

Beacon Fen Solar - Responses to ExQ1 from North Kesteven District Council (ID F8D379496)

Question	NKDC response
1. General and cross-topic matters	
<p>GCT.1.1 - Planning Policy</p> <p>If not in your Local Impact Reports (LIR), all local authorities are asked to provide full copies of any development plan policies referred to in any of your submissions and confirm the status of the relevant plan. Should you refer to any additional development plan policies at any time in your future submissions to the Examining Authority (ExA), if they have not already been provided, please also submit copies of these into the examination. The ExA also asks to be kept up-to-date on changes to the status of any development plan which a local authority has previously relied upon during examination.</p>	<p>Please see below for full copies of the development plan policies referred to the Council's LIR [REP1-054] and Written Representation [REP1-056]. The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan was adopted in 2023.</p>
<p>GCT.1.2 - Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping</p> <p>Appendix 1.1. Scoping Report [APP-071] includes the applicant's assessment of the relevant local policy context. Are the HLAs content with the applicant's policy analysis?</p>	<p>NKDC notes that the Scoping Report was prepared in April 2023. It refers to policy documents which have now been superseded, for example, the older versions of the National Planning Policy Statements, National Planning Policy Framework and the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. The Council notes that the up-to-date versions have been assessed in the applicant's Planning Statement [APP-277] and individual ES chapters.</p>
<p>GCT.1.3 - Table 15.1 of appendix 1.1. Scoping Report [APP-071] includes the summary of what has been scoped in and scoped out of the EIA? Are the HLAs and statutory consultees content with the applicant's approach?</p>	<p>NKDC is broadly content with the topics included in Table 15.1 of the Scoping Report with the exception of two matters:</p> <p>The Council considers that potential ground contamination from the storage of solar panels during the decommissioning stage should be scoped into the ES.</p>

	<p>In addition, the Council considers that provision should be made within the DCO for an extended period of outage whereby decommissioning measures would be required.</p> <p>Both matters have been referred to in the Council's LIR at paragraphs 24.5-24.6 and 24.31-34 respectively.</p>
<p>GCT.1.4 - Neighbourhood Plans</p> <p>Can you confirm whether there are any relevant made or emerging neighbourhood plans that the ExA should be aware of? If there are, can you:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide details, confirm their status and – if they are emerging – the expected timescales for their completion. 2. Provide a copy of the made plan or a copy of the latest draft. 3. Indicate what weight you consider the ExA should give to these documents. 	<p>The Council confirms that there are no made or emerging Neighbourhood Plans that the ExA should be made aware of.</p>
<p>GCT.1.5 - Updates on development</p> <p>Please provide an update on any submitted planning applications or consents granted since the application was submitted that could either affect the proposed development or be affected by the proposed development and whether these would affect the conclusions reached in the Environmental Statement (ES).</p>	<p>The Little Hale Fen solar farm was granted on appeal (Ref:APP/R2520/W/25/3363027) on 24 September 2025. Reference: APP/R2520/W/25/3363027</p> <p>It should be included as part of the cumulative impact assessment.</p> <p>The Mareham Lane Solar Farm (Land Formed By Two Parcels Of Land On The Eastern And Western Side Of Mareham Lane Between The Villages Of Screddington And Silk Willoughby Sleaford - planning reference 23/1419/FUL) was refused planning permission and is now in appeal – reference APP/R2520/W/25/3373351.</p> <p>The solar farm proposal on Land To The North Of Whitecross Lane Burton Pedwardine Sleaford Lincolnshire NG34 0BN is now subject to a live planning application referenced 24/1470/FUL.</p>

	<p>The proposed BESS scheme referenced 23/0390/EIASCO (Green Man Road, Navenby) is subject to a live planning application referenced 25/0491/FUL).</p> <p>The planning application referenced 24/0841/RESM (Phase 1A Lincoln South East Quadrant Sustainable Urban Extension, North Of Canwick Avenue And East Of London Road, Bracebridge Heath, Lincs) was granted planning permission on 3 October 2025.</p> <p>The Springwell solar farm DCO examination closed on 9 October 2025. The ExA's recommendations will be provided to the Secretary of State by 26 January 2026. The Council has referred to certain issues considered during the Springwell examination that are of relevance to this DCO in its LIR at paragraphs 18.9, 18.26, 21.17, 21.26, 24.3, 26.7 and 26.10.</p>
<p>GCT.1.7 - Central Government Policy and Guidance</p> <p>Are you aware of any updates or changes to Government Policy or Guidance (including emerging policies) relevant to the determination of this application that have occurred since it was submitted? If yes, what are these changes and what are the implications for the application?</p>	<p>The Council is not aware of any updates or changes to government policy or guidance relevant to the determination of this application. The government has commenced consultation on revisions to NPS EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5 but the Council considers that while the review is being undertaken, the current suite of energy NPS's remain relevant and have effect for the purposes of the Planning Act 2008.</p>
<p>GCT.1.8 - Issues for Examination</p> <p>Requests have been made to the ExA, at both the Preliminary Meeting (PM) and Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1), for certain topics to be considered for future hearings. The ExA asks for a list of topics to be submitted which you believe would benefit from being examined in a hearing context and why a hearing, as opposed to written representations, would be needed?</p>	<p>NKDC considers that the following topics should be examined in a hearing context. The main reason is that the Council considers the conclusions reached by the applicants in their ES ought to be examined in person since the Council has reservations about how these conclusions have been reached, that the Council would be able to provide further elaboration on their concerns as set out in their LIR and that the Council has offered suggestions on how the DCO could be amended to provide greater protection to environmental assets.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of BMV Agricultural Land • Landscape and Visual • Cultural Heritage (above ground) • BESS and Fire Safety • Ecology, Biodiversity and Biodiversity Net Gain
<p>GCT.1.11 - Can the applicant please set out what considerations it has given to the need to develop a s106 agreement with the HLAs, namely Lincolnshire County Council, North Kesteven District Council and Boston Borough Council? And, if the applicant feels there is a need for one, what are the topics and issues that the s106 agreement should cover?</p> <p>Can the HLAs confirm their position in relation to the need for a s106 agreement and confirm if any discussions or consideration has been given to this?</p>	<p>NKDC consider that a s106 planning obligation is required to achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial contribution of £50,000 to Skills and Education package as consented in the Heckington Fen DCO and as agreed with the applicant on the Springwell DCO (to be determined) • Financial contribution towards establishment of an Ecological Steering Group with a focus on coordinating and funding local authority BNG monitoring • Financial contribution towards Stepping Out Walks
<p>GCT.1.12 - The applicant has presented a Long and Short List of Committed Development [APP-102] and [APP-103]. Can all HLAs confirm if they are happy with the list provided or if there are any further projects that they wish to add?</p> <p>Other IPs, namely SUs, are also invited to comment.</p>	<p>The Council is content with the Long and Short List of Committed Development with the addition of Little Hale Fen solar farm that was granted on appeal (Ref:APP/R2520/W/25/3363027) on 24 September 2025. Reference: APP/R2520/W/25/3363027</p> <p>Planning application 25/0521/FUL for the erection of a ground mounted solar farm on Land North Of Ferry Lane North-East Of Skellingthorpe & West Of Burton Waters Lincolnshire should be added to the shortlist of projects.</p> <p>In addition, planning application 25/0533/FUL for the erection of a proposed battery energy storage system (BESS) together with associated infrastructure on Land To The South Of Hill Rise West Of</p>

