated sites, including:

- the displacement of passage and wintering waterbirds from 'functionally linked land';
- construction noise and visual disturbance of passage and wintering waterfowl.

In light of the above, the local authority, acting as the competent authority, have undertaken an HRA Stage 1 Significance Test and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment dated September 2025.

Following the process described in detail in Circular 06/2005, the local authority has examined and assessed all the submitted information, along with additional background survey data and the consultation response received from Natural England, in reaching the conclusions contained within and informing their Appropriate Assessment submission to Natural England.

The local authority has concluded that, overall, it is possible to ascertain that the proposal will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Humber Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, arising from construction noise and visual disturbance of passage and wintering waterfowl, or displacement of passage and wintering waterfowl from functionally linked land.

In light of reaching the above conclusions, it is considered that the proposal fully complies with international legislation, and national and local planning policy, and is acceptable in terms of its impacts upon protected sites.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **neutral to positive** for the following reasons:

- The Appropriate Assessment concludes no adverse effect on the Humber Estuary SPA/Ramsar.

- NE confirms no objection.

Having regard to all the above, it is considered that the representations made in respect of the protected sites, and covered in the consultations section of this report, have been satisfactorily addressed within this section.

Greenhouse gases and climate change resilience

National greenhouse gas policy context

The Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended) places a legally binding duty on the UK to reduce national greenhouse gas emissions through five-year carbon budgets and to achieve net zero by 2050. The UK's latest climate commitments (the updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)) require an 81% reduction in emissions by 2035 compared with 1990.

Following High Court rulings emphasising greater clarity, the government updated its decarbonisation plans through the Carbon Budget and Growth Delivery Plan (2025), which sets the national pathway for meeting Carbon Budgets 4–6 (2023–2037). The plan reaffirms the commitment to a fully decarbonised electricity grid by 2030 and introduces further measures to support industry in cutting emissions.

The revised EN-1NPS establishes the urgent national need for large-scale low-carbon energy infrastructure and sets out requirements for assessing greenhouse gas (GHG) impacts in planning. It recognises the new infrastructure must support the transition to clean power and contribute to national carbon-reduction commitments.

National planning policy (NPPF) requires local authorities to:

- support economic growth in ways consistent with climate objectives

- facilitate development of energy-intensive, digital and data-driven industries in suitable locations

- address climate mitigation and adaptation as material considerations in planning.

On a more local basis, NLC has produced A Green Future Strategy and Climate Action Plan that sets a commitment for NLC to become net zero in its Scope 1 and 2 emissions by

2030. A Green Future sets the strategic direction for sustainability and climate action, covering land use, transport, biodiversity, building and renewable-energy deployment. The associated Climate Action Plan contains specific aims, including biodiversity net gain, tree planting, nature recovery and carbon-sequestration initiatives.

The council reports emissions annually in line with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol. In 2023/2024, the council recorded 65,933 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions (tCO2e), achieving a 20% emissions reduction since 2020/2021 through renewable energy adoption, lower fossil fuel use, and sustainable procurement, demonstrating a direction of travel aligned with local decarbonisation goals.

The council has supported regional delivery of a net-zero industrial cluster by 2040, promoting decarbonisation in energy-intensive sectors across the Humber and approving planning applications and NSIP for the delivery of significant carbon capture plans and pipelines to remove CO2 from emissions.

Having regard to the adopted NLCS, key policies are CS2, CS11, CS17, CS18 and CS19.

This application has been supported by a Planning Statement dated 05/2025 by Pegasus Group Ltd, an Energy and Sustainability Statement dated 05/2025 by BE Design, a Greenhouse Economic and Strategic Case dated 05/2025 by Collison & Associates Ltd, and a Carbon Footprint Statement by Found Digital dated 10/2025.

Assessment

Paragraph 7.61 of the Planning Statement highlights that large amounts of energy are required to operate the servers and processors and to keep the machines cool. Despite this, large-scale modern data centres are highly energy efficient. This can be substantiated by how, due to very high utilisation rates and sophisticated cooling equipment, energy usage has remained stable, despite the boom in data usage and the importance of new, highly efficient data centres. It is also stressed that data centre operators and trade associations are committed to the European Green Deal, achieving ambitious greenhouse gas reductions (using technology and digitalisation to achieve the goal of making Europe climate neutral by 2050).

The supporting Carbon Footprint Statement (CFS) focuses on Scope 2 emissions; these are greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with electricity for the 1GW data-centre campus during operation.

Scope 1 emissions (generators, refrigerants) and Scope 3 emissions are excluded at the outline stage as they are dependent on future design decisions and subsequent reserved matters applications.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned, the applicants have committed to offsetting the emissions (to net carbon zero) and this is to be secured via a pre-occupation condition requiring future operators to demonstrate how each building will achieve net zero carbon, therefore mitigating significant environmental effects.

Prior to first occupation of any data centre building(s) hereby approved, a sustainability and energy statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority setting out the methodology for that/those data centre building(s) to achieve net zero carbon in operation (for scope 2 emissions) in accordance with the UK Green Building Council Framework 2019 or another suitable standard or methodology to be agreed with

the local planning authority. The development shall thereafter be implemented and operated in accordance with the approved details.

Turning to Scope 2 emissions, the proposed data park is planned to reach its full 1 gigawatt load over a five-year phased ramp up (200MW per year).

Using UK government grid-carbon-intensity projections, the CFS estimates:

- Peak annual Scope 2 emissions year 2033–2034 reaching 1,004,478 tCO2e
- Total emissions over the period years 2029–2037 calculated at 6,952.023 tCO2e.

In assessing the significance against the UK's legally binding Carbon Budgets:

- 2029: 0.0037% of annual Carbon Budget (Not significant/negligible)
- 2030–2037: 0.026–0.107% of annual budgets (Not significant/minor adverse).

Notwithstanding the above figures, the proposal seeks to provide a series of mitigation and decarbonisation measures that would reduce overall emissions. These measures include:

- demand-side response to reduce electricity use during grid-stress events;
- high-efficiency IT hardware, including advanced cooling and free-cooling systems;
- modular build out to avoid unnecessary energy use;
- commitment to Climate Neutral Data Centre Pact (CNDCP) which would require a 100% utilisation of clean energy on an hourly basis by 2030;
- carbon offsetting as required to achieve neutrality.

In addition to the above, the proposal includes an extensive heat-reuse infrastructure, with waste heat used for:

- on-site large scale greenhouses (7.05ha);
- district heating for agriculture, industry or future housing.

Through the delivery of the above, it is estimated that avoided emissions through heat reuse would be:

- 5,652,135 tCO2e (2029–2037).

Aligned with the specific grid location benefits, the Humber region provides:

- 20% of UK electricity generation
- 33% of UK offshore wind capacity
- planned and committed carbon capture and hydrogen-network integration.

With the above in mind, although officers recognise that the development has a large absolute energy demand, its relative GHG impact is not significant against national carbon budgets. The site's strategic location with a clean-energy cluster, combined with ambitious mitigation measures, ensures that emissions are minimised and offset where feasible.

Given the minor adverse GHG significance, extensive mitigation, alignment with national and local planning and climate policy and additional benefits (heat reuse, economic growth, support for low carbon infrastructure, the development GHG impacts weigh minor negative.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **minor negative** for the following reasons:

- Large absolute energy demand, but minor adverse in terms of national carbon budgets
- Significant mitigation through heat reuse, energy efficiency and clean power alignment with the Humber cluster
- Delivery at scale.

Having regard to all the above, it is considered that the representations made in respect of the greenhouse gases and carbon footprints, and covered in the consultations section of this report, have been satisfactorily addressed within this section.

Climate change resilience

National and local climate change policy requires new development to:

- minimise greenhouse gas emissions (addressed above);
- support national net-zero targets and the decarbonisation of electricity supply (addressed above);
- be resilient to future climate risks, including extreme rainfall, heat, drought and flood risk;
- contribute positively to local net-zero pathways, including NLC's 2030 target and the Humber's 2040 industrial-cluster objective (addressed above); and
- incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and maximise water efficiency and natural flood management measures.

Chapter 14 of the NPPF outlines how, due to the changing climate, the planning system should incorporate matters of flood risk and coastal changes into the decision-making process.

Paragraph 166(b) outlines that, in line with the Climate Change Act 2008, the planning system should take a proactive approach to mitigating climate change by taking account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.

The development plan policy against which to assess the proposed developments effect on climate change resilience is policy CS18. Implemented using action plans, this policy is aimed at moving North Lincolnshire to a more resource-efficient future.

It includes a series of specific requirements, including (amongst others):

2. Requiring the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) where practicable

3. Supporting the necessary improvement of flood defences and surface water infrastructure required against the actions of climate change and preventing development in high flood risk areas wherever practicable and possible

8. Ensuring that development and land use in areas close to the Humber Estuary and rivers responds appropriately to the character of the area, in the interests of preserving and making best use of limited resources

13. Promote the use of a greenspace strategy and a green infrastructure plan, where applicable, which could help reduce the effects of climate change.

This application has been supported by a Planning Statement dated 01/05/2024 by Pegasus Group Ltd, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Strategy dated 06/2025 by PFA Consulting, and a Sustainability and Renewable Energy Statement dated 24/04/2024 by BE Design.

Assessment

The site lies entirely within flood zone 1, the area of lowest flood probability, meaning all proposed land uses are appropriate and meet the NPPF's sequential risk-based requirements.

Assessment of all flood sources – river, surface water, groundwater, sewers and reservoirs – show very low to low pre-development risk across the site, with no recorded historical flooding.

The FRA includes climate change allowances for the 2070's epoch, applying a +40% uplift in rainfall intensity in drainage modelling to ensure the scheme remains safe over a 100-year design life.

Whilst it is acknowledged by officers that the proposal is currently only in outline form, a comprehensive SuDS-based drainage strategy is proposed, designed to mimic natural infiltration and remain robust under future climate scenarios. Key measures include:

- infiltration basins, trenches and swales sized for 1:100 year storm event plus climate change;

- permeable paving, bioretention areas and filter drains incorporated at detailed design stage;

- pollution control measures (bunded plant areas, silt traps and separators) protecting groundwater in the source protection zone; and

- compliance with the government's Non-statutory Technical Standards for SuDS.

It is considered, through the imposition of the above measures, that stormwater will be managed sustainably, reduce peak flows, and prevent off-site run-off, delivering resilience against more intense rainfall events under climate change.

The proposed SuDS system and landscaped areas intercept and attenuate surface water, reducing reliance on hard drainage systems vulnerable to climate-driven extreme rainfall.

Ground investigations confirm suitable infiltration conditions within chalk bedrock, allowing robust infiltration drainage, even under increased storm intensity.

Primary and secondary access routes are available, ensuring safe entry and exit, even during isolated surface water ponding on Halifax Approach. Alternative routes via the A15 southbound slip road ensure continuity of access under adverse weather conditions, addressing NPPF resilience criteria.

Turning to matters relating to water usage, the development proposes to use a closed-loop 'dry' cooling system that operates without evaporating water. This design is inherently climate-resilient because:

- cooling efficiency remains high under higher ambient temperatures due to the Humber region's favourable climate (95% of the year less than 21 degrees Celsius);
- water is only required for initial filling of the sealed systems, not for ongoing cooling; and
- direct-to-chip cooling allows high-density server cooling with minimal water and high tolerance to heatwaves.

This approach aligns with best practice and emerging industry standards (e.g. Climate Neutral Data Centre Pact) and avoids the vulnerability and high-water demand of evaporative cooling systems.

The estimated domestic water demand for the development (office and welfare facilities) is modest.

- 572 persons/day x 50 litres/person/day = 28.6 cubic metres/day. This is the equivalent to the domestic water consumption of approximately 65 dwellings, indicating the impact on local water resources is limited.

The separate data centre water requirements report estimates:

- up to 45 litres/person/day for office use (BSRIA BG9 guidance);
- for 900 staff, the annual office water requirement is around 10,530 cubic metres per year, assuming a standard 5-day working week; and
- humidification requirements for winter conditions add around 3,886 cubic metres per year, which is still significantly lower than water-dependent data centres.

The data centre campus cooling water use proposes a fully closed-loop, meaning:

- no operational water consumption for cooling;
- only initial system fill is required, which can be phased or delivered by tanker to avoid pressure on the local network; and
- maintenance water use (cleaning, irrigation) is low and can be met through rainwater harvesting.

With the above in mind, officers note that were the data centre campus using evaporative or adiabatic cooling water, demand would increase dramatically.

In summary, the proposed development incorporates robust climate change measures through the low-risk site selection, climate-adaptive drainage design, safe access and sustainable water management. The FRA confirms the scheme remains safe for its lifetime, accounts for future impacts, and reduces flood risk, both on and off site, fully complying with national and local policy requirements.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **neutral** for the following reasons:

- Fully compliant with the NPPF and CS18
- Robust SuDS design, climate-resilient water strategy and closed-loop cooling.

Having regard to all the above, it is considered that the representations made in respect of the greenhouse gases and carbon footprints, and covered in the consultations section of this report, have been satisfactorily addressed within this section.

Geology, soils and contaminated land

Across both national and local policy, the overarching objectives for land contamination management are:

- to protect human health;
- to protect controlled waters and water environment;
- to prevent harm to property, biodiversity and eco systems;
- to ensure land is suitable for its intended use;
- to enable safe and sustainable brownfield regeneration; and
- to require the undertaking of risk assessments, remediation and verification.

Sections 11 and 15 of the NPPF are relevant in considering the application, providing the framework for delivering the overarching objective identified above.