	Coleby And North Of Navenby Lincolnshire should also be added to the shortlist of projects.
6. Historic Environment	
HEN.1.1 - Can Historic England and the HLAs confirm they are in agreement with the applicant's methodology and overall assessment of effects on cultural heritage?	NKDC is broadly satisfied with the methodology, analysis and outcomes of the ES chapter on Cultural Heritage in relation to the above ground heritage assets. We agree for the most part with the outcomes regarding the minor adverse impacts on the principal heritage assets. We do however feel there are some heritage assets need consideration in more detail, where the impacts have a moderate impact at least.
HEN.1.9 - Can HLAs confirm if they are in agreement with Historic England's assessment in relation to the effects of the proposed development on the setting of designated heritage assets and on archaeological remains?	<p>NKDC agrees that there continues to be an adverse impact on the setting of South Kyme Tower (listed grade I NHLE 1204786 and Scheduled Monument NHLE 1008317) + Church of St Mary and All Saints, South Kyme listed grade II* NHLE 1061749 as well as potentially the Church of St Oswald, Howell.</p> <p>The Council does not consider, however, that their assessment is comprehensive, and there continues to be an adverse impact on other highly graded heritage assets, principally the Grade I listed Church of St Andrew at Asgarby. Also, Historic England have not assessed the potential impacts on grade II heritage assets, or non-designated heritage assets, and the Council considers that there are still adverse impacts on a number of these that are yet to be assessed fully.</p>
HEN.1.10 - If not submitted as part of their LIR, NKDC are asked to provide the ExA with a character appraisal, if available, of the Heckington Station Conservation Area and Heckington Village Conservation Area.	<p>The appraisal can be found at:</p> <p>https://www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/planning-building/planning/conservation-heritage/conservation-area-reviews</p>
7. Landscape and visual	

<p>LSV.1.1 - Are the relevant LPAs satisfied that the assessment has established an appropriate study area and all relevant landscape and visual receptors have been identified?</p>	<p>A detailed LVIA review has been carried out, which has been appended to the LPA LIR. The LVIA review considers the Study Area utilised in the assessment, and the selection is explained within paragraphs 6.4.1 and 6.4.2 of the LVIA. The Study area is illustrated in Figure 6.1. The radius of the study area of 5km from the Order Limits has been defined for the LVIA. A brief justification within paragraph 6.4.2 for extending the Study Area to 5km, stating: <i>“It is considered that beyond this distance the Proposed Development is unlikely to give rise to significant landscape or visual effects.”</i>. The Council’s consultants, AAH, have not identified anything on Site that would contradict the statement that there would not be Significant effects beyond 5km, and typically distance reduces the likelihood of this occurring.</p> <p>Also as identified within the detailed LVIA review, the baseline process undertaken by the applicant resulted in several landscape receptors being identified as likely to be affected by the Development identified as <i>“Sensitive Receptors”</i>. These are presented in Table 6.4 of the LVIA and include both landscape elements or features of the Site and Study Area (e.g. vegetation and hedgerows, land use, landscape pattern), as well as Landscape Character. AAH have assumed these are the published landscape character areas as identified in paragraphs 6.5.3 to 6.5.20 of the LVIA, providing an overview of published character assessments.</p> <p>This identification and list is confusing and used inconsistently in the subsequent assessment, which goes on to assess Landscape Character – Site Level; and Effects on Landscape character – Local landscape character.</p> <p>The way section 6.5.64 is written is that these are the receptors that the LVIA will assess the change to, however the actual receptors are the Site and wider character areas. Also confusingly, the construction effects on each of the landscape receptors are then broken down with subheadings into landscape elements and landscape character, but the Operation</p>
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	<p>effects are not broken down in the same way, mixing together these two aspects (character and elements). Some clarity and re-structuring would assist in clarity of this section: Clearly lay out the landscape receptors identified, summarise the likely elements to be affected within these; Assess the list of landscape receptors breaking down into effects on elements and character.</p> <p>For clarity, AAH have assumed the following are the landscape baseline receptors, which we would judge are appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site level; • Fenland Sub Area; • Central Clays and Gravels Sub Area; • Holland Reclaimed Fen LCA; • Bicker to Wyberton Settled Fen LCA; and • South Holland Fen LCA. <p>AAH have not identified any visual receptors that have been omitted from the assessment, and those we are aware of have been included.</p>
<p>LSV.1.2 - Are the relevant LPAs and other IPs content with the methodology used by the applicant to identify the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development.</p>	<p>A detailed LVIA review has been carried out, which has been appended to the LPA LIR. The LVIA review considers the LVIA methodology. Reference is made in section 1.1.4 of <i>Appendix 6.2</i> of the LVIA to industry guidance, including GVLIA3, however we note that there is no reference to <i>Notes and Clarifications on aspects of GLVIA 3, LITGN-2024-01, Landscape Institute</i> which was published in August 2024. This TGN provides some key updates and clarifications that are applicable to LVIA being carried out, and we would seek confirmation from the applicant as to whether this has been utilised within the methodology and subsequently the assessment.</p> <p>However, overall, the methodology in <i>Appendix 6.2</i> of the LVIA is clear and detailed, with Section 1.3 to 1.10 covering landscape effects and Section 1.11 to 1.14 covering visual effects. Section 1.15 of Appendix</p>

	<p>11.2 clarifies how the level or significance of landscape and visual effects are determined by combining judgements regarding the sensitivity of the receptor and the nature or magnitude of the effect arising from the Development.</p> <p>In summary, AAH are broadly content that the methodology used by the Applicant to identify the landscape and visual effects of the development generally accords with GLVIA3 and relevant Landscape Institute guidance. The assessment has been prepared by suitably qualified professionals and presents an appropriate level of detail for a project of this scale.</p> <p>However, a number of matters require clarification or further justification through the Examination, which have been detailed within our LVIA review appended to the LPA LIR, notably: confirmation that the LVIA represents a worst-case assessment consistent with the Rochdale Envelope; reference to the most recent Landscape Institute guidance (LITGN-2024-01); clarification of how susceptibility and sensitivity have been derived for visual receptors; and confirmation that the photomontages represent the maximum design parameters.</p> <p>Subject to these clarifications, the Council is content that the overall methodology is sufficiently robust to inform the Examination, although several aspects of its application and interpretation require refinement and further explanation.</p>
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GCT.1.1 – Planning Policy

Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2023 policies in full as referenced within NKDC's LIR:

[Policy S1: The Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy](#)

[Policy S2: Growth Levels and Distribution](#)

[Policy S5: Development in the Countryside](#)

[Policy S10: Supporting a Circular Economy](#)

[Policy S11: Embodied Carbon](#)

[Policy S14: Renewable Energy](#)

[Policy S16: Wider Energy Infrastructure](#)

[Policy S21: Flood Risk and Water Resources](#)

[Policy S28: Spatial Strategy for Employment](#)

[Policy S47: Accessibility and Transport](#)

[Policy S53: Design and Amenity](#)

[Policy S54: Health and Wellbeing](#)

[Policy S57: The Historic Environment](#)

[Policy S59: Green and Blue Infrastructure Network](#)

[Policy S60: Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity](#)

[Policy S61: Biodiversity Opportunity and Delivering Measurable Net Gains](#)

[Policy S66: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows](#)

[Policy S67: Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land](#)

[Policy S84: Ministry of Defence Establishments](#)

Policy S1: The Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy

The spatial strategy will focus on delivering sustainable growth for Central Lincolnshire that meets the needs for homes and jobs, regenerates places and communities, and supports necessary improvements to facilities, services and infrastructure.

Development should create strong, sustainable, cohesive and inclusive communities, making the most effective use of previously developed land and enabling a larger number of people to access jobs, services and facilities locally.

Development should provide the scale and mix of housing types and a range of new job opportunities that will meet the identified needs of Central Lincolnshire in order to secure balanced communities.

Decisions on investment in services and facilities, and on the location and scale of development, will be assisted by the Central Lincolnshire Settlement Hierarchy.

The hierarchy is as follows:

1. Lincoln Urban Area

To significantly strengthen the role of Lincoln, both regionally and within Central Lincolnshire, and to meet Lincoln's growth objectives and regeneration needs, the Lincoln urban area (defined as the current built up area of Lincoln, which includes the City of Lincoln, North Hykeham, South Hykeham Fosseway, Waddington Low Fields and any other developed land adjoining these areas) and the sites allocated in this Local Plan on the edge of the Lincoln urban area will be the principal focus for development in Central Lincolnshire, including housing, retail, leisure, cultural, office and other employment development. In addition to sites being allocated in the Local Plan or a neighbourhood plan, development proposals in accordance with Policy S3 and other relevant development plan policies will be viewed positively.

2. Main Towns

To maintain and enhance their roles as main towns, and to meet the objectives for regeneration, Sleaford and Gainsborough will, primarily via sites allocated in this Local Plan and any applicable neighbourhood plan, be the focus for substantial housing development supported by appropriate levels of employment growth, retail growth and wider service provision. In addition to sites being allocated in the Local Plan or a neighbourhood plan, development proposals in accordance with Policy S3 and other relevant development plan policies will be viewed positively.

3. Market Towns

To maintain and enhance their roles as market towns, Caistor and Market Rasen will be the focus for significant, but proportionate, growth in housing, employment, retail and wider service provision. This growth will primarily be through sites allocated in this Local Plan and any applicable neighbourhood plan. In addition to sites being allocated in the Local Plan or a neighbourhood plan, development proposals in accordance with Policy S3 and other relevant development plan policies will be viewed positively.

4. Large Villages

Large villages are defined as those with 750 or more dwellings at 1 April 2018. To maintain and enhance their role as large villages which provide housing, employment, retail, and key services and facilities for the local area, the following settlements will be a focus for accommodating an appropriate level of growth via sites allocated in this plan. Beyond site allocations made in this plan or any applicable neighbourhood plan, development will be limited to that which accords with Policy S4: Housing Development in or Adjacent to Villages or other policies relating to nonresidential development in this plan as relevant.

Bardney	Waddington
Heighington	Branston
Scotter	Navenby
Billinghay	Washingborough
Keelby	Cherry Willingham
Skellingthorpe	Nettleham
Bracebridge Heath	Welton
Metheringham	Dunholme
Witham St Hughs	Ruskington
Heckington	Saxilby

5. Medium Villages

Medium villages are defined as those with between 250 and 749 dwellings at 1 April 2018. Well connected or well served medium villages may receive some limited growth through allocations in this plan in order to achieve a balance between ensuring the vitality of the village and protecting the rural character. Beyond site allocations made in this plan or any applicable neighbourhood plan, development will be limited to that which accords with Policy S4: Housing Development in or Adjacent to Villages or other policies relating to non-residential development in this plan as relevant.

Bassingham	Lea
Greylees	Sturton By Stow
Nocton	Digby
Blyton	Leasingham
Harmston	Sudbrooke
North Kelsey	Dunston
Brant Broughton	Marton
Hawthorn Avenue ('Little Cherry')	Tealby

Potterhanworth
Brookenby
Helpringham
Reepham
Burton Waters
Hemswell Cliff
Scampton (RAF)
Cranwell RAF
Ingham
Scothern

Eagle
Middle Rasen
Waddingham
Fiskerton
Morton
Welbourn
Great Hale
Nettleton
Wellingore
Cranwell Village

6. Small Villages

Small villages are defined as those with between 50 and 249 dwellings at 1 April 2018. Well connected or well served small villages may receive some limited growth, primarily through allocations in this plan in order to achieve a balance between ensuring the vitality of the village and the rural character. Beyond site allocations made in this plan or any applicable neighbourhood plan, development will be limited to that which accords with Policy S4: Housing Development in or Adjacent to Villages or other policies relating to non-residential development in this plan as relevant.