Paragraph 187 sets out how planning decisions must protect and improve the natural and local environment. Key aims include:

- preventing unacceptable pollution risks (soil, air, noise and land instability) and aiming to improve environmental conditions; and
- remediating degraded, derelict or contaminated land where appropriate;

whilst paragraph 196 requires planning decisions to ensure that development is safe, suitable and appropriately informed with respect to land conditions, specifically:

- ensuring development sites are suitable for their proposed use, considering contamination, land instability, natural hazards, mining legacy and required remediation;

- following remediation, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990; and

- requiring adequate site investigation to be provided by a competent person to inform risk assessments and decision-making.

Paragraph 197 places the emphasis on managing risk, and reinforces the duty to make a site safe rests with those bringing the development forward.

The most relevant extant development plan policies against which to assess the proposed development's effect on land contamination and ground conditions are 'saved' policy DS1 of the NLLP, which seeks to prevent development from resulting in the pollution of water, air or land; 'saved' policy DS7 of the NLLP, which requires contamination to be overcome by remedial measures or improvements; 'saved' policy DS15 of the NLLP, which seeks to protect the quality and quantity of water resources; and policy CS18 of the NLCS which seeks, amongst other things, to protect people and the environment from unsafe, unhealthy and polluted environments, by protecting and improving the quality of the air, land and water.

The application is supported by an Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) report, an Economic Needs and Benefits Report, and a Preliminary Geo-environmental Risk Assessment.

The site covers approximately 176ha made up of 10 agricultural fields. Historical maps from 1866 detail agricultural fields, with Marshall's Covert woodland in the southwest, a small quarry in the east and an old gravel pit straddling the northwest boundary.

By the mid 20th century there is evidence of a military airfield, including a disused runway along with a number of former buildings.

Post 2000s, the A15 was constructed to the west of the site.

With reference to ground conditions, the site provides superficial deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravel. Underlying bedrock consists of a Welton chalk formation, a principal aquifer.

The site lies within a groundwater source protection zone and within a low radon risk area.

The site contains a mix of high-quality (grades 1 and 2) and moderate-quality (grades 3a and 3b) agricultural land, primarily influenced by droughtiness, soil depth and stoniness, with excellent drainage and no climatic limitations. This makes the land variable in capability but with substantial areas of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land (grades 1, 2 and 3a).

- Grade 1 (Excellent): 33.4ha

- Grade 2 (Very Good): 49.2ha

- Grade 3a (Good): 59.9ha

- Grade 3b (Moderate): 25.2ha

- Non-agricultural: 12ha.

BMV land is recognised as a national resource because of its value to agricultural production. As such, its loss needs to be rationalised and in this instance offset, both in terms of crop size and value across the wider economy.

The application has been supported by a Greenhouse Economic & Strategic Case report by Collison and Associates Limited that assesses the loss of the arable crop growing field against the benefits on the food chain of a glasshouse development on the site.

The proposed glasshouse is to be sited centrally, using the heat from the district heating unit and serviced by a rainwater capture/storage system. The site will be landscaped and include multiple areas of enriched biodiverse land uses, including hedges, woodland areas and wildflower meadows, as well as new wetland habitats.

The proposed glasshouse area is 70,050 square metres (7.05ha) which has been set as a residual figure on which to undertake assessments of the impacts of the proposal on food production relative to its current use.

Assessment

The NPPF requires decision-makers to recognise the economic and environmental importance of BMV land to avoid its unnecessary loss. Where development on BMV land is justified, mitigation must demonstrate that the loss is offset through measures that protect food production, soil functions and environmental quality.

Overall, and following completion of the development, 153.9ha of cropped arable land will be permanently removed.

Given the permanent loss of soil function arising from the land-take for built development, proposed mitigation has followed an accepted planning hierarchy:

1. Avoidance: There are no alternative non-BMV locations of the scale required within North Lincolnshire. The development footprint has been structured to retain all existing woodland (10ha) and avoid soil disturbance where possible.

2. Minimisation: The site layout consolidates development footprints, and areas of non-agricultural land (tracks, margins and existing woodland) have been integrated to reduce BMV loss. Ancient woodland is avoided and buffered.

3. Compensation/Functional Replacement: Because soil functions cannot be replaced, the applicants propose a functional productivity-based offset through a 6-hectare high-tech greenhouse.

The development of a 6-hectare productive greenhouse, heated using waste heat from the data centre, has the below quantified benefits to offset the loss of the BMV land:

- the production of up to 4,728 tonnes of tomatoes annually, replacing 3.45 times the displaced food tonnage from 153.9ha arable land

- the generation of £8.1m crop value – over 26 times that of the arable baseline

- supporting 64 FTE jobs, compared to 3.5 FTE lost from farming

- avoiding a dependence on global imports of tomatoes, reducing food miles and strengthening UK food security.

The proposed greenhouse seeks to incorporate modern environmental controls that mitigate pressures previously placed on BMV soils namely:

- Water protection and nitrate vulnerable zone compliance: By rainwater harvesting meeting 90% of the greenhouse irrigation needs, it reduces abstraction and protects groundwater. Hydroponic systems prevent nutrient leaching.

- Carbon reduction: Heating derived from data centre waste substitutes high-carbon natural gas used in traditional horticulture and eliminates carbon emissions linked to diesel-based arable operations (cultivation, fertiliser spreading and haulage).

The proposal seeks to secure significant habitat creation and thus improve soil ecosystem services across the site in the forms of:

- the retention of 10ha of existing woodland, enhancing soil organic matter retention and reducing erosion;

- introducing new tree belts, which will improve soil stability and microclimate;

- introducing wildflower meadows and reinstating species-rich grassland lost nationally; and

- introducing wetland and reedbed creation through new attenuation ponds, improving water infiltration and soil moisture moderation.

Through the avoidance of indirect land use change (iLUC), the development aims to increase total UK food production and thus:

- avoids shifting agricultural production overseas;

- prevents additional foreign land conversion to agriculture; and

- reduces associated carbon emissions from imported produce.

Officers note that the proposed compensatory approach, which will need to be delivered in the early phases of development of the site, aligns with the NPPF's intent that planning supports modern, resilient food systems.

Overall, the supporting assessment concludes that the physical loss of BMV soil is unavoidable, which is of major adverse significance; however, through the mitigation proposed, the residual loss of agricultural output demonstrates significant increases and can therefore be assessed as major beneficial in terms of food production, economic, environmental and policy outcomes.

Officers acknowledge the findings of the report and consider that the benefits of this element of the proposal are significant and outweigh or offset the loss of the BMV soils.

Officers would recommend that should Members be minded to approve the application, a condition should be imposed to ensure that there is an appropriate trigger included for the early delivery of the glasshouse once a certain proportion of the data centre buildings and

the district-wide heating unit have become operational, thus safeguarding the delivery of the food production from the site.

Turning to matters relating to land contamination, the application has been assessed by both the Environment Agency and NLC's Environmental Protection officers and a series of conditions have been recommended to safeguard both controlled waters and human health, based on the following findings of the Preliminary Geo-environmental Risk Assessment:

The site has been identified as posing low to moderate risk in terms of contamination, predominantly through historical uses, including the airfield, quarry, gravel pits, former tanks and sewage works, and as such, whilst risks exist, they can be robustly mitigated through investigation, remediation and verification.

Information obtained from within the submitted preliminary unexploded ordnance (UXO) report suggests that because of the historical nature of the site as a former WWII airfield further research is undertaken in a more detailed UXO risk assessment prior to commencement of development in any given part of the site. This can be secured by condition.

Having given due regard to the expert information submitted in support of the application and the consultation responses from the council's Environmental Protection officers, it is considered that the risks of an adverse impact in respect of the contamination of land or controlled waters is low and that there would be appropriate measures to ensure adequate protection. Suggested conditions have been offered where the consultee is of the opinion that controls are necessary. Therefore, the proposed development, appropriately mitigated, is considered to accord with policies DS1, DS7 and DS15 of the NLLP and policy CS18 of the NLCS with regard to contamination.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **finely balanced but overall positive** for the following reasons:

- Loss of 153ha BMV is major adverse, but offset by:
  - 6–7ha greenhouse producing 3.45 times more food tonnage
  - 26 times higher crop value
  - lower carbon agricultural operations
- Contamination risk is low and mitigated by conditions.

Having regard to all the above, it is considered that the representations made in respect of the geology, soils and land contamination matters, and covered in the consultations section of this report, have been satisfactorily addressed within this section.

Human health

Chapter 2 of the NPPF indicates at paragraph 8 that there are three overarching objectives for sustainable development, including a social objective which supports healthy communities by:

‘fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being’.

Chapter 8, at paragraph 96, outlines the policy aim of achieving ‘healthy, inclusive, and safe places’.

Chapter 14 of the NLCS emphasises the need to ensure that:

‘all local people have ready access to those services and facilities they need for their everyday lives and that they contribute positively to the health and well-being of the community.’

The supporting text, at paragraph 14.4, refers to delivering sustainable development in accordance with national planning policy. Under the Planning Policy Statement (PPS), sustainable development is required to:

‘contribute to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.’

Paragraph 14.6 states:

‘Major development proposals such as large mixed-use areas or urban extensions should have regard to the potential health impacts of proposals.’

Assessment

Notwithstanding the clear socioeconomic benefits that are outlined in a later section of this report, and the planning obligations that have been secured through a section 106 agreement that accompanies this proposal towards delivering an education and wellbeing hub, recreational improvements and the delivery of a new cycle way, the introduction of the greenhouse to the site as part of this proposal will bring significant health benefits.

The other technical matters that are addressed within this report also seek to demonstrate that the proposal will not lead to conditions prejudicial to the living conditions currently afforded to existing residents in terms of noise, air quality, highway safety etc.

The proposed greenhouse component of the proposal is considered to be more that just an economic asset, in that it directly supports population health through improved diet, greater food security and ultra-low-carbon domestic production.

The public health implication of the proposed 6ha of greenhouse production would increase the availability of fresh produce which would directly support meeting 5-a-day targets and improving diet quality. The supporting Greenhouse Strategic Case shows only 27% of adults and just 8% of children meet the 5-a-day target.

Presently, imports currently dominate UK supply:

- Only 35% of UK fruit and vegetables demand is met domestically.
- UK self-sufficiency in tomatoes is below 15%.

Domestic greenhouse production:

- reduces import-linked costs and volatility;
- shortens supply chains;
- improves shelf life and freshness; and
- increases resilience during global disruption.

In addition to the above, the cleaner production resulting from the greenhouse processes supports environmental determinants of health and protects water quality.

The overall assessment is therefore that the greenhouse will, from a food production perspective, increase the yield of food produced, increase the crop value produced and support more jobs in the economy. It will also replace imports and increase activity in the local economy, whilst delivering modern, efficient production aligned with environmental and health policies at the local, regional and national levels.

Based on the assessment of the submitted supporting documents, the development raises no issues in terms of public health. Overall, subject to the proposed mitigation in respect of local labour agreements, it is considered that the proposed development would have a positive impact with regard to economic impacts and opportunities for training, and negligible impacts with regard to connectivity and neighbourhood amenity.

In view of the above, the development complies with the aspirations of chapter 14 of the

NLCS and national policy in the NPPF identified above.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **positive in favour** of the development for the following reasons:

- The greenhouse would improve food security and diet quality.
- No significant adverse noise/air/dust effects
- Strong employment and training benefits.

Having regard to all the above, it is considered that the representations made in respect of the impacts of the development on human health, and covered in the consultations section of this report, have been satisfactorily addressed within this section.

Noise and vibration

Chapter 15 of the NPPF seeks to prevent unacceptable harm as a result of noise pollution, At paragraph 198 it states that:

‘planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development.’

Paragraph 198(a) states that policies and decisions should:

‘mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life.’

The most relevant extant development plan policies against which to assess the proposed development’s effect on noise are ‘saved’ policies DS1 and DS11.

The application has been supported by an Acoustics Assessment dated May 2025 by MEC Consulting Group Ltd and, following receipt of comments from Environmental Protection, additional information and justification submitted for review relating to typical operations, backup generator testing and post development validation requirements to establish compliance.

Assessment

The scope of works for the assessment was undertaken to establish the prevailing acoustic conditions with regard to ambient and background sound levels, which subsequently informed the baseline data of the acoustic model produced to assess the potential risk of adverse effects on health and wellbeing for residents at the nearest residential receptors.

Baseline surveys were undertaken at five monitoring locations (CM1–CM3, SM1–SM2) over a weekend and weekday periods. Key findings were:

- Dominant noise source: A15 and A180 road traffic; occasional agricultural activity; intermittent aircraft and wildlife

- Background sound levels (LA90) vary across the site, with typical daytime values ranging from 42–55dB and night-time from 35–40dB, depending on receptor location.

Six noise sensitive receptors (NSRs) were identified around the site, NSR1–2 northwest, NSR3–4 southeast, NSR5 southwest (Middlegate Lane) and NSR6 west (Vicarage Lane). Background noise levels for each receptor were derived from the nearest representative measurement points.

The original assessment proposed rating levels up to +5dB above background, consistent with an expected ‘low impact’ under BS 4142. Noise limits (day/night) for each NSR were set accordingly. For example:

- NSR1 daytime limit: 48dB; night-time: 40dB

- NSR4 daytime limit: 60dB; night-time: 40dB.

Following consultations with Environmental Protection officers concerns were raised relating to:

- clarity and tabulation of raw background data;

- limited weekly measurement coverage;

- representativeness of selected monitoring positions;

- potential for ‘noise creep’ if allowing operational levels above background; and

- justification for +5dB design margin.

The applicants responded with full tabulated data for CM1–3, justification of each measurement (including distances to NSRs), a commitment to use the lowest measured background levels for sample locations SM1 and SM2, and finally, a revision of all operational noise limits so they do not exceed background levels, fully preventing noise creep and ensuring low impact under BS 4142.

The revised operational noise limits provided within the update set the rating level equal to background level, removing the +5dB. This mitigates cumulative impacts and aligns with comments received from EP.

Revised limits (day/night):

NSR1: 43/35dB

NSR2: 43/35dB

NSR3: 42/35dB

NSR4: 51/35dB

NSR5: 45/40dB

NSR6: 47/40dB.

The assessment confirms that if these limits are met at 3.5m from any receptor façade, including for tonal/impulsive/intermittent characteristics, no adverse impact is expected.

The assessment identifies a comprehensive suite of mitigation options to ensure compliance with the operational limits, including:

- mechanical engineering solutions involving the oversizing of equipment to allow lower fan speeds, water-cooled plant, EC/variable speed fans and structural vibration isolation;

- acoustic design measures comprising engineered barriers, louvres, resonators, internal absorption, optimised equipment siting and active noise control technologies; and

- site planning seeking to locate service yards centrally and avoiding operations near boundaries, acoustic fencing and minimising night-time operations.

Through the delivery of the above measures, matters relating to noise can be adequately secured to ensure compliance. With the revised operational noise limits, the development is considered to maintain noise levels at or below existing background conditions at every NSR. BS 4142 guidance indicates that, where rating levels are equal to or less than background, low impact is expected.

Having due regard to the submission of expert consultants appointed in support of the application, and the responses of the council’s Environmental Protection officer, it is considered that mitigation of the effects of the development with regard to noise, through

the use of planning conditions, is appropriate and proportionate and will adequately protect the living conditions of neighbouring residential properties, with no adverse noise impacts anticipated. It is considered, subject to the recommended conditions, that the proposed development accords with policies DS1 and DS11 of the NLLP.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **neutral** for the following reasons:

- Revised limits ensure no increase above background at receptors.
- Mitigation is feasible through design and conditions.

Having regard to all the above, it is considered that the representations made in respect of noise and vibration, and covered in the consultations section of this report, have been satisfactorily addressed within this section.

Socioeconomics

NPPF Section 2, at paragraph 7, outlines that:

'the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development, and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.'

The objectives of sustainable development include in part at paragraph 8:

'a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.'

Paragraph 85 of the NPPF states that:

'planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.'

Paragraph 87 of the NPPF states that:

'planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for:

clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries; and for new, expanded or upgraded facilities and infrastructure that are needed to support the growth of these industries (including data centres and grid connections.'

The most relevant extant development plan policies against which to assess the proposed development's effect on socio-economic development are 'saved' policies CS2 and CS11 of the NLCS.

Assessment

The application has been supported by an Economic Benefits and Needs Assessment dated May 2025, which has been scrutinised, and advice has been provided by the council's Economic Development team as summarised below:

The proposal is considered to align strongly with national and local policy identified above, along with the UK AI Opportunities Action Plan (2025) which supports AI Growth Zones, large-scale compute capacity, and data infrastructure, and the North Lincolnshire Economic Growth Plan (2023–2028) which aims to increase productivity, create high-value jobs, improve infrastructure and support the digital sector. Finally, the proposal forms part of the area's proposed North Lincolnshire AI Growth Zone strategy that supports the region's ambition to become a national AI and digital hub.

In assessing the economic benefits, this can be broken down into the construction phase and the operational phase. Taking each in turn:

At construction phase the capital investment is estimated to be between £5.5bn and £7.5bn, making it among the UK's largest inward investments, the employment generated equating to between 26,000 to 36,000 person years of employment both on and off site. This would be equivalent to 2,600 to 5,100 jobs per year, depending on how the phasing of the site is rolled out.

The overall scale of the works proposed would add a significant stimulus to the UK steel sector and local construction, engineering and supply chain industries.

During the operational phase it is anticipated that the development would lead to between 600 to 1000 FTEs on site, with an average salary between £55,000 to £61,000, which is well above the local average of £34,500. Direct GVA contributions would range between £320m to £500m annually, which is an approximate uplift in North Lincolnshire's total GVA of approximately 6 to 10%.

In addition to the above, the indirect and induced effects are considered to be in the range of an additional 1,800 to 2,800 FTEs, providing a total economic footprint including 2,800 to 3,700 FTEs, £900m GVA and £130m in annual wages.

The proposed development will also deliver skills and training, generating substantial opportunities for local education and training providers. Engagement with colleges, universities and apprenticeship organisations has been initiated and the supporting draft s106 identifies financial support in this area committing to securing training, apprenticeships and upskilling programmes in engineering, ICT and data-centre operations.

In terms of agricultural land and food security, although officers recognise the loss of the crop land, the development incorporates a district heat network supplying on-site greenhouse food production. This approach demonstrates innovation in agritech, supports security objectives, and offsets land-use impacts through significantly higher controlled-environment agricultural productivity.

The data centre is designed to operate with an air-cooled, closed-loop system, minimising water use. Its location in the Humber energy cluster allows alignment with existing and planned renewable energy, hydrogen, and carbon capture infrastructure. The provision of waste-heat reuse furthers the council's net-zero commitments.

In conclusion, the socio-economic assessment demonstrates that the proposed development would deliver substantial and transformative economic benefits at a local, regional and national level. These include major capital investment, high-value employment, supply-chain stimulus, alignment with regional decarbonisation and energy strategies, and support for the emerging AI and digital technology sectors.

The loss of agricultural land is acknowledged and mitigated.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **very strongly positive in favour** of the development at regional/national level for the following reasons:

- £5.5–£7.5bn inward investment
- 2,600–5,100 construction jobs per year
- 600–1000 permanent FTEs; 1800–2800 indirect jobs
- £320m–£500m annual GVA uplift
- Supports AI Growth Zone strategy and national digital infrastructure needs.

Having regard to all the above, it is considered that the representations made in respect of social and economic matters, and covered in the consultations section of this report, have been satisfactorily addressed within this section.

Traffic and transport

Chapter 9 of the NPPF, at paragraph 115, states that:

'In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

(a) sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location;

(b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;

(c) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach.'

Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states:

'Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.'

Paragraph 118 of the NPPF states:

'All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a vision-led transport

statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed and monitored.'

The most relevant extant development plan policies against which to assess the proposed development's effect on highway safety are 'saved' policy T1 of the NLLP, which requires developments that generate significant vehicle movements to be located in urban areas or where there is good access to transport networks; 'saved' policy T2 of the NLLP, which requires all new developments to be served by a satisfactory access; and 'saved' policy T19 of the NLLP, which requires car parking to be provided that will meet the needs of the business.

The application has been supported by a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan and each of the documents has been assessed by National Highways and the local highway authority.

At the time of writing this report, a holding objection has been placed on the application by National Highways and additional information has been sought and agreed.

This information relates to the mitigation proposals for Barnetby Interchange requiring adjustments to lane geometry, radii and lane designation to accurately reflect the mitigation scheme drawings. Saturation flows need to be recalculated using actual geometric inputs, and lane designations need to be corrected for consistency. Traffic flow values should then be clarified and aligned with supporting documentation. The model should then be clarified and aligned and the assessment results updated for final review.

National Highways are working alongside the applicants and their team of transport consultants to ensure they meet all the requirements necessary for road safety and traffic flows prior to agreeing in principle to remove their objection. Work is ongoing to deliver a suitable scheme for this significant infrastructure improvement with full commitment from the applicants to deliver the necessary mitigation.

Assessment

The existing network conditions in the form of the A15, M180, A180 and A18 form a heavily trafficked strategic network around the site with daily flows on the A15 exceeding 26,000 vehicles per day.

Barnetby Interchange (M180 J5) is a five-arm grade-separated roundabout with several geometric deficiencies (non-compliant entry path curvature, conflict angles and visibility).

Collision records show 40 incidents at Barnetby Interchange in 2020 to 2025, mostly slight, with four serious, plus a fatal collision at the A15 industrial estate access.

Prior to the submission of the current proposal, National Highways was already developing a safety only led improvement scheme for the junction, although delivery funding had yet to be secured. Having assessed the mitigation required to make the interchange fit for purpose in terms of safety and capacity, the applicants have sought to incorporate the National Highways wider set of works and deliver them through an s278 agreement.

Whilst the above is still being modelled to satisfy National Highways, the principle of the works proposed is considered to provide an acceptable solution once all the suitable updates are submitted and reviewed.

Having regard to development traffic impact, the proposal includes around 1,200 FTE jobs with shift change peaks at 6–7am and 7–8pm, outside the usual network peaks.

Worst case scenario traffic generation indicates 514 two-way trips in each shift-change peak and 58 two-way trips in typical AM and PM peaks.

Distribution analysis indicates 87% of trips will use the A15 south towards Barnetby Interchange.

The junction capacity results for the proposal consider the Halifax Approach signals operating well, with and without the development, whilst the A18/Kings Road roundabout remains within capacity for 2027 and 2035 scenarios.

As mentioned above, the Barnetby Interchange is already forecast to be over capacity in future baselines, even without the development, requiring mitigation measures – primarily signalisation and geometric improvements.

Notwithstanding previous proposals for improvements to the interchange, namely National Highways and Truck Stop access works, the applicants' transport consultants are modelling a scheme that includes the following mitigation measures which could be secured by condition:

- traffic signal control on the M180 off-slip and A15 entry
- removal of A15 lay-bys to improve visibility and weaving distance
- widening of the circulatory to accommodate design vehicles
- geometric realignments to improve conflict angles and reduce entry speeds.

National Highways has confirmed these align with its own emerging scheme, but Departures from Standard (DfS) and Approval in Principle (AiP) processes will be required.

Mitigation measures are required at a local level, including the submission of a construction traffic management plan, flood monitoring linked signage on the A15, and bus, cycle and car share strategies funded and operated through the framework travel plan.

The framework travel plan proposes:

- an aspirational 85% car driver mode share target, to be reviewed post-occupation;
- on-site bus facilities and a developer-funded shuttle to Barnetby Station, Brigg and Scunthorpe;
- cycle links to NCN (National Cycle Network) Route 1 and Middlegate Lane; and
- travel plan coordinator for at least 5 years.

The proposal having been assessed at both the Strategic Road Network Level and Local Road Network Level:

- it is considered to not materially impact Halifax Approach or the A18/Kings Road roundabout;

- the holding objection remains in place until the Barnetby Interchange mitigation scheme has been agreed with National Highways following assessment of the further modelling details that have been requested; and

- subject to delivering the mitigation and addressing National Highways' outstanding queries, the scheme would not result in a severe residual cumulative impact under NPPF paragraph 116.

With regard to the above points, Members are requested, should they be minded to approve the application, to delegate it back to officers to resolve these outstanding technical matters.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **minor positive** for the following reasons:

- Impacts acceptable at most junctions

- Barnetby Interchange requires mitigation; NH holding objection remains until modelling updated and secured.

Having regard to all the above, it is considered that the representations made in respect of the Strategic and Local Road Network and all highway matters, and covered in the consultations section of this report, have been satisfactorily addressed within this section.

Water environment and flood risk

Chapter 14 of the NPPF outlines that the planning system should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk and water supply.

Paragraph 170 outlines that the principal aim of the NPPF regarding flood risk is that:

'Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.'

The most relevant existent policy from the North Lincolnshire Local Plan against which to assess the proposed development's effect on water environment and flood risk are policy DS13 and DS14 of the NLLP, and policies CS2 and CS19 of the NLCS, that direct development to low-risk areas and require SuDS.

This application has been supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy dated June 2025 and prepared by PFA Consulting.

Assessment

The application site (approximately 176ha) lies adjacent to Elsham Wolds Industrial Estate and currently predominantly comprises arable land subdivided by hedgerows. It naturally drains to ground via permeable chalk strata. The topography slopes from around 71m AOD in the west to 45m AOD in the southeast.

The site is entirely within flood zone 1, indicating less than 0.1% annual probability of river flooding. No watercourses run through or immediately adjacent to the site, and there are no

recorded incidents of river, surface water, groundwater, sewer or artificial-source flooding affecting the site. As the development is entirely within flood zone 1 the sequential test is not required. The scheme is compatible with its flood-risk vulnerability classification ('less vulnerable').

The FRA assesses the flood risk of the site from all sources: tidal, surface water, groundwater, artificial sources, sewer, and canal and reservoir. These are all assessed to be low and acceptable.

A 100-year design life has been assumed, with a +40% peak rainfall intensity allowance applied.

All drainage design work models the 1 in 100 year +40% climate change event, in accordance with EA and NPPF requirements.

A comprehensive SuDS management train is proposed including:

- infiltration basins, trenches and swales;
- pervious paving, bioretention areas and source control measures; and
- pollution controls, deep-trapped gullies, BS EN 858 compliant separators for large parking areas, and engineered soil layers to protect the chalk aquifer.

Infiltration testing confirms the site is highly suitable for infiltration drainage.

Micro drainage modelling demonstrates that all basins drain effectively and flooding is proposed within the predicted storm events.

The SuDS features collectively meet CIRIA C753 pollution mitigation index requirements and are considered adequate to protect the principal aquifer (SPZ3). Construction best practice measures and bunded fuel/plant storage are proposed.

A new foul sewer network will connect to the existing off-site system. No foul water will be infiltrated.

A SuDS maintenance strategy is included, covering vegetation management, sediment removal, reinstatement of levels and pollution control system servicing.