Anwick
Hemswell
Scotton
Ashby de la Launde
Holton le Moor
Scredington
Aubourn
Kexby
Searby
Aunsby
Kirkby Green
Silk Willoughby
Beckingham
Kirkby La Thorpe
Snitterby
Bigby

Burton
Leadenham
Spridlington
Canwick
Lissington
Springthorpe
Carlton Le Moorland
Little Hale
Stow
Chapel Hill
Martin
Swallow
Claxby
New Toft
Swarby
Coleby

Knaith Park
South Kelsey
Bishop Norton
Langworth
South Kyme
Boothby Graffoe
Laughterton
South Rauceby
Branston Booths
Laughton
Dorrington
Thorpe On The Hill
Threekingham
North Owersby
Ewerby
Torksey
Norton Disney
Fenton
Walcott
Osgodby
Glentham
Wickenby
Rothwell
Grasby
Great Limber
Wilsford
Hackthorn

Newton On Trent
Swaton
Corringham
Normanby By Spital
Swinderby
Doddington
North Carlton
Tattershall Bridge
Southrey
North Greetwell
East Ferry
North Kyme
East Stockwith
Timberland
North Scarle
Faldingworth
Upton
Osbournby
Fillingham
Walesby
Owmby By Spital
Glentworth
Willingham By Stow
Rowston
Willoughton
Scampton village
Scopwick

7. Hamlets

For the purposes of this Local Plan, a hamlet is defined as a settlement not listed elsewhere in this policy and with dwellings clearly clustered together to form a single developed footprint*. Such a hamlet must have a dwelling base of at least 15 units (as at 1 April 2018). Within the developed

footprint* of such hamlets, development will be limited to single dwelling infill developments or development allocated through a neighbourhood plan.

8. Countryside

Unless allowed by:

a) policy in any of the levels 1-7 above; or

b) any other policy in the Local Plan (such as Policies S4, S5, S34, or S43) or a relevant policy in a neighbourhood plan, development will be regarded as being in the countryside and as such restricted to:

- that which is demonstrably essential to the effective operation of agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation, transport or utility services;
- delivery of infrastructure;
- renewable energy generation; and
- minerals or waste development in accordance with separate Minerals and Waste Local Development Documents.

* The definition of “developed footprint” as used throughout this policy is provided in the Glossary.

Policy S2: Growth Levels and Distribution

The housing requirement for Central Lincolnshire is 1,102 dwellings per year, and 24,244 dwellings over the plan period of 2018-2040.

This baseline will be used for Five Year Housing Land Supply calculations, Housing Delivery Test purposes and any other such similar calculations.

The economic vision and strategy of this plan is to seek to facilitate the creation of 24,000 new jobs over the plan period, 2018-2040. To help facilitate that target, and ensure the provision of new homes is in balance with job creation, this plan aims to facilitate the delivery of 1,325 dwellings per year, or 29,150 dwellings over the Plan period.

In order to facilitate all of the above, this Plan identifies a sufficient supply and mix of sites to not only meet its identified housing requirement and its economic vision jobs growth target, but also sufficient supply to meet the housing needed should the economic vision be successfully delivered.

Such a supply and mix of housing and employment sites have been provided in this Plan to broadly meet the following spatial strategy:

- a. Lincoln Strategy Area – around 64% of the supply, delivered through a combined strategy of (and in priority order):
 - i. urban regeneration;
 - ii. sustainable urban extensions to Lincoln; and
 - iii. growth at settlements which serve, and are serviced by, Lincoln.
- b. Gainsborough - around 12% of the supply, delivered through a combined strategy of urban regeneration, sustainable urban extensions and sites at nearby and well connected villages.
- c. Sleaford – around 12% of the supply, delivered through, primarily, a strategy of sustainable urban extensions and on other urban sites and sites at nearby and well connected villages.
- d. Elsewhere – around 12% of the supply will come forward in settlements elsewhere, primarily located at the market towns and in well-connected villages and villages with a good range of services present.

Policy S5: Development in the Countryside

Part A: Re-use and conversion of non-residential buildings for residential use in the countryside

Where a change of use proposal to residential use requires permission, and where the proposal is outside the developed footprint of a settlement listed in the Settlement Hierarchy or the developed footprint of a hamlet, then the proposal will be supported provided that the following criteria are met:

- a) Comprehensive and proportionate evidence is provided to justify either that the building can no longer be used for the purpose for which it was originally built, or the purpose for which it was last used, or that there is no demand (as demonstrated through a thorough and robust marketing exercise) for the use of the building for business purposes; and
- b) The building is capable of conversion with minimal alteration, including no need for inappropriate new openings and additional features; and
- c) The building is of notable architectural or historic merit and intrinsically worthy of retention in its setting

Part B: Replacement of a dwelling in the countryside

The replacement of an existing dwelling outside the developed footprint of a settlement will be supported provided that:

- a) The residential use of the original dwelling has not been abandoned;
- b) The original dwelling is not of any architectural or historic merit and it is not valuable to the character of the settlement or wider landscape;
- c) The original dwelling is a permanent structure, not a temporary or mobile structure;
- d) The replacement dwelling is of a similar size and scale to the original dwelling;
- e) It is located on the footprint of the original dwelling unless an alternative position within the existing residential curtilage would provide notable benefits and have no adverse impact on the wider setting; and f) It satisfies the requirements of Policy S11: Embodied Carbon.

Part C: Mobile homes within the countryside

Applications for temporary and mobile homes will be considered in the same way as applications for permanent dwellings. The exception to this is cases when a temporary or mobile home is needed during the construction of a permanent dwelling on site or on a nearby site: in such cases more flexibility will be applied. Permission granted in such instances will be subject to time restrictions.

Part D: New dwellings in the countryside

Applications for new dwellings will only be acceptable where they are essential to the effective operation of existing rural operations listed in tier 8 of Policy S1. Applications should be accompanied by evidence of:

- a) Details of the rural operation that will be supported by the dwelling;
- b) The need for the dwelling;
- c) The number of workers (full and part time) that will occupy the dwelling;
- d) The length of time the enterprise the dwelling will support has been established;
- e) The commercial viability of the associated rural enterprise through the submission of business accounts or a detailed business plan;
- f) The availability of other suitable accommodation on site or in the area; and

g) Details of how the proposed size of the dwelling relates to the needs of the enterprise. Any such development will be subject to a restrictive occupancy condition.

Part E: Non-residential development in the countryside

Proposals for non-residential development will be supported provided that:

- a) The rural location of the enterprise is justifiable to maintain or enhance the rural economy or the location is justified by means of proximity to existing established businesses or natural features;
- b) The location of the enterprise is suitable in terms of accessibility;
- c) The location of the enterprise would not result in conflict with neighbouring uses; and
- d) The development is of a size and scale commensurate with the proposed use and with the rural character of the location.

Part F: Agricultural diversification

Proposals involving farm based diversification to non-agricultural activities or operations will be permitted, provided that the proposal will support farm enterprises and providing that the development is:

- a) In an appropriate location for the proposed use;
- b) Of a scale appropriate to its location; and
- c) Of a scale appropriate to the business need

Part G: Agricultural, forestry, horticultural or other rural land-based development

Proposals which will help farms modernise and/or adapt to funding changes or climate change will be supported in principle and any such proposals will be considered against relevant design, landscape and natural environment policies in this plan. Where permission is required, development proposals for buildings required for agriculture or other rural land based development purposes will be supported where:

- a) It is demonstrated that there is a functional need for the building which cannot be met by an existing, or recently disposed of, building;
- b) the building is of a scale that is proportionate to the proposed functional need;
- c) the building is designed specifically to meet the functional need identified;

d) the site is well related to existing buildings in terms of both physical and functional location, design and does not introduce isolated structures away from existing buildings; and

e) significant earthworks are not required, and there will be no harm to natural drainage and will not result in pollution of soils, water or air.