Although part of the Halifax Approach slip road is occasionally affected by surface water flooding, alternative access routes via the A15 remain available. The site therefore provides safe entry and exit in flood conditions.

The proposed drainage strategy intercepts and manages overland flows, reduces run-off rates and delivers net betterment compared to existing greenfield conditions. No increase in downstream flood risk is expected.

The LLFA has also been consulted and raises no objections.

In terms of assessing the proposed water environment and flood risk, officers deem that the proposal is compliant with both national and local policy in this regard.

Specifically, national compliance is represented by how the site is not an at-risk area, and all the required documents (such as a flood risk assessment) have been completed, raising no issues.

In terms of local policy compliance, officers are satisfied that the development proposal considers not only impact on land drainage and ground water protection, but impacts on foul sewage and surface water drainage are also considered and mitigated.

Officers therefore deem that, subject to implementation of the three pre-commencement conditions mentioned below, should Members be minded to approve the application, compliance with all relevant policy will have been met.

Conditions:

- compliance and outline drainage principles
- drainage scheme
- changes to development design and drainage.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **positive in favour** for the following reasons:

- Flood zone 1 – all sources low risk
- SuDS strategy complies with climate allowances
- Anglian Water objections resolved.

Having regard to all the above,, it is considered that the representations made in respect of water environment and flood risk and covered in the consultations section of this report, have been satisfactorily addressed within this section.

Materials and waste

Chapter 2 of the NPPF broadly sets out the environmental objectives of sustainable development as:

‘To protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including…minimising waste and pollution...’

The NPPF does not contain specific policies with regard to waste, only referring to the government’s Planning Policy for Waste and noting in paragraph 4:

‘The Framework should be read in conjunction with the government’s planning policy for waste.’

The National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) sets out the detailed waste planning policies that should be considered. This policy lists the hierarchy of preferred methods of waste management to be as follows: prevention, preparation for re-use, recycling, other recovery and, as a last resort, disposal. This hierarchy aims to achieve the country’s waste ambitions by driving waste management up the hierarchy, from disposal to recovery, and so on.

Most relevant to this proposal, paragraph 8, states that local planning authorities should ensure that:

‘new, non-waste development makes sufficient provision for waste management and promotes good design to secure the integration of waste management facilities with the rest of the development and, in less developed areas, with the local landscape’;

‘the handling of waste arising from the construction and operation of development maximises reuse/recovery opportunities, and minimises off-site disposal.’

In terms of relevant local policy, NLCS policy CS18 states that the council should actively promote development that utilises natural resources as efficiently and sustainably as possible. Most relevant to this proposal, it states that the council should support development that:

‘Seeks to minimise waste and facilitates recycling and using waste for energy where appropriate’.

Supporting paragraph 11.41 adds that North Lincolnshire should move towards a more resource-efficient future by:

‘Concentrating more on waste minimisation, reuse, and recycling by applying the national waste hierarchy...’

NLCS policy CS20 also includes the following provision:

‘The council will promote sustainable waste management by: requiring site waste management plans for future major developments to minimise waste.’

The application has been supported by a Waste Management Plan (WMP) prepared by Pegasus Group Ltd and dated May 2025.

Assessment

The supporting WMP is heavily based around the principles outlined within national and local policy outlined above.

The proposed development will implement a comprehensive and policy-compliant waste management strategy covering both the construction and operational phases. The approach is grounded in the waste hierarchy as below:

- Eliminate
- Reduce
- Reuse
- Recycle
- Recover
- Dispose (the last resort).

As part of the overarching waste strategy, a Resource Management Plan (RMP) will be prepared by the contractor prior to construction to set out procedures for waste minimisation.

The development commits to achieving BREEAM 'Very Good' which includes enhanced performance around waste management and storage provision.

The strategy is considered to align with national waste policy, including the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011, NPPW and NPPF requirements to minimise waste and integrate sustainable resource use into development proposals.

With reference to the construction phase waste management, the design stage measures proposed seek to minimise waste through standardised components, prefabrication, reduced offcuts and maximising reclaimed materials.

Materials from site clearance, including soils, will be reused on site wherever feasible, with stripped soils being stored in controlled 3-metre-high grassed bunds to preserve their quality for later use, whilst cut and fill strategies aim to reduce the need to export soil off site.

Having regard to segregation and recycling on site, waste streams will be implemented to maximise opportunities for recycling and reuse. Where this is not possible, materials will be sent to licensed facilities for separation and recovery in line with the proximity principle. Packaging will be minimised and returned to suppliers where possible.

On-site practices offer training to contractors in waste minimisation and materials handling to enable accurate ordering, and secure storage and protection of materials will minimise theft, damage and surplus stock.

A confirmed remediation strategy (where contamination is identified) will manage compliant handling and disposal of any hazardous wastes.

At the operational phase of the development, dedicated, accessible waste and recycling storage areas will be provided for each building/plot, meeting BREEAM and occupier requirements, with all stores including clearly labelled segregation systems, appropriate capacity, and safe access for users and collection vehicles.

A building user guide will be provided to occupiers to ensure waste practices align with the site-wide waste strategy, including recycling and efficiency expectations, with detailed operational waste data and management procedures being finalised at the reserved matters stage.

Landfill disposal will occur as a last resort and when all other options are exhausted.

In terms of assessing the proposed waste management provisions, officers deem that the proposal complies with both national and local policy in this regard. Specifically, the NPPW has clearly been strongly considered in this proposal. This is clear through the variety of approaches which incorporate the waste management hierarchy, such as how the proactive design of the building incorporates preferential treatment of materials viable for reuse as opposed to recycling. This will also remove the need for off-site disposal.

In terms of local policy, alongside the impetus on the waste hierarchy, weight is also given to using waste for energy where appropriate. Officers are satisfied that the application

meets this requirement through the provision of a greenhouse. Not only will this be beneficial to waste, but there are additional environmental benefits to this, such as less transport emissions. Although not referred to in the waste management plan, the location of the site, near to the large energy supply in the region, will further add to this.

Officers are therefore fully in support of the application in this regard, but advise a condition requiring a full waste management plan to be agreed before construction commences.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **positively in favour** for the following reasons:

- Strong alignment with waste hierarchy
- Construction and operational waste minimised; BREEAM 'Very Good'.

Having regard to all the above, it is considered that the representations made in respect of materials and waste, and covered in the consultations section of this report, have been satisfactorily addressed within this section.

Landscape and visual impact

NPPF chapter 12 seeks to ensure the delivery of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places, with paragraph 187(b) stating:

'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.

The relevant extant development plan policies against which to assess the proposed development's effect on landscape and visual impact are policies RD2, DS1, LC7 and LC12 of the NLLP, which seek to protect the local character and appearance of the countryside. The guiding principle is that development should benefit economic activity, promote social inclusion and maintain or enhance the environment. The open countryside can accommodate some forms of development without detriment, if the type, form and design are sensitive to the location. New development should be carefully located having regard to existing settlement patterns and to historic, wildlife and landscape resources.

Policy CS5 of the NLCS sets out the key design principles for all new development in North Lincolnshire. Its aim is to ensure that development supports the creation of a high quality built environment which is attractive to residents, investors and visitors. However, it is not just about the architecture of a building, the same principles will apply to the spaces between buildings, particularly within built-up areas, that make an important contribution to people's lives. Parks, gardens, playing fields, amenity areas, and town and village squares, offer pleasant settings to live, work and play, as well as providing social meeting places and important breaks in built-up areas.

The application has been supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment dated May 2025 by MHP Design Ltd, and a subsequent updated LVIA dated July 2025, along with supporting papers on Methodology, Zones of Theoretical Visibility and Viewpoint Photographs and Graphics.

Assessment

The above documents have been independently assessed by a Chartered Landscape Architect (Tetra Tech) on behalf of NLC and a summary of their conclusions is reported in the consultations section of this report.

Having regard to the submitted documents, the updated LVIA has been undertaken in line with GLVIA3 and Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Notes and reviewing officers are satisfied with the assessment areas and methodology used to reach its conclusions.

In terms of landscape effects, the following provide a summary of the supporting documents' findings:

Construction phase: Significant temporary effects at the site and immediate surroundings, assessed as substantial to moderate adverse, due to the overall scale of earthworks, plant and loss of openness.

Operational phase (Year 1): The development results in substantial adverse landscape effects at the site itself, reflecting large-scale change from open arable land to built infrastructure.

Residual (Year 15): With mitigation, the LVIA identifies substantial-moderate effects for the site and moderate adverse effects for adjacent landscapes north, east and south, as the built form remains prominent, despite planting.

Effects on the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape are assessed as negligible, with no harm to scenic beauty or special qualities at distance.

In terms of visual effects, it is recognised that the greatest harm is close-range receptors, particularly:

- walkers on the Viking Way (north, east and south of site);
- users of Race Lane and Middlegate Road;
- residents at Elsham Top Lodge, High Wood Farm and Dodds Farm; and
- residents at the listed Threshing Barn, who would experience substantial–moderate adverse residual effects due to the scale of change of their setting and views. (This building is not currently habitable but planning permission has been granted for its conversion – its inclusion is therefore questioned.)

Medium and long-distance views experience moderate to negligible adverse effects depending on topography and vegetation.

The LVIA concludes with the effectiveness of mitigation in the form of bunding and woodland planting that will soften impacts over time but will not eliminate the substantial change to openness or the prominence of large buildings.

Long-term success is dependent on effective establishment and management of new planting, recognised in both the LVIA and subsequent reviews.

Following assessment by Tetra Tech, it is concluded that the findings of the updated LVIA are reasonable, but that the residual adverse landscape and visual effects remain substantial–moderate for the site and moderate for the immediate surroundings.

Assessment validity still depends heavily on the long-term success of mitigation planting, further details of which would be provided at the reserved matters stage.

On planning balance, in considering the landscape and visual considerations, the submitted LVIA identifies significant localised landscape and visual harm which cannot entirely be mitigated, especially affecting the open character of the site, nearby receptors and the setting of the listed barn. Both independent reviews of the LVIA agree the general scale of harm is credible, but question the reliance on long-term planting and bunding as mitigation. Any future reserved matters applications would be required to deliver this mitigation to facilitate the works on site and ensure early establishment and compliance.

In considering the impacts, Members must attach significant weight to national and local landscape policies, including the NPPF requirement to recognise landscape character, and NLCS policies CS1, CS5 and CS16, which seek high-quality design that responds positively to local landscape character and provides effective mitigation.

The overall planning judgement, therefore, turns on whether identified benefits of the scheme, including economic investment, employment creation and meeting an identified need for strategic digital infrastructure, are sufficient to outweigh the identified landscape and visual harm.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **moderately negative at a local level** for the following reasons:

- Substantial–moderate harm at site level; moderate harm locally
- No harm to national landscape or any other designated landscape
- Long-term mitigation reduces but does not eliminate local impacts.

Having regard to all the above, it is considered that the representations made in respect of landscape and visual impact of the development, and covered in the consultations section of this report, have been satisfactorily addressed within this section.

Cultural heritage

NPPF chapter 16 seeks to ensure that heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Paragraph 207 of the NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of heritage assets and assess the impact of proposals on that significance. Paragraphs 214–215 require consideration of whether harm is substantial or less than substantial, with the latter weighed against public benefits.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a statutory duty to have “special regard” to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their settings, and special architectural or historic features when exercising planning functions.

The most relevant extant development plan policies against which to assess the proposed development's effect on heritage assets are 'saved' policy DS1, which requires that developments do not have adverse effects on features of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, archaeological remains, listed buildings and conservation areas; and policy CS6 of the NLCS, which seeks to protect, conserve and enhance North Lincolnshire's historic environment, as well as the character and setting of areas of acknowledged importance, including historic buildings, conservation areas, listed buildings (both statutory and locally listed), registered parks and gardens, scheduled ancient monuments and archaeological remains. With reference to policies DS1 and CS6, officers recognise these policies do not fully reflect paragraph 215 of the NPPF and subsequently the level of weight afforded these policies is limited.

The application has been supported by a Planning Statement dated May 2025 by Pegasus Group Ltd, a Heritage Statement V3 dated June 2025 by Pegasus Group Ltd, an Enhanced Heritage Statement dated October 2025 by Pegasus Group Ltd, a Geophysical Survey dated April 2025 by Magnitude Surveys and a Report for Archaeological Fieldwalking dated December 2025.

Assessment

Archaeological potential and impacts

The site provides for a number of periods of potential archaeological remains, which are summarised below:

Prehistoric and Romano-British potential

- Evidence in and around the site includes Mesolithic and Neolithic lithic scatters, a Bronze Age boundary bank, a possible barrow and Iron Age enclosures recorded nearby.

- Fieldwalking in 2025 revealed no prehistoric or Roman artefacts.

- The site has moderate potential for discovering previously unrecorded Bronze Age, Iron Age or Romano-British remains, particularly near the ring-ditch and palaeochannel areas identified in geophysical survey.

Early Medieval and Modern Archaeology

- An early medieval cremation cemetery lies immediately west of the site, with some ambiguity regarding its full extent.

- Fieldwalking found no early medieval or medieval finds, and the Heritage Statements conclude the likelihood of significant medieval remains is very low.

Post-Medieval and Modern Archaeology

- Remains of RAF Elsham Wolds (WWI and WWII) occur across the site, including dispersal areas, hut bases, blast shelters and runway remnants.

- Structures are in poor condition, with low to negligible archaeological value, though some below-ground elements will be lost to facilitate the development.

- Fieldwalking finds (glass, metal items, ceramics) were predominantly post medieval to modern, generated largely by agricultural activity and historic RAF site use.

Further to analysis by NLC's HER officer and the submission of additional information resulting from an initial holding objection, officers are satisfied that the development can be conditioned to enable additional works to be undertaken and programmed following the below criteria:

- further archaeological fieldwork to be undertaken post decision
- no groundworks to be undertaken on the basis of any potential consent
- the first reserved matters application for the site will consist of enabling works
- an outline written scheme of investigation for trenching to be agreed with HER prior to determination of the outline application
- trenching in its entirety or phased with multiple mobilisations as different reserved matters come forward
- an archaeological mitigation plan and mitigation strategy to be agreed at the outline stage.

Heritage assets and setting impacts

The key asset affected is the grade II listed Threshing Barn and Cartshed/granary at Elsham Top Farm, which lies immediately adjacent to the site. Its significance derives from its architectural value, chalk ashlar construction and association with the historic farmstead.

Elements of its setting that contribute to significance include the adjacent historic agricultural land and remaining farmyard structures.

The supporting Heritage Assessments acknowledge that the development will alter the agricultural character of land forming part of the barn's historical setting, concluding the proposal will cause less than substantial harm (low–moderate) to the asset's significance through changes to setting.

Under the NPPF, such harm must be weighed against public benefits and is ultimately a matter for the decision-maker.

Having regard to mitigation proposals, these are identified below:

- strategic landscaping and tree planting to screen views of the new development for the listed building
- a 100-metre undeveloped buffer between the listed building and the nearest development parcel, reducing the level of harm but not eliminating the impact completely
- surviving WWII structures have limited significance but are acknowledged as part of the historic environment, with the development resulting in low-level harm, partially mitigated through proposals for survey, recording, interpretation and repairs where appropriate and secured by condition.

Following consultation with NLC's conservation officer, whose comments are documented earlier in this report, significant concerns have been raised. However, prior to summarising these concerns, it should be noted that this application is for outline planning permission and all matters are reserved for subsequent consideration; no layouts or designs have been tabled, and the matter at hand relates only with the principle of the development.

The conservation officer has raised particular concern that, as no elevations or appearance details have been submitted, the LPA cannot fulfil its duty under s66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to give special regard to desirability of preserving the setting of the listed building. This point is noted but, again, the application is for outline planning permission only and these matters would be dealt with at reserved matters stage.

The conservation officer cites Historic England guidance (GPA3) and the Greater Lincolnshire Farmstead Assessment Framework to argue that the barn's agricultural setting is integral to its significance, not secondary to the surviving fabric.

As much of the surrounding farmland remains unchanged (other than the industrial estate), the conservation officer considers the setting 'highly significant' and largely intact.

It remains the conservation officer's view that, whilst the existing industrial development has already partially eroded the setting of the listed building, the proposed data centre would complete the severing of the barn's link to the historic landscape, resulting in cumulative harm and worsening an already compromised context. This statement is based on the overall scale of the development and cannot be substantiated until a layout has been submitted that would clearly demonstrate that this would be the case.

Matters relating to landscape and screening have led to a view that the proposed bunds and planting are considered intrusive, uncharacteristic of the Lincolnshire Wolds, and potentially harmful in themselves. This matter has been fully addressed in the landscape and visual impact section of this report.

With the above in mind, NLC's conservation officer is minded that harm is less than substantial but at the moderate–high end.

In reaching a conclusion on the evidence and professional views, and comparing both positions, there are areas of agreement and disagreement as tabled below:

Areas of agreement

- Some level of less than substantial harm arises to the listed barn's setting.
- The industrial estate already compromises the setting to a degree.
- The statutory heritage tests of NPPF paragraphs 212–215 apply.

Areas of disagreement

- Applicants: The significance of the agricultural setting contributes modestly to significance due to existing disruption.
- Conservation officer: The significance of the agricultural setting contributes strongly, is essential to significance and is largely intact to the east/south.

- Applicants: The magnitude of harm is low–moderate.
- Conservation officer: The magnitude of harm is moderate–high, especially cumulatively.
- Applicants: The mitigation effectiveness in the provision of landscaping and buffers reduces harm.
- Conservation officer: The screening introduces new intrusive features and undermines landscape character.
- Applicants: Consider the outline level information is proportionate at this stage.
- Conservation officer: Insufficient detail in outline submission to meaningfully assess setting impacts under s66(1).

Under paragraph 215 of the NPPF, where development causes less than substantial harm to a designated asset, this harm must be weighed against the public benefits. Officers recognise that the difference in opinions outlined above, however would recommend that the level of harm attributed to the setting of the listed building should reflect the views of the LPA Conservation officer in this instance, therefore considering the magnitude of harm as moderate to high and subsequently significant when weighing the planning balance.

The statutory duty under s66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires great weight to be given to the conservation of listed buildings and their settings. The conservation officer has advised that the proposal would not preserve the setting of the listed building and would cumulatively erode its significance, raising concern that such harm may conflict with applicable legislation and development plan policies HE5 and CS6.

In accordance with paragraph 215 of the NPPF, this harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The scheme is considered to deliver significant economic, technological and employment benefits of both local and wider importance, as set out in the applicants' submission and these benefits weigh substantially in favour of the development.

On balance, officers would advise Members that, whilst it is agreed that the development will lead to less than substantial harm at a magnitude of moderate to high to the setting of the listed building, Members must determine whether the identified public benefits are sufficient to outweigh the less than substantial harm on the listed building's significance.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **significantly negative** for the following reasons:

- Less-than-substantial harm at a magnitude of moderate to high to the setting of the grade II listed barn
- Mitigation reduces impacts but does not remove them
- Must give 'great weight' to conservation under NPPF/s66.

Having regard to all the above, it is considered that the representations made in respect of cultural heritage, and covered in the consultations section of this report, have been satisfactorily addressed within this section.

Other material considerations

Sustainability

The NPPF, at paragraph 131, talks about the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places, and how this is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work, and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Whist the current proposal is outline in nature, with all matters reserved, the proposal has been supported by a parameter plan setting out how the site can be delivered and seeks to provide design guidance and constraints upon the site, and provide a framework which could inform any later reserved matters submissions. The parameter plan also provide officers with a level of comfort that what is proposed is achievable and that sustainability goes to the heart of the design for the site.

Whilst it is recognised that all detailed matters of this outline proposal are reserved for subsequent consideration, the application has been supported by a Design and Access Statement by Pegasus Group and an Energy and Sustainability Statement by BE Design.

Assessment

BREEAM is the Building Research Establishment Assessment Method. A BREEAM Assessment is broken down into nine core issues aiming to mitigate the life-cycle impacts of new buildings on the environment in a robust and cost-effective manner. Each core issue has a weighting, providing a means of defining and ranking the relative impact of environmental issues. BREEAM uses an explicit weighting system to determine the overall BREEAM score. The BREEAM core issues are:

- Management
- Health and Wellbeing
- Energy
- Transport
- Water
- Materials
- Waste
- Land Use and Ecology
- Pollution
- Innovation.

The BREEAM assessment process is split into three main stages: pre-assessment, design stage assessment and post construction review. The pre-assessment stage allows the design team to ascertain the likely BREEAM score and rating a development can achieve

and provide a strategy for the credits to be targeted, and support the later stages of the assessment process.

Should Members be minded to approve the application, officers agree that a BREEAM rating of ‘very good’ is feasible for this proposal and a condition is recommended requiring the next phases of the process to achieve this rating at the design stage and post-construction review stage.

With the above in mind, along with the aims of the Energy and Sustainability Strategy which includes in part:

- moving towards a circular economy by proposing measures to reduce the whole-life embodied carbon and significantly reducing waste to landfill through sustainable construction processes;
- creating a safe and friendly environment;
- having a positive impact on the local community by connecting the development with local residents and natural settings through sustainable modes of transport and green spaces;
- designing and installing integrated energy efficient building services systems;
- targeting the procurement of ‘green energy’;
- creating a development that adds significant social value to the area; and
- increasing the ecological value of the site and surrounding area.

it is considered that the proposal seeks to provide a development that aligns with the aspirations of the NPPF in delivering a high quality, beautiful and sustainable building.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **positively in favour** of the development for the following reasons:

- Parameter plans secure strong design principles
- BREEAM ‘Very Good’ commitment.

Having regard to all the above, it is considered that the representations made in respect of the overall sustainability of the development, and covered in the consultations section of this report, have been satisfactorily addressed within this section.

Planning obligations

Regulation 122(2) of the 2010 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) introduced into law three tests for planning obligations in respect of development. The three tests are also repeated in the NPPF at paragraph 57. Both CIL and the NPPF state that planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all the following tests:

- are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
- are directly related to the development; and

- are fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Education and welfare provision

Policy CS13 of the NLCS supports improvements in education provision to enable everyone to share North Lincolnshire's growing prosperity by working with the Learning and Skills Council, providers of further and higher education, employers and neighbourhood renewal partnerships to identify sites and premises for new or expanded provision for further/higher education, training and lifelong learning.

As part of the proposal the applicant is seeking to fund the construction of a new Educational AI and Wellbeing Hub and provide the requisite qualified teaching and training network to deliver the needs of this IT-led development.

Policy CS27 then sets out that the council will seek obligations to meet the reasonable cost of new infrastructure and improvements to existing infrastructure, and/or mitigate the impact of the development. The NLCS therefore requires consideration of the sufficiency of and need for additional education and training infrastructure in support of the proposed development.

Whilst it will fall to the council, working with its partners, to decide on the best way to provide the necessary infrastructure to address the demands arising from the proposed development, and to identify the associated costs, the applicants in this instance are prepared to offer a sum which should be sufficient to cover the costs arising: £25m towards capital expenditure to provide the appropriate facilities.

With this in mind, it is imperative upon the LPA to clearly outline and bring to Members' attention the material relevance of the s106 education money contained within the draft s106.

The education and wellbeing hub provision funds proposed, both in terms of the general programme and construction training programme, are, in principle, capable of being CIL/NPPF compliant; however, without a full and comprehensive costing for the delivery of such a facility at this point in time, officers consider the contribution not to be fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development and therefore Members should not attach any weight to it in assessing the planning balance, notwithstanding the applicants' commitment to deliver the facility. It is noted this contribution cannot be considered to be material in determining this application, although would be enforceable if contained within an s106 contribution.

Play and recreation

Policy CS23 of the NLCS states that the provision of good quality, well maintained leisure, recreation and open space facilities which meet the needs of local residents will be supported in principle. Developers will be expected to make an appropriate contribution towards necessary improvements or additional provision for community services and facilities arising from their development proposals.

The applicants have actively engaged with the local parish councils to seek their views.

Policy CS27 then sets out that the council will seek obligations to meet the reasonable cost of new infrastructure and improvements to existing infrastructure, and/or mitigate the impact of the development. The NLCS therefore requires consideration of the sufficiency of and

need for the provision of play and recreation initiatives in support of the proposed development.

A financial contribution of £1,000,000 is under review from the applicant towards the provision of improvements to play and recreation provision across the local parishes (Elsham, Worlaby, Wrawby, Bonby, Saxby All Saints, Barnetby le Wold, Barrow and Goxhill). Members' attention is drawn to the fact that a contribution towards improvement to play and recreation on the basis that it is not related to the impacts of the development are unlikely to be CIL/NPPF compliant and to that extent this may be an immaterial consideration which would be enforceable if contained within an s106 obligation and should not be taken into account as a material consideration in assessing the planning balance.

Highways

Policy CS26 of the NLCS states that the council will support proposals to enhance internal and external transport connections and provide access to the area's key strategic economic development locations by road.

The applicants have actively engaged with the council in assessing the need for improvements to existing road safety and the delivery of additional capacity to meet the needs of the development site.

The sum of £5,000,000 is sought towards road improvements, including the replacement of the vehicle restraint system (VRS, aka crash barriers) along the A15, and highway improvements and enhancements along Caistor Road, which provide additional connectivity to the site.

Whilst the above may in principle be considered capable of being CIL/NPPF compliant in terms of delivering the necessary highway safety barriers along the A15, and is at the request of the local highway authority, and the draft s106 allows monies to assist the delivery of works along Caistor Road which could potentially ease congestion to and from the site, these are not seen as directly necessary to facilitate the development.

With this in mind, it may be, therefore, that £3,000,000 is disproportionate 'in scale and kind' and would fall outside the scope of regulation 122, and therefore fails the test of materiality.

Based on quotations from the Local Highway Authority it is noted that the provision of crash barriers between the slip roads to the Elsham Industrial Estate and Barnetby Interchange on both sides of the A15 covers a distance of 4km equating to a total cost of £2,000,000.

Members should therefore treat that part of the funding proposed for works along Caistor Road as immaterial in the consideration process and determination of this planning proposal; however, the funding can be secured and capable of being enforced under s106 if the developer wishes to propose a planning obligation that is triggered on implementation of the permission, should Members be minded to approve.

Active travel

Policy CS25 of the NLCS states that the council will seek to introduce appropriate demand management measures, to reduce car-based travel by ensuring highway safety, and improving and encouraging walking and cycling.

As part of their Framework Travel Plan, the applicants are seeking to reduce car-based travel by a variety of mechanisms, including increased cycle use. To facilitate this, the applicants propose to add to the existing cycle network in and around the development site area.

Policy CS27 then sets out that the council will seek obligations to meet the reasonable cost of new infrastructure and improvements to existing infrastructure, and/or mitigate the impact of the development. The NLCS therefore requires consideration of the sufficiency of and need for additional cycle path infrastructure in support of the proposed development.