Policy S10: Supporting a Circular Economy

The Joint Committee is aware of the high energy and material use consumed on a daily basis, and, consequently, is fully supportive of the principles of a circular economy.

Accordingly, and to complement any policies set out in the Minerals and Waste Development Plan, proposals will be supported, in principle, which demonstrate their compatibility with, or the furthering of, a strong circular economy in the local area (which could include cross-border activity elsewhere in Lincolnshire).

Policy S11: Embodied Carbon

All development should, where practical and viable, take opportunities to reduce the development's embodied carbon content, through the careful choice, use and sourcing of materials.

Presumption against demolition:

To avoid the wastage of embodied carbon in existing buildings and avoid the creation of new embodied carbon in replacement buildings, there is a presumption in favour of repairing, refurbishing, re-using and re-purposing existing buildings over their demolition. Proposals that result in the demolition of a building (in whole or a significant part) should be accompanied by a full justification for the demolition. For non-listed buildings demolition will only be acceptable where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the local planning authority that:

1. the building proposed for demolition is in a state of such disrepair that it is not practical or viable to be repaired, refurbished, re-used, or re-purposed; or
2. repairing, refurbishing, re-using, or re-purposing the building would likely result in similar or higher newly generated embodied carbon than if the building is demolished and a new building is constructed; or

3. repairing, refurbishing, re-using, or re-purposing the building would create a building with such poor thermal efficiency that on a whole life cycle basis (i.e. embodied carbon and in-use carbon emissions) would mean a lower net carbon solution would arise from demolition and re-build; or

4. demolition of the building and construction of a new building would, on an exceptional basis, deliver other significant public benefits that outweigh the carbon savings which would arise from the building being repaired, refurbished, re-used, or re-purposed.

Applications within the countryside relating to the re-use or conversion of existing buildings will only be acceptable where they also meet the requirements of Policy S5, S34, or S43 as applicable.

Major development proposals:

All major development proposals should explicitly set out what opportunities to lower a building's embodied carbon content have been considered, and which opportunities, if any, are to be taken forward.

In the period to 31 December 2024, there will be no requirement (unless mandated by Government) to use any specific lower embodied carbon materials in development proposals, provided the applicant has at least demonstrated consideration of options and opportunities available.

From 1 January 2025, there will be a requirement for a development proposal to demonstrate how the design and building materials to be used have been informed by a consideration of embodied carbon, and that reasonable opportunities to minimise embodied carbon have been taken. Further guidance is anticipated to be issued by the local planning authorities on this matter prior to 1 January 2025.

Policy S14: Renewable Energy

The Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee is committed to supporting the transition to a net zero carbon future and will seek to maximise appropriately located renewable energy generated in Central Lincolnshire (such energy likely being wind and solar based).

Proposals for renewable energy schemes, including ancillary development, will be supported where the direct, indirect, individual and cumulative impacts on the following considerations are, or will be made, acceptable. To determine whether it is acceptable, the following tests will have to be met:

- i. The impacts are acceptable having considered the scale, siting and design, and the consequent impacts on landscape character; visual amenity; biodiversity; geodiversity; flood risk; townscape; heritage assets, their settings and the historic landscape; and highway safety and rail safety; and

ii. The impacts are acceptable on aviation and defence navigation system/communications; and

iii. The impacts are acceptable on the amenity of sensitive neighbouring uses (including local residents) by virtue of matters such as noise, dust, odour, shadow flicker, air quality and traffic;

Testing compliance with part (i) above will be via applicable policies elsewhere in a development plan document for the area (i.e. this Local Plan; a Neighbourhood Plan, if one exists; any applicable policies in a Minerals or Waste Local Plan); and any further guidance set out in a Supplementary Planning Document.

In order to test compliance with part (ii) above will require, for relevant proposals, the submission by the applicant of robust evidence of the potential impact on any aviation and defence navigation system/communication, and within such evidence must be documented areas of agreement or disagreement reached with appropriate bodies and organisations responsible for such infrastructure.

In order to test compliance with part (iii) above will require, for relevant proposals, the submission by the applicant of a robust assessment of the potential impact on such users, and the mitigation measures proposed to minimise any identified harm.

For all matters in (i)-(iii), the applicable local planning authority may commission its own independent assessment of the proposals, to ensure it is satisfied what the degree of harm may be and whether reasonable mitigation opportunities are being taken.

Where significant adverse effects are concluded by the local planning authority following consideration of the above assessment(s), such effects will be weighed against the wider environmental, economic, social and community benefits provided by the proposal. In this regard, and as part of the planning balance, significant additional weight in favour of the proposal will arise for any proposal which is community-led for the benefit of that community.

In areas that have been designated for their national importance, as identified in the National Planning Policy Framework, renewable energy infrastructure will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it would be appropriate in scale, located in areas that do not contribute positively to the objectives of the designation, is sympathetically designed and includes any necessary mitigation measures.

Additional matters for solar based energy proposals

Proposals for solar thermal or photovoltaics panels and associated infrastructure to be installed on existing property will be under a presumption in favour of permission unless there is clear and demonstrable significant harm arising.

Proposals for ground based photovoltaics and associated infrastructure, including commercial large scale proposals, will be under a presumption in favour unless:

- there is clear and demonstrable significant harm arising; or
- the proposal is (following a site specific soil assessment) to take place on Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land and does not meet the requirements of Policy S67; or
- the land is allocated for another purpose in this Local Plan or other statutory based document (such as a nature recovery strategy or a Local Transport Plan), and the proposal is not compatible with such other allocation.

Proposals for ground based photovoltaics should be accompanied by evidence demonstrating how opportunities for delivering biodiversity net gain will be maximised in the scheme taking account of soil, natural features, existing habitats, and planting proposals accompanying the scheme to create new habitats linking into the nature recovery strategy.

Additional matters for wind based energy proposals

Proposals for a small to medium single wind turbine, which is defined as a turbine up to a maximum of 40m from ground to tip of blade, are, in principle, supported throughout Central Lincolnshire (i.e. the whole of Central Lincolnshire is identified as a broad area potentially suitable for such a single turbine), subject to meeting the above criteria (i)-(iii) and the requirements of national planning policy. Under this paragraph, no dwelling or other operation (e.g. a farm or a business) may have more than one turbine at any one time in the curtilage of that dwelling or other operation.

Proposals for medium (over 40m from ground to tip of blade) to large scale wind turbines (including groups of turbines) will, in principle, be supported only where they are located within an area identified as a 'Broad Area Suitable for Larger Scale Wind Energy Turbines' as identified on the Policies Map and (indicatively) on Map 2. Such proposals will be tested against criteria (i)-(iii) and the requirements of national planning policy.

Medium to large scale wind turbines must not be within 2km of a settlement boundary of a settlement identified in the Settlement Hierarchy. However, where a proposal is within 2km of any residential property, the following matters will need careful consideration as to the potential harm arising:

- Noise
- Flicker
- Overbearing nature of the turbines (established by visual effects from within commonly used habitable rooms)
- Any other amenity which is presently enjoyed by the occupier.

In this regard, no medium to large scale wind turbine within 700m of a residential property is anticipated to be supported, and proposals between 700-2,000m will need clear evidence of no significant harm arising.

For the avoidance of doubt, any medium to large scale wind turbine proposals outside of the identified Broad Area Suitable for Larger Scale Wind Energy Turbines should be refused.

Decommissioning renewable energy infrastructure

Permitted proposals will be subject to a condition that will require the submission of an End of Life Removal Scheme within one year of the facility becoming non-operational, and the implementation of such a scheme within one year of the scheme being approved. Such a scheme should demonstrate how any biodiversity net gain that has arisen on the site will be protected or enhanced further, and how the materials to be removed would, to a practical degree, be re-used or recycled.

Policy S16: Wider Energy Infrastructure

The Joint Committee is committed to supporting the transition to net zero carbon future and, in doing so, recognises and supports, in principle, the need for significant investment in new and upgraded energy infrastructure.

Where planning permission is needed from a Central Lincolnshire authority, support will be given to proposals which are necessary for, or form part of, the transition to a net zero carbon sub-region, which could include: energy storage facilities (such as battery storage or thermal storage); and upgraded or new electricity facilities (such as transmission facilities, sub-stations or other electricity infrastructure).

However, any such proposals should take all reasonable opportunities to mitigate any harm arising from such proposals, and take care to select not only appropriate locations for such facilities, but also design solutions (see Policy S53) which minimises harm arising.

Policy S21: Flood Risk and Water Resources

Flood Risk

All development proposals will be considered against the NPPF, including application of the sequential and, if necessary, the exception test.

Through appropriate consultation and option appraisal, development proposals should demonstrate:

- a) that they are informed by and take account of the best available information from all sources of flood risk and by site specific flood risk assessments where appropriate;
- b) that the development does not place itself or existing land or buildings at increased risk of flooding;
- c) that the development will be safe during its lifetime taking into account the impacts of climate change and will be resilient to flood risk from all forms of flooding such that in the event of a flood the development could be quickly brought back into use without significant refurbishment;
- d) that the development does not affect the integrity of existing flood defences and any necessary flood mitigation measures have been agreed with the relevant bodies, where adoption, ongoing maintenance and management have been considered and any necessary agreements are in place;
- e) how proposals have taken a positive approach to reducing overall flood risk and have considered the potential to contribute towards solutions for the wider area; and
- f) that they have incorporated Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)/ Integrated Water Management into the proposals unless they can be shown to be inappropriate.

Protecting the Water Environment

Development proposals that are likely to impact on surface or ground water should consider the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

Development proposals should demonstrate:

- g) that water is available to support the development proposed;
- h) that adequate mains foul water treatment and disposal already exists or can be provided in time to serve the development. Non mains foul sewage disposal solutions should only be considered where it can be shown to the satisfaction of the local planning authority that connection to a public sewer is not feasible;
- i) that they meet the Building Regulation water efficiency standard of 110 litres per occupier per day or the highest water efficiency standard that applies at the time of the planning application (see also Policy S12)
- j) that water reuse and recycling and rainwater harvesting measures have been incorporated wherever possible in order to reduce demand on mains water supply as part of an integrated approach to water management (see also Policy S11);

k) that they have followed the surface water hierarchy for all proposals:

- i. surface water runoff is collected for use;
- ii. discharge into the ground via infiltration;
- iii. discharge to a watercourse or other surface water body;
- iv. discharge to a surface water sewer, highway drain or other drainage system, discharging to a watercourse or other surface water body;
- v. discharge to a combined sewer;

l) that no surface water connections are made to the foul system;

m) that surface water connections to the combined or surface water system are only made in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that there are no feasible alternatives (this applies to new developments and redevelopments) and where there is no detriment to existing users;

n) that no combined sewer overflows are created in areas served by combined sewers, and that foul and surface water flows are separated;

o) that development contributes positively to the water environment and its ecology where possible and does not adversely affect surface and ground water quality in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive;

p) that development with the potential to pose a risk to groundwater resources is not located in sensitive locations to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive;

q) how Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)/ Integrated Water Management to deliver improvements to water quality, the water environment and to improve amenity and biodiversity net gain wherever possible have been incorporated into the proposal unless they can be shown to be impractical;

r) that relevant site investigations, risk assessments and necessary mitigation measures for source protection zones around boreholes, wells, springs and water courses have been agreed with the relevant bodies (e.g. the Environment Agency and relevant water companies);

s) that suitable access is safeguarded for the maintenance of watercourses, water resources, flood defences and drainage infrastructure;
and

t) that adequate provision is made to safeguard the future maintenance of water bodies to which surface water and foul water treated on the site of the development is discharged, preferably by an appropriate authority (e.g. Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Board, Water Company, the Canal and River Trust or local Council).

In order to allow access for the maintenance of watercourses, development proposals that include or abut a watercourse should ensure no building, structure or immovable landscaping feature is included that will impede access within 8m of a watercourse, or within 16m of a tidal watercourse. Conditions may be included where relevant to ensure this access is maintained in perpetuity and may seek to ensure responsibility for maintenance of the watercourse including land ownership details up to and of the watercourse is clear and included in maintenance arrangements for future occupants.

Policy S28: Spatial Strategy for Employment

In principle, employment related development proposals should be consistent with meeting the following overall spatial strategy for employment.

The strategy is to strengthen the Central Lincolnshire economy offering a wide range of employment opportunities focused mainly in and around the Lincoln urban area and the towns of Gainsborough and Sleaford, with proportionate employment provision further down the Settlement Hierarchy (see Policy S1).

Aligned to the Greater Lincolnshire Local Industrial Strategy, and as a key component of the Midlands Engine, there will be significant growth in a number of sectors, most notably agri-food, manufacturing, business services and the visitor economy, including accommodation and food services.