Whilst it will fall to the council, working with its partners, to decide on the best way to provide the necessary infrastructure to address the demands arising from the proposed development, and to identify the associated costs, the applicants, in this instance, are prepared to offer a sum which should be sufficient to cover the costs arising (£1,000,000 towards a new cycle path from the development site to Brigg and other surrounding settlements).

The new cycle path provision funds proposed (in terms of the general training programme and construction training programme) are, in principle, capable of being CIL/NPPF compliant and can therefore be considered to be material in determining this application.

With the above in mind, it is considered that the contributions proposed can be secured through a s106 agreement as set out in CIL Regulation 122 and paragraph 57 of the NPPF; however, Members need to be cautious in reaching their conclusions about the development in the round and as to the materiality of the contributions set out above.

Shuttle bus service

Fully funded by owners, the provision of a shuttle bus service between Brigg and the development site can be secured through an s106 agreement as set out in CIL Regulation 122 and paragraph 57 of the NPPF.

Local business opportunities

The applicant is seeking to provide local businesses with the first opportunity to bid or tender for sub-contracting opportunities and the supply of goods and services during construction of the development, and to ensure that a minimum of 30% of the build costs of the development (excluding fit-out costs) is given to local businesses operating within a 30-mile radius of the development.

Officers would point out to Members that this commitment is not necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms and is therefore unlikely to be CIL/NPPF compliant. To that extent, this may be an immaterial consideration which would be enforceable if contained within an s106 obligation and should not be taken into account as a material consideration in assessing the planning balance.

In summary, the planning balance weighs **positive material in favour** of the development for the following reasons with some immaterial elements:

- Material: Shuttle bus, parts of highways, biodiversity, SuDS management

- Immaterial (non-CIL compliant) but deliverable: education, recreation and parts of highways.

Conclusion and planning balance

As stated earlier in this report, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Such other important considerations include other relevant policy and guidance, particularly national planning policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other relevant government policy statements, as well as that which is provided within the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF relates to the presumption in favour of sustainable development and states:

'where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, granting permission unless:

(v) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

(vi) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

Whilst it is recognised that the development represents a departure from the development plan, and as such a degree of conflict exists, officers consider the proposals are in broader compliance with the vision and spatial objectives of the adopted NLCS. Furthermore, officers are cognisant of the significant weight afforded through paragraph 85 of the NPPF to support economic growth and productivity, and the additional weight that can be attributed through paragraphs 86 and 87 of the NPPF, which acknowledges the importance of economic growth and productivity and places a strong emphasis on delivering development that enables areas to build on their strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. Decisions should recognise and address specific locational requirements of different sectors including data centres and grid connections and support the growth of these industries.

The table below summarises the degree of weight afforded to each section of this report in order to provide a balanced planning conclusion.

Issue	Assessment summary	Weight in balance
Principle of development and need for the development	Development plan partly out of date; strong national support for data centres (NPPF 85–87)	**Very significant positive**

Air quality	Construction and operational emissions not significant; no exceedance of air quality objectives; NE confirm no ecological AQ impacts	**Neutral (local)**
Biodiversity and BNG	Baseline low ecological value; BNG achieved: +10.7% habitat, +13.99% hedgerow; protected species fully mitigated	**Moderate positive (local)**
Habitats Regulations Assessment	Appropriate Assessment concludes no adverse effect on Humber Estuary SPA/Ramsar; NE raises no objection	**Neutral**
Greenhouse gases/carbon	Large absolute energy demand but minor significance within national budgets; benefits of providing highly efficient data centres at scale; substantial mitigation (net carbon zero, heat reuse, clean energy alignment)	**Minor negative**
Climate change resilience	Fully compliant with CS18 and NPPF; robust SuDS; closed-loop cooling; climate-resilient design	**Neutral**
Geology, soils and BMV land	Loss of 153.9ha of BMV is major adverse, but glasshouse offset provides >3× food output, >26× value: net food production gain; contamination mitigated	**Moderate positive (after offset)**
Human health	No significant health impacts: glasshouse improves food security; socio-economic uplift benefits wellbeing	**Positive**
Noise and vibration	Revised limits ensure no increase above background at receptors; mitigation secured by condition	**Neutral**
Socio-economic benefits	Exceptional national-scale investment (£5.5–£7.5bn); 2,600–5,100 construction jobs/year; 600–1,000 FTE permanent jobs; £320–£500m annual GVA uplift; supports AI Growth Zone	**Very substantial positive (national)**

Traffic and transport	Impacts acceptable at most junctions; Barnetby Interchange requires finalised mitigation; NH holding objection pending modelling updates	**Minor positive (regional)**
Water environment and flood risk	Flood zone 1; low flood risk from all sources; SuDS compliant with climate allowances; Anglian Water objections resolved	**Neutral**
Materials and waste	Waste hierarchy followed; construction/operational waste minimised; BREEAM Very Good strategy	**Neutral**
Landscape and visual impact	Substantial–moderate harm at site level; moderate harm locally; no harm to national landscape; mitigation reduces but does not eliminate effects	**Moderate negative**
Cultural heritage	Less than substantial harm to grade II listed barn; statutory great weight applied; harm mitigated but not removed	**Significant negative**
Sustainability/design	Parameter plans provide robust framework; BREEAM Very Good achievable; strong sustainability credentials	**Moderate positive**
Planning obligations (material elements)	Material: transport improvements, public transport, biodiversity/SuDS management; non-material: education and recreation (can be secured but not weighed)	**Limited positive (material parts only)**

With all matters material to the consideration of the planning proposal addressed above, it is concluded that, whilst there is a conflict with the development plan when read as a whole, the site is not allocated for development, and the most important development plan policies in this instance are out of date and not reflective of NPPF paragraphs 85 to 87. Therefore, any conflict with the development plan (open countryside location) only carries limited weight, although it is noted the proposal does align with the overarching strategic objectives of the development plan.

In this instance, policies DS1 and CS6, amongst others covering landscape and heritage, are inconsistent with the NPPF and are therefore considered out of date.

Officers recognise the tilted balance is engaged (NPPF paragraph 11 d) and note that there are no policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance and provide a strong reason for refusal as required in paragraph 11 d) i.

Paragraph 11 d) ii. therefore remains engaged. In considering the proposal, Members must be minded to grant permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF as a whole.

Officers recognise that, in assessing matters relating to heritage, the development proposal will result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed building and moderate harm on a local level to the immediate landscape, and would add that, when assessing the planning weight identified in the table above, there are no adverse impacts that would outweigh the benefits in providing an identified need and scale of socio-economic development that this application proposes.

All other matters covered throughout this report demonstrate policy compliance and can be afforded varying degrees of significant weight in outweighing the harm identified.

It is officers' opinion that, in accordance with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the proposal is considered to provide a sustainable form of development that will provide significant economic, social and environmental benefits to both North Lincolnshire and surrounding areas.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to the resolution of National Highways' holding objection and completion of a formal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 providing for play and recreation, highway improvements and active travel, in addition to securing biodiversity net gain and management of the sustainable urban drainage system, the committee resolves:

(i) it is minded to grant permission for the development;

(ii) the decision be delegated to the Planning Development Manager on completion of the obligation and resolution of National Highways' holding objection; and

(iii) the permission so granted be subject to the following conditions with the addition of those considered reasonable and necessary following the resolution of the National Highways' holding objection:

1.
No part of the development hereby approved shall be begun until details of the layout, scale and appearance of the development, the means of access and the landscaping of the site (hereinafter called 'the reserved matters') have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority for that part of the development. The development shall be carried out as approved.

Reason
To allow such details to be reserved for subsequent consideration and to comply with the requirements of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2.
The first application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the local planning authority before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission. Subsequent application(s) for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the local planning authority before the expiration of 10 years from the date of this permission.

Reason
To allow such details to be reserved for subsequent consideration and to comply with the requirements of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and to ensure that the development is carried out within a reasonable period of time.

3.
The development hereby permitted shall be begun either before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission or before the expiration of two years from the date of approval of the first of the reserved matters to be approved, whichever is later.

Reason
To allow such details to be reserved for subsequent consideration and to comply with the requirements of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and to ensure that the development is carried out within a reasonable period of time.

4.
The application(s) for approval of reserved matters made pursuant to condition 1 above shall be in accordance with the following:

- Drawing no. 24239.901 – Site Location Plan

- Drawing no. 24239.104 Rev G – Parameter Plan.

Reason
To ensure that the development accords with the scheme as approved.

5.
Each application for approval of reserved matters shall be accompanied by a statement which explains how that reserved matters application accords with the Parameter Plan listed in condition 4 above.

Reason
To achieve a comprehensive and cohesive form of development.

6.
Prior to or alongside the first application for approval of reserved matters, a site-wide sequencing plan (SWSP) for site infrastructure, mitigation and enabling works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The SWSP shall be in accordance with the approved Parameter Plan (drawing no. 24239.104 Rev G).

The SWSP shall provide further details of the sequencing of the works listed below relative to the build out of data centre buildings on the approved development parcels shown on the approved Parameter Plan:

1. Site access and initial stretches of road into the site including any construction accesses

2. Ground remodelling works to create each of the development platforms

3. Strategic sustainable urban drainage features

4. Creation of proposed landscaped bunds and other strategic landscaping

5. Landscaping to the rear of the Grade II listed Threshing Barn

6. Provision of the main security gate house

7. Provision of the amenity building

8. Provision of the agricultural building(s).

Submissions for the approval of the reserved matters for any part of the development hereby approved shall be accompanied by a compliance statement that explains how development in that part of the site would accord with the approved SWSP.

The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved SWSP and there shall be no construction works on any data centre building above slab level until such time as the relevant works referred to in the SWSP required to serve, enable or mitigate that part of the site have been completed.

Reason
In the interests of proper planning of the site.

7.
No development shall take place until a site-wide species protection plan (SPP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The SPP shall include details of measures to avoid harm to badgers, bats and nesting birds during vegetation clearance and construction works. Development shall be carried out only in accordance with the approved SPP.

Prior to the commencement of development, a site-wide biodiversity net gain plan (BNGP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The BNGP shall be in general accordance with the [document, date, author] and accompanying BNG metric prepared by [author] and the BNGP.

The BNGP shall include:

(a) prescriptions for the provision of any artificial badger setts required, along with associated foraging habitat;

(b) prescriptions for the provision of at least two barn owl nest boxes, along with associated foraging habitat;

(c) details of at least 20 bat boxes to be installed in retained trees and woodlands;

(d) details of at least 20 nest boxes to be installed to support a variety of woodland and farmland bird species;

(e) prescriptions for habitat management for farmland birds including skylarks, corn buntings, reed buntings and yellowhammers;

(f) restrictions on lighting to avoid impacts on bat roosts, bat foraging areas, bird nesting sites and sensitive habitats;

(g) a proposed timetable for sequencing of the above measures and a mechanism for linking this to the completion of the data centre buildings' floorspace.

Each application for approval of reserved matters shall be accompanied by a statement explaining how it accords with the site-wide biodiversity net gain plan for that part of the site.

The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved BNGP.

Reason
To conserve protected and priority species in accordance with saved policy LC5 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan and policies CS5 and CS17 of the North Lincolnshire Core Strategy.

8.
Prior to commencement of the development, a habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The HMMP shall be prepared in accordance with the approved biodiversity net gain plan (BNGP) and shall include:

(a) a non-technical summary;

(b) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the approved biodiversity net gain plan;

(c) a plan that splits the site into identifiable biodiversity net gain (BNG) zones where habitat creation and enhancement works may be delivered on a phased basis;

(d) a sequencing plan which shall link the delivery of new data centre floorspace to the phased completion of habitat creation and enhancement works;

(e) the roles and responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering the HMMP including those responsible for areas within the data centre development parcels and those areas beyond;

(f) the timescales for implementation of the HMMP;

(g) the management measures to maintain habitat within each identified BNG zone in accordance with the approved biodiversity net gain plan for a period of 30 years from the completion of the habitat creation and enhancement works in that zone; and

(h) the monitoring methodology and frequency in respect of the created or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the local planning authority.

Development shall then be carried out in strict accordance with the approved habitat management and monitoring plan.

Reason
To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

9.
Within six months of first occupation of any data centre building hereby permitted, a completion report, evidencing the completed habitat creation and enhancement works linked to that new floorspace through the HMMP, shall be submitted to the local planning authority for its written approval. Thereafter, monitoring reports for the relevant BNG zones shall be submitted to the local planning authority in accordance with the approved habitat management and monitoring plan.

Reason
To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

10.
Prior to commencement of the development hereby approved, a site-wide surface water drainage scheme based on the submitted Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy conducted by PFA Consulting (G336-DOC01-Issue 1-Flood Risk Assessment) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority in consultation with the lead local flood authority. The scheme shall provide details of any phased implementation of the site-wide drainage scheme.

Reason
In the interests of providing a safe and appropriate method of discharging surface water from the site which follows local and national guidance and reduces the risk of flooding to the site.

11.
Prior to commencement of development within any part of the site, a detailed drainage strategy for that part of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The detailed drainage strategy for any given part of the site shall include full SuDS details with all relevant proposals, maintenance plans and drainage runs, and include full hydraulic modelling which should include 1-year, 5-year, 30-year and 100-year storm events for summer and winter with the 30-year having a 35% allowance for climate change and the 100-year having a 40% allowance included for that part of the site. The SuDS design shall be in general accordance with the indicative plans (ref. xxx) submitted at the outline stage unless alternative designs are submitted to and approved by the local planning authority through reserved matters applications made pursuant to condition 1 above.

Reason
In the interests of providing a safe and appropriate method of discharging surface water from the site which follows local and national guidance and reduces the risk of flooding to the site.

12.
No development that would involve the construction of a new building above slab level shall take place until a strategic foul water strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, in consultation with Anglian Water. The strategy shall identify a sustainable point of connection to the public foul network. Prior to occupation of any building, the relevant foul drainage works for that building must have been carried out in complete accordance with the approved strategy.

Reason
In the interests of public safety and the natural environment.

13.
No development hereby permitted shall take place on any part of the site until a phase 1 desk study and a written report of the findings of an investigation and risk assessment for that part of the site, in addition to any assessment provided with the planning application, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The phase 1 desk study shall identify and evaluate all potential sources of contamination and the impacts on land and/or controlled waters relevant to that part of the site, establish a 'conceptual model' for that part of the site and identify all plausible pollutant linkages. Furthermore, the desk study shall set objectives for intrusive site investigation works/quantitative risk assessment (or state if none required). A non-technical summary shall be provided.

The investigation and risk assessment must assess the nature and extent of any contamination on the relevant part of the site, whether it originates on the site, and be undertaken by competent persons. The written report must include:

(i) a survey of the extent, scale, and nature of contamination;

(ii) an assessment of the potential risks to human health; existing or proposed property (including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland, and service lines and pipes); adjoining land; groundwaters and surface waters; ecological systems; archaeological sites; and ancient monuments;

(iii) an appraisal of remedial options, and a proposal of the preferred option(s).

The desk study and investigation and risk assessment must be conducted in accordance with the Environment Agency’s Land Contamination Risk Management (LCRM) guidance July 2023.

Reason
To ensure the site is safe for future users and construction workers.

14.
No development hereby permitted shall start on any part of the site until a detailed remediation scheme for that part of the site based on the findings of the report approved pursuant to condition 13 above, to bring the relevant land to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to human health, buildings and other property, and the natural and historic environment, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The remediation scheme shall include all works to be undertaken, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, a timetable of works and site management procedures. The scheme shall ensure that the relevant part of the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

The detailed remediation scheme so approved shall be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to commencement of development within that part of the site other than that required to carry out the approved remediation scheme. The local planning authority must be given two weeks' written notice of the developer's intention to commence the remediation scheme works.

Reason
To ensure the site is safe for future users and construction workers.

15.
No development further to that required to carry out the approved remediation scheme shall take place until a verification report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out pursuant to condition 14 above has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason
To ensure the site is safe for future users and construction workers.

16.
In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the development that was not previously identified, it must be reported in writing immediately to the local planning authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of condition 13 above and, where remediation is necessary, a remediation scheme must be prepared in accordance with the requirements of condition 14 above, which is subject to the approval in writing of the local planning authority. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme, a verification report must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of the local planning authority in accordance with condition 15 above.

Reason
To ensure the site is safe for future users and construction workers.

17.
No development hereby permitted shall commence on any part of the site until a detailed unexploded ordnance risk assessment for that part of the site has been submitted to and approved in writing to the local planning authority. All identified mitigation measures shall then be implemented and maintained thereafter prior to commencement of development in that part of the site.

Reason
To ensure the site is safe for future users and construction workers.

18.
There shall be no importation of top soil onto the site unless a top soil verification plan has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The verification plan shall ensure that imported soil is safe and suitable for use on the approved development.

Where soil importation is required, no building hereby permitted shall be occupied on any part of the development until the verification plan for that part of the site has been complied with in full and subsequently approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plan.

The scheme shall be retained for the duration of the development.

Reason
To ensure the site is safe for future users and construction workers.

19.
No development hereby permitted shall take place until plans showing the existing and proposed ground levels of the site and the existing ground levels of adjacent land have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The submitted details shall include existing and proposed cross-section drawings of the site indicating the extent of ground works required to achieve finished site levels. The reserved matters applications submitted pursuant to condition 1 above shall include details of the slab levels of the proposed buildings. The development shall be implemented strictly in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason
To minimise the impact of the development on the visual amenity, character and appearance of the area and to comply with policy DS1 of the North Lincolnshire Plan.

20.
No development hereby permitted shall commence within any part of the site until a soil management plan (SMP) for that part of the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The SMP, in line with guidance in the Defra document: The Construction Code of Practice for Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites, shall include, but not be limited to, appropriate soil handling, storage and restoration methods.

Reason
In the interests of visual amenity, nature conservation, and the character and appearance of the area.

21.
The development hereby approved shall be carried out in complete accordance with the recommendations set out in the Arboricultural Assessment issued May 2025 by Barton Hyett Associates Ltd unless otherwise agreed through applications for approval of reserved matters pursuant to condition 1 above. No development shall commence within any part of the site until a tree protection plan (TPP) for that part of the site has been submitted to and

approved in writing by the local panning authority. The measures identified within the TPP shall be fully installed and all tree protection measures shall remain in place until the relevant part of the development is complete.

Reason
To ensure that no damage is caused to trees during construction work and to comply with policy LC12 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

22.
All planting, seeding or turfing within each reserved matters area and comprised in the approved details of landscaping within the reserved matters area shall be carried out in the first planting season following occupation of the specific reserved matters area or the completion of that reserved matters area, whichever is the sooner. If, within a period of five years from the date of planting of any tree/hedge/shrub, that tree/hedge/shrub, or any replacement, is removed, uprooted or destroyed, or dies or becomes, in the opinion of the local planning authority, seriously damaged or defective, another tree/hedge/shrub of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted in the same location as soon as reasonably possible and no later than the first available planting season.

Reason
In the interests of visual amenity and nature conservation, and to comply with policies LC5 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan and CS17 of the North Lincolnshire Core Strategy.

23.
Prior to construction of any building above slab level, a site-wide landscape environmental management plan (LEMP), covering the management and aftercare of the development after construction, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason
In the interests of visual amenity, nature conservation, and the character and appearance of the area.

24.
Construction, demolition and site clearance operations shall be limited to the following days and hours:

- 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday

- 8am to 1pm on Saturdays.

No construction, demolition or site clearance operations shall take place on Sundays or public holidays, nor any installation of construction plant or machinery on site outside these hours without prior written approval from the local planning authority.

Reason
To minimise the impact of the development on adjacent properties in accordance with policy DS1 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

25.
No development hereby permitted shall commence until a site-wide construction environmental management plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP shall include the following:

Noise and vibration – the CEMP shall set out the particulars of:

(a) the works, and the method by which they are to be carried out;

(b) the noise and vibration attenuation measures to be taken to minimise noise and vibration resulting from the works, including any noise limits; and

(c) a scheme for monitoring the noise and vibration during the works to ensure compliance with the noise limits and the effectiveness of the attenuation measures.

Light – the CEMP shall set out the particulars of:

(a) specified locations for contractors' compounds and materials storage areas;

(b) areas where lighting will be required for health and safety purposes;

(c) the location of potential temporary floodlights;

(d) the identification of sensitive receptors likely to be impacted upon by light nuisance;

(e) proposed methods of mitigation against potential light nuisance, including potential glare and light spill, on sensitive receptors.

Dust – the CEMP shall set out the particulars of:

(a) site dust monitoring, recording and complaint investigation procedures;

(b) the identification of receptors and the related risk of dust impact at all phases of the development, including when buildings and properties start to be occupied;

(c) the provision of water to the site;

(d) dust mitigation techniques at all stages of development;

(e) the prevention of dust trackout;

(f) communication with residents and other receptors;

(g) a commitment to cease the relevant operation if dust emissions are identified either by regular site monitoring or by the local authority;

(h) a 'no burning of waste' policy.

Where any updates or variations to the site-wide CEMP are required to address requirements in specific parts of the site, these shall be submitted to and approved in

writing to the local planning authority prior to commencement of development within that part of the site.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved CEMP.

Reason
To minimise the impact of the development on adjacent properties in accordance with policy DS1 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

26.
The development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted Elsham Tech Park, Lighting Impact Assessment (LIA) - Report Ref: 29574-LIGH-0401 Rev C dated June 2025, with each reserved matters submission providing a detailed lighting scheme for that part of the development demonstrating compliance with the LIA.

Reason
To minimise light pollution in accordance with policy DS12 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

27.
Prior to first occupation of each of the data centre buildings hereby permitted, details of any noise mitigation measures for the typical operations of that building shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval in writing, which ensure that the total cumulative BS4142: 2014 + A1: 2019 rating level of the development hereby permitted shall not exceed the typical background sound level at any time at any noise sensitive property as determined in report reference: Elsham Tech Park, Acoustic Technical Addendum, Report Ref: 29574-ENV-0402 Rev A, dated July 2025.

All measurements and assessments shall be made according to BS 4142: 2014 + A1: 2019.

Reason
In the interests of amenity in accordance with policies DS1 and DS11 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

28.
Development shall not commence within any reserved matters phase until full details of the proposed boundary treatments for that phase have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason
In the interests of visual amenity and to comply with policy DS1 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

29.
Routine testing of the generators serving the data centre shall be restricted to the hours of 9am to 6pm Monday to Friday and the testing shall not exceed 1 hour in duration for any given generator.

The occupiers of the noise sensitive receptors as identified in report reference Elsham Tech Park, Acoustic Technical Addendum, Report Ref: 29574-ENV-0402 Rev A, dated July 2025 shall be given written notice of the times and dates for testing 7 days in advance.

Reason
In the interests of amenity in accordance with policies DS1 and DS11 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

30.
Any application for approval of reserved matters submitted pursuant to condition 1 above shall ensure that provision is made for a construction and maintenance strip (comprising a 13m strip either side of the Cadent gas pipeline) that will be kept free from obstructions and available for maintenance activities at all times during both the construction phase and following completion of the development.

Reason
To protect the pipeline that runs through the site.

31.
Any works that are approved within the construction and maintenance strip, such as access roads and landscaping, shall be undertaken in strict accordance with a construction method statement (CMS) which must first be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (in consultation with the Cadent pipeline operator) before any works are undertaken within that part of the site. The submitted CMS must demonstrate how the works preserve Cadent's rights and access to the Cadent gas pipeline, and can be undertaken safely whilst ensuring no disruption to the buried apparatus.

Reason
To protect the pipeline that runs through the site.

32.
Application(s) for approval of reserved matters made pursuant to condition 1 above in relation to 'access' shall include, but not be limited to:

(i) detailed plans of the proposed vehicular access from The Flarepath/Halifax Approach;

(ii) the method of preventing unauthorised vehicle access from Merlin Drive, whilst permitting pedestrian, cycle and emergency access;

(iii) pedestrian, cycle and emergency access from Middlegate Lane;

(iv) pedestrian and cycle access from Race Lane.

The development shall be completed and thereafter retained for the lifetime of the development in strict accordance with the details so approved.

Reason
To ensure suitable access is provided to and from the site in the interests of highway safety.

33.
No development shall take place until plans showing the existing and proposed ground levels of the site and existing ground levels of adjacent land have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The submitted details shall include existing and proposed cross-section drawings of the site indicating the extent of ground works required to achieve finished site levels. The reserved matters application(s) submitted pursuant to condition 1 above shall include details of the slab levels of the proposed buildings. The development shall be implemented strictly in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason
To achieve a satisfactory form of development and to comply with policy DS1 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

34.
No building on the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until the associated carriageway(s) (including surface water drainage/disposal, vehicular turning head(s) and street lighting) providing access from the nearest public highway to that building have been completed to at least binder course level and the footway(s) to surface course level.

Reason
In the interests of highway safety and to comply with policies T2 and T8 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

35.
No part of the development hereby permitted shall be brought into use until details of:

- the loading, off-loading and turning areas for all vehicles; and

- the parking spaces and access aisles (including surface markings);

for that part of the development have been completed in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Once provided, these facilities shall thereafter be retained for their purpose for the lifetime of the development.

Reason
In the interests of highway safety and to comply with policy T19 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

36.
No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until secure cycle parking has been provided for that part of the development in accordance with details which have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The cycle parking shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details for the lifetime of the development.

Reason
In the interests of highway safety and to comply with policies T2 and T8 of the North Lincolnshire Plan.

37.
Prior to the occupation of any part of the development hereby approved, a detailed travel plan for that part of the development shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The travel plan shall specify initiatives to be implemented by the development to promote and maximise the use of sustainable travel to and from the site by a variety of non-car means (including public transport, walking and cycling) and set out measures to ensure compliance with, and monitoring of, the travel plan objectives. Each part of the development shall operate in full accordance with all measures identified within the travel plan from first occupation.

Reason
To ensure the development operates in a safe and sustainable manner with minimal disruption to the highway network.

38.
No development of any phase shall take place until a construction phase traffic management plan showing details of the following has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority in consultation with National Highways (or its successors):

- a pre/post construction condition survey of the carriageway to identify any defects and how they will be rectified

- all associated traffic movements, including delivery vehicles and staff/construction movements

- vehicle routeing to the site and the methods taken to inform contractors of the agreed route

- any abnormal load movements

- contractor parking and welfare facilities

- storage of materials

- traffic management requirements, including the means of controlling the deposition of mud onto the adjacent highway, along with appropriate methods of cleaning the highway, as may be required.

Once approved, the plan shall be implemented, reviewed and updated as necessary throughout the construction period.

Reason
In the interests of highway safety and to comply with policy T18 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan, to manage construction traffic impacts for the M180 and A180, and to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the strategic road network.

39.
Prior to first occupation of any part of the development, an operational management plan (OMP) shall be submitted for approval in writing by the local planning authority (following consultation with National Highways). This shall:

(a) identify measures to limit level of vehicle movements; and

(b) include a scheme for the monitoring and reporting of peak hour flows.