Land has been made available in appropriate locations in this plan to meet the strategic needs identified in Central Lincolnshire. Strategic Employment Sites (SES), and existing Important Established Employment Areas (IEEA) will be protected for their importance to the economy. Employment development will mainly be directed to these SES and IEEA and at Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) as part of mixed use communities being created.

Elsewhere, policies will seek to protect Local Employment Areas (LEA) to help ensure there are jobs and services available to meet the local needs of the community and to allow enterprises to flourish at suitable sites across Central Lincolnshire. Outside of existing employment areas and allocated sites, economic development will typically be limited to small-scale proposals which satisfy the requirements of Policy S33 or Policy S34.

Policy S47: Accessibility and Transport

Development proposals which contribute towards an efficient and safe transport network that offers a range of transport choices for the movement of people and goods will be supported.

All developments should demonstrate, where appropriate, that they have had regard to the following criteria:

- a) Located where travel can be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes maximised;
- b) Minimise additional travel demand through the use of measures such as travel planning, safe and convenient public transport, car clubs, walking and cycling links and integration with existing infrastructure;
- c) Making allowance for low and ultra-low emission vehicle refuelling infrastructure.

Delivering Transport Related Infrastructure

All development proposals should have regard to the IDP, and, where necessary contribute to the delivery of the following transport objectives, either directly where appropriate (such as the provision of infrastructure or through the contribution of land to enable a scheme to occur) or indirectly (such as through developer contributions as set out in Policy S45).

For Strategic Transport Infrastructure:

- d) Improve and manage the strategic highway infrastructure for a range of users and increased capacity where appropriate and viable;
- e) Improve and manage the wider road infrastructure to benefit local communities including through the use of traffic management and calming initiatives where appropriate on rural roads, and key transport links in the towns and villages;
- f) Deliver opportunities for improved road and rail interaction, and avoiding impacts upon level crossings;
- g) Improve, extend and manage the strategic cycling network for a range of users;
- h) Support the enhancement of existing or proposed transport interchanges;
- i) Improve and manage the strategic highway infrastructure, wider road infrastructure and public rights of way network to deliver biodiversity net gain, including improved connectivity and extent of green infrastructure guided by local nature recovery strategy; and
- j) Explore opportunities to utilise waterways for transport, particularly freight.

For Public and Community Transport Infrastructure and Services:

- k) Assist in the implementation of infrastructure which will help all communities in Central Lincolnshire, including people living in villages and small settlements, to have opportunities to travel without a car for essential journeys;
- l) Improve the integration, efficiency, accessibility, safety, convenience and comfort of public transport stations, including both rail and buses;
- m) Deliver flexible transport services that combine public and community transport, ensuring that locally based approaches are delivered to meet the needs of communities;
- n) Assist in bringing forward one or more mobility hubs in the Lincoln area.

To demonstrate that developers have considered and taken into account the requirements of this policy, an appropriate Transport Statement/ Assessment and/ or Travel Plan should be submitted with proposals, with the precise form dependent on the scale and nature of development and agreed through early discussion with the local planning or highway authority and external bodies where relevant.

Any development that has severe transport implications will not be granted planning permission unless deliverable mitigation measures have been identified, and arrangements secured for their implementation, which will make the development acceptable in transport terms.

Policy S53: Design and Amenity

All development, including extensions and alterations to existing buildings, must achieve high quality sustainable design that contributes positively to local character, landscape and townscape, and supports diversity, equality and access for all.

Good design will be at the centre of every development proposal and this will be required to be demonstrated through evidence supporting planning applications to a degree proportionate to the proposal. Design Codes may be produced for parts of Central Lincolnshire or in support of specific developments. The approach taken in these Design Codes should be informed by the National Model Design Code and where these codes have been adopted, developments will be expected to adhere to the Code.

Proposals for new buildings should incorporate the Design Principles for Efficient Buildings in Policy S6 at the centre of design.

All development proposals will be assessed against, and will be expected to meet the following relevant design and amenity criteria. All development proposals will:

1. Context

- a) Be based on a sound understanding of the context, integrating into the surroundings and responding to local history, culture and heritage;
- b) Relate well to the site, its local and wider context and existing characteristics including the retention of existing natural and historic features wherever possible and including appropriate landscape and boundary treatments to ensure that the development can be satisfactorily assimilated into the surrounding area;
- c) Protect any important local views into, out of or through the site;

2. Identity

- a) Contribute positively to the sense of place, reflecting and enhancing existing character and distinctiveness;
- b) Reflect or improve on the original architectural style of the local surroundings, or embrace opportunities for innovative design and new technologies which sympathetically complement or contrast with the local architectural style;
- c) Use appropriate, high quality materials which reinforce or enhance local distinctiveness;
- d) Not result in the visual or physical coalescence with any neighbouring settlement nor ribbon development;

3. Built Form

- a) Make effective and efficient use of land that contribute to the achievement of compact, walkable neighbourhoods;
- b) Be appropriate for its context and its future use in terms of its building types, street layout, development block type and size, siting, height, scale, massing, form, rhythm, plot widths, gaps between buildings, and the ratio of developed to undeveloped space both within a plot and within a scheme;
- c) Achieve a density not only appropriate for its context but also taking into account its accessibility;
- d) Have a layout and form that delivers efficient and adaptable homes in accordance with Policy S6 and Policy S20.

4. Movement

- a) Form part of a well-designed and connected travel network with consideration for all modes of transport offering genuine choices for non-car travel and prioritising active travel and where relevant demonstrate this through evidence clearly showing connectivity for all modes and a hierarchy of routes (also see Policy S47 and Policy S48);
- b) Maximise pedestrian and cycle permeability and avoid barriers to movement through careful consideration of street layouts and access routes both within the site and in the wider context contributing to the delivery of walkable and cyclable neighbourhoods in accordance with Policy S48;
- c) Ensure areas are accessible, safe and legible for all including people with physical accessibility difficulties;
- d) Deliver well-considered parking, including suitable electric vehicle charging points, with appropriate landscaping provided in accordance with the parking standards set out in Policy NS18 and Policy S49;
- e) Deliver suitable access solutions for servicing and utilities;

5. Nature

- a) Incorporate and retain as far as possible existing natural features including hedgerows, trees, and waterbodies particularly where these features offer a valuable habitat to support biodiversity, aligned with policies in the Natural Environment chapter of the Local Plan;
- b) Incorporate appropriate landscape and boundary treatments to ensure that the development can be satisfactorily assimilated into the surrounding area, maximising opportunities to deliver diverse ecosystems and biodiverse habitats, strengthening wildlife corridors and green infrastructure networks, and helping to achieve wider goals for biodiversity net gain, climate change mitigation and adaptation and water management;

6. Public Spaces

- a) Ensure public spaces are accessible to all, are safe and secure and will be easy to maintain with clear definition of public and private spaces;
- b) Form part of a hierarchy of spaces where relevant to offer a range of spaces available for the community and to support a variety of activities and encourage social interaction;
- c) Be carefully planned and integrated into the wider community to ensure spaces feel safe and are safe through natural surveillance, being flanked by active uses and by promoting activity within the space;

d) Maximise opportunities for delivering additional trees and biodiversity gains through the creation of new habitats and the strengthening or extending wildlife corridors and the green infrastructure network in accordance with policies in the Natural Environment chapter;

7. Uses

a) Create or contribute to a variety of complementary uses that meet the needs of the community;

b) Be compatible with neighbouring land uses and not result in likely conflict with existing uses unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that both the ongoing use of the neighbouring site will not be compromised, and that the amenity of occupiers of the new development will be satisfactory with the ongoing normal use of the neighbouring site;

c) Not result in adverse noise and vibration taking into account surrounding uses nor result in adverse impacts upon air quality from odour, fumes, smoke, dust and other sources;

8. Homes and Buildings

a) Provide homes with good quality internal environments with adequate space for users and good access to private, shared or public spaces;

b) Be adaptable and resilient to climate change and be compatible with achieving a net zero carbon Central Lincolnshire as required by Policies S6, S7 and S8;

c) Be capable of adapting to changing needs of future occupants and be cost effective to run by achieving the standards set out in Policy S20;

d) Not result in harm to people's amenity either within the proposed development or neighbouring it through overlooking, overshadowing, loss of light or increase in artificial light or glare;

e) Provide adequate storage, waste, servicing and utilities for the use proposed;

9. Resources

a) Minimise the need for resources both in construction and operation of buildings and be easily adaptable to avoid unnecessary waste in accordance with Policies S10 and S11;

b) Use high quality materials which are not only suitable for the context but that are durable and resilient to impacts of climate change in accordance with the requirements of Policy S20;

10. Lifespan

- a) Use high quality materials which are durable and ensure buildings and spaces are adaptive; and
- b) Encourage the creation of a sense of ownership for users and the wider community with a clear strategy for ongoing management and stewardship.

Development proposals will be expected to satisfy requirements of any adopted local design guide or design code where relevant to the proposal.

Policy S54: Health and Wellbeing

The potential for achieving positive mental and physical health outcomes will be taken into account when considering all development proposals. Where any potential adverse health impacts are identified, the applicant will be expected to demonstrate how these will be addressed and mitigated.

The Central Lincolnshire authorities will expect development proposals to promote, support and enhance physical and mental health and wellbeing, and thus contribute to reducing health inequalities. This will be achieved by:

- a) Seeking, in line with the Central Lincolnshire Developer Contributions SPD, developer contributions towards new or enhanced health facilities from developers where development results in a shortfall or worsening of provision, as informed by the outcome of consultation with health care commissioners;
- b) In the case of development of 150 dwellings or more, or 5ha or more for other development, developers submitting a fit for purpose Health Impact Assessment (HIA) as part of the application or master planning stage where applicable, and demonstrating how the conclusions of the HIA have been taken into account in the design of the scheme. The HIA should be commensurate with the size of the development;
- c) Development schemes safeguarding and, where appropriate, creating or enhancing the role of allotments, orchards, gardens and food markets in providing access to healthy, fresh and locally produced food; and
- d) Ensuring quality green infrastructure provides adequate access to nature for its benefits to mental and physical health and wellbeing and potential to overcome health inequalities.

Proposals for new health care facilities

Proposals for new health care facilities should relate well to public transport services, walking and cycling routes and be easily accessible to all sectors of the community. Proposals which utilise opportunities for the multi-use and co-location of health facilities with other services and facilities, and thus co-ordinate local care and provide convenience for the community, will be particularly supported.

Policy S57: The Historic Environment

Development proposals should protect, conserve and seek opportunities to enhance the historic environment of Central Lincolnshire.

In instances where a development proposal would affect the significance of a heritage asset (whether designated or non-designated), including any contribution made by its setting, the applicant will be required to undertake and provide the following, in a manner proportionate to the asset's significance:

- a) describe and assess the significance of the asset, including its setting, to determine its architectural, historical or archaeological interest; and
- b) identify the impact of the proposed works on the significance and special character of the asset, including its setting; and
- c) provide a clear justification for the works, especially if these would harm the significance of the asset, including its setting, so that the harm can be weighed against public benefits.

Development proposals will be supported where they:

- d) protect the significance of heritage assets (including where relevant their setting) by protecting and enhancing architectural and historic character, historical associations, landscape and townscape features and through consideration of scale, design, architectural detailing, materials, siting, layout, mass, use, and views and vistas both from and towards the asset;
- e) promote opportunities to better reveal significance of heritage assets, where possible;
- f) take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing non-designated heritage assets and their setting.

Proposals to alter or to change the use of a heritage asset, will be supported provided:

- g) the proposed use is compatible with the significance of the heritage asset, including its fabric, character, appearance, setting and, for listed buildings, interior; and

- h) such a change of use will demonstrably assist in the maintenance or enhancement of the heritage asset; and
- i) features essential to the special interest of the individual heritage asset are not harmed to facilitate the change of use.

Development proposals that will result in substantial harm to, or the total loss of, a designated heritage asset will only be granted permission where it is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss, and the following criteria can be satisfied:

- j) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- k) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- l) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- m) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

Where a development proposal would result in less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, permission will only be granted where the public benefits, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use, outweigh the harm.

Where a non-designated heritage asset is affected by development proposals, there will be a presumption in favour of its retention, though regard will be had to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. Any special features which contribute to an asset's significance should be retained and reinstated, where possible.

Listed Buildings

Permission to change the use of a Listed Building or to alter or extend such a building will be granted where the local planning authority is satisfied that the proposal is in the interest of the building's conservation and does not involve activities or alterations prejudicial to the special architectural or historic interest of the Listed Building or its setting.

Development proposals that affect the setting of a Listed Building will, in principle, be supported where they make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of the Listed Building.

Conservation Areas

Significant weight will be given to the protection and enhancement of Conservation Areas.

Development within, affecting the setting of, or affecting views into or out of, a Conservation Area should conserve, or where appropriate enhance, features that contribute positively to the area's special character, appearance and setting, including as identified in any adopted Conservation Area appraisal. Proposals should:

- n) retain buildings/groups of buildings, existing street patterns, historic building lines and ground surfaces and architectural details that contribute to the character and appearance of the area;
- o) where relevant and practical, remove features which have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- p) retain and reinforce local distinctiveness with reference to height, massing, scale, form, materials and plot widths of the existing built environment;
- q) assess, and mitigate against, any