Thereafter, each and any part of the development must operate in accordance with the OMP unless or until there is an updated transport assessment that has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (in consultation with National Highways) which:

(c) identifies measures of how any traffic queues can be mitigated; and

(d) identifies timescales for the implementation of any such management or mitigation measures.

There shall be no deviation from the approved OMP until any necessary management or mitigation identified in the updated transport assessment has been fully implemented in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason
In the interests of highway safety and to comply with policy T18 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan, to manage construction traffic impacts for the A15 and Barnetby Top Interchange, and ensure the safe and efficient operation of the strategic road network.

40.
No part of the development hereby approved above damp-proof course level shall take place until details of the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority:

- a scheme for the removal of the southern lay-bys on the A15 (northbound and southbound carriageways), including details for the reinstatement of the lay-bys and timescales for completion. The proposed scheme shall have been the subject of a Stage 2 Safety Audit.

The development shall be completed in accordance with the details and timescales so approved.

Reason
In the interests of highway safety.

41.
Within 12 months of occupation of each data centre building, a BREEAM certificate confirming that the relevant building achieves a 'Very Good' BREEAM rating shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason
In the interests of achieving sustainable form of development.

42.
No building(s) hereby approved shall be occupied until a waste management strategy (WMS) for that building(s) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The WMS shall be implemented as approved and maintained thereafter.

Reason
To protect the amenity of the locality in accordance with policy DS1 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

43.
Prior to the submission of any reserved matters application, a programme of archaeological site investigation and post-investigation assessment shall be completed in accordance with the programme set out within the agreed Outline Written Scheme of Investigation (OWSI). Any variations to the works detailed within the OWSI, including phasing of works, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority in consultation with North Lincolnshire Council's Historic Environment Record (HER) in advance of works being undertaken.

Reason
To comply with policy HE9 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan because the site lies in an area of archaeological interest.

44.
A copy of the report on any part of the above site investigation (condition 42) and an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on any archaeological remains identified during site investigation works shall be deposited with North Lincolnshire Council's HER within 3 months of completion or any such other period as may be agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

Reason
To comply with policy HE9 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan because the site lies in an area of archaeological interest.

45.
No part of the development hereby approved, including groundworks, shall take place within any given portion of the application site until the applicants or their successor(s) in title have commissioned and secured the implementation of an archaeological management plan for each part of the site which has been agreed in writing with the local planning authority. This document shall include details of:

- the results of initial archaeological site investigations;

- any areas of proposed in-situ preservation;

- measures to secure in-situ preservation areas during construction and beyond;

- the provision of on-site interpretation;

- a timetable for implementation of the above.

Reason
To comply with policy HE9 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan because the site lies in an area of archaeological interest.

46.
The archaeological mitigation plan for each part of the site shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and timings, with the applicants or their successor(s) in title demonstrating compliance at regular agreed intervals.

Reason
To comply with policy HE9 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan because the site lies in an area of archaeological interest.

47.
No part of the development hereby approved, including groundworks, shall take place within any given part of the application site until the applicants or their successor(s) in title have commissioned and secured the implementation of a mitigation strategy of archaeological excavation and recording for each part of the site and submitted a written scheme of investigation (WSI) for the programme of works to the local planning authority for written approval. The WSI shall include:

(i) results of initial archaeological site investigations;

(ii) measures to ensure preservation by record of identified archaeological features outside of preserve in situ areas;

(iii) methodologies for archaeological field recording and post-fieldwork assessment/analyses;

(iv) reporting, publication and archival arrangements;

(v) timetable and monitoring arrangements.

Reason
To comply with policy HE9 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan because the site lies in an area of archaeological interest.

48.
Notification of commencement of any archaeological fieldwork detailed within the archaeological mitigation strategy (condition 46 above) shall be provided to the local planning authority at least 14 days prior to commencement.

Reason
To comply with policy HE9 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan because the site lies in an area of archaeological interest.

49.
Submission of any analysis, reporting, publication and archiving required as a result of the archaeological mitigation strategy works with the relevant bodies (HER/North Lincolnshire Museum/ADS etc) shall take place within 12 months or any such other period agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason
To comply with policy HE9 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan because the site lies in an area of archaeological interest.

50.
Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) or any provision in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification, the data centre building(s) hereby approved shall be used as (a) data centre(s) only and for no other purpose whatsoever.

Reason
In the interests of the safe and efficient operation of the strategic road network.

51.
The reserved matters application for the agricultural buildings hereby approved shall be accompanied by details which demonstrate how waste heat arising from the approved data centres will be recovered and reused in those buildings. The agricultural buildings shall be constructed and operated in accordance with the approved details.

Reason
In the interests of proper planning and to secure the long-term agricultural production of the site.

52.
Prior to first occupation of any data centre building(s) hereby approved, a sustainability and energy statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority setting out the methodology for that/those data centre building(s) to achieve net zero carbon in operation (for scope 2 emissions) in accordance with the UK Green Building Council Framework 2019 or another suitable standard or methodology to be agreed with the local planning authority. The development shall thereafter be implemented and operated in accordance with the approved details.

Reason
To meet the challenges of climate change and to comply with paragraph 157 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

53.
No on-site energy generation/storage equipment that forms part of the Energy Centre hereby approved shall be installed on site until an energy centre scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority which provides further details of the proposed fuel source, energy storage capacity, estimated emissions and related mitigation measures, but not limited to, emissions, air quality and noise. The energy scheme shall demonstrate how any greenhouse gas emissions will be addressed through the procurement of renewable electricity, carbon-free energy and/or verifiable carbon offsetting measures sufficient to achieve net zero operational emissions from first operation and thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason
To meet the challenges of climate change and to comply with paragraph 157 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

54.
Prior to the installation of any data centre cooling systems within any part of the development hereby approved, full details of the proposed cooling strategy for that part of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, in consultation with Anglian Water. The submitted cooling strategy shall:

(i) demonstrate that no more than 20m3/day of non-domestic water will be used for each business on site;

(ii) confirm that there will be no adverse impact on local water supplies; and

(iii) address the global warming potential of any refrigerants proposed.

The development shall thereafter be implemented and operated strictly in accordance with the approved details.

Reason
To meet the challenges of climate change and to comply with paragraph 157 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

55.
No development shall commence until a condition survey, scheme of repairs where appropriate, management plan, interpretation scheme for WWII airfield features within the site and a timetable for its implementation have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall then be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason
To comply with policy HE9 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

56.
The on-site energy generation from the Energy Centre hereby approved shall not exceed 49.9MW.

Reason
To limit the energy generation levels on site to those that have been applied for.

Informatives

1.
This application must be read in conjunction with the relevant Section 106 Agreement.

2.
In determining this application, the council, as local planning authority, has taken account of the guidance in paragraph 39 of the National Planning Policy Framework in order to seek to secure sustainable development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area

3.
The development hereby granted planning permission requires works to be carried out within the limits of the adopted (public) highway. Therefore:

- before ANY construction works take place within the limits of the highway you MUST contact the highway authority on telephone number 01724 297000 to arrange for the relevant permissions/licenses to be issued;

- before ANY service (utility) connections take place within the limits of the highway you MUST contact the highway authority on telephone number 01724 297319 to arrange for the relevant permissions/licenses to be issued.

4.
The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to 'the biodiversity gain condition' that development may not begin unless:

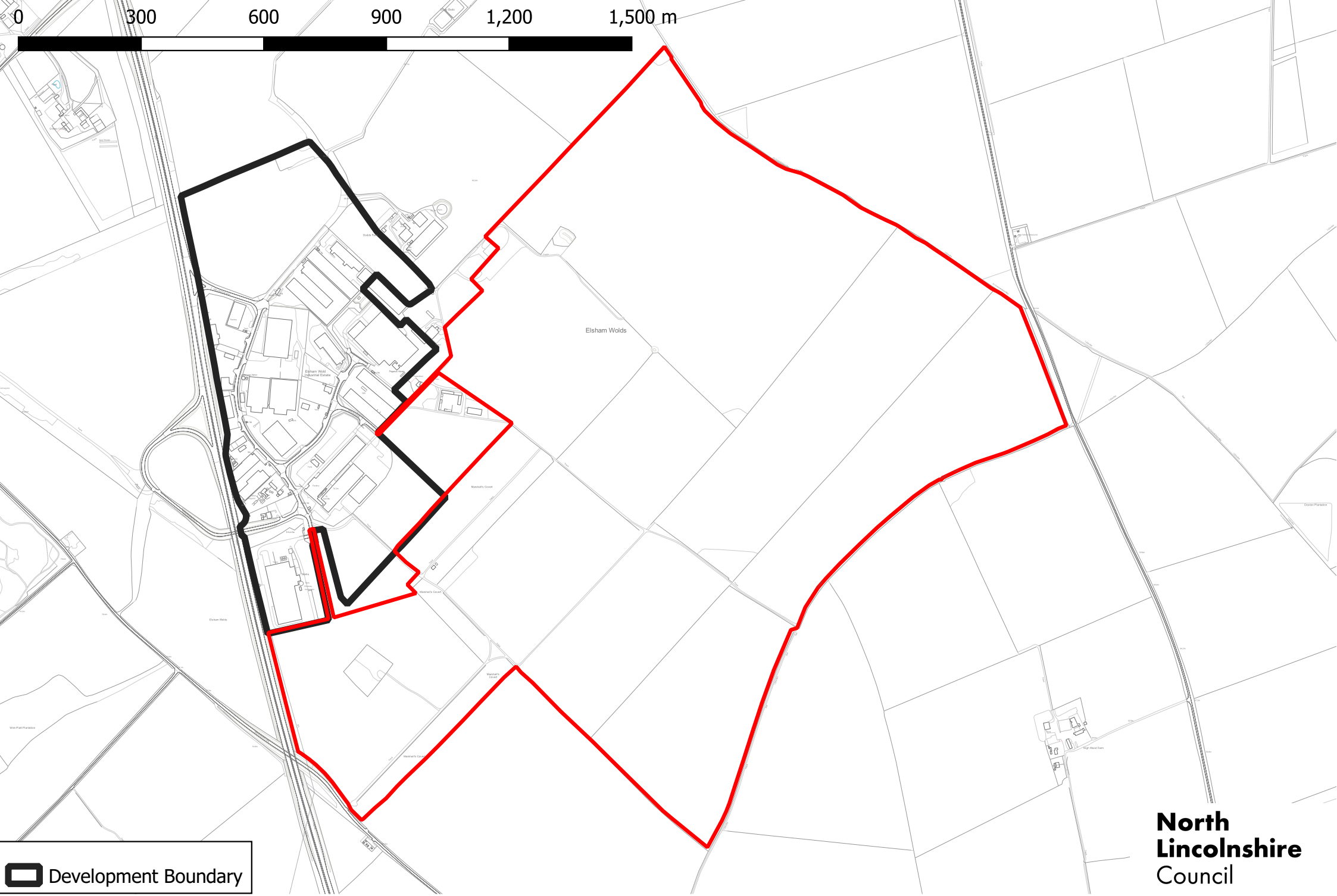
(a) a biodiversity gain plan has been submitted to the planning authority; and

(b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purpose of determining whether to approve a biodiversity gain plan if one is required in respect of this permission, would be North Lincolnshire 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 require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.



North Lincolnshire Council

PA/2025/643

PA/2025/643 Parameter plan (not to scale)

Key

- Planning boundary
- Development zone
- Agricultural buildings zone
- Existing woodland / trees / hedgerows retained
- Localised tree removal
- Bunding with woodland planting
- Strategic planting
- Principal access
- Emergency access
- Pedestrian and cycle access
- Green / Blue infrastructure / Access / Security Structures

Schedule of Development Zones

Zone	Use	Max. Ridge Ht.
A	DC and ancillary	93m AOD (23m tall excluding flues)
B	DC and ancillary	90m AOD (22m tall excluding flues)
C	DC and ancillary	87m AOD (22m tall excluding flues)
D	DC and ancillary	78m AOD (16m tall excluding flues)
E	DC and ancillary	73m AOD (16m tall excluding flues)
F	Substation	74m AOD (14m tall)
G	Energy Centre	74m AOD (14m tall excluding flues)
H	Agricultural	78m AOD (8m tall)
I	Amenity	77m AOD (7m tall)

Scale

0 50 100 250 500 1000

Elsham Tech Park
Parameter Plan

N

Notes

1) This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all other relevant MHP drawings and information supplied by other consultants.

2) Hatch patterns displayed on this drawing are indicative only and do not represent actual paving units or material sizes.

3) All tree planting in proximity to buildings to be checked by engineers to ensure foundation detailing is appropriate.

Rev		Date	Drawn	Checked
F	Max. building ridge height included, max. AOD and FFL removed	19-05-25	DAL	PH
E	Addition of pedestrian/cycle arrow in SW corner.	09-05-25	GW	PH
D	Zone I and J updated	29-04-25	DB	PH
C	Minor updates	25-04-25	DB	PH
B	Update to development zones extents	16-04-25	DB	PH
A	Project name revised; development areas adjusted; addition of J.	16-04-25	GW	PH

Revisions:

Project: Elsham Tech Park

Client: Elsham Tech Park Ltd.

Title: Parameter Plan

Drawing number: 24239.104 Rev: G

Status: FOR INFORMATION

Drawn By:	Checked By:	Date:	Scale @ A1:
GW	PSH	07-04-25	1:5000

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE MASTERPLANNING ARBORICULTURE mhp

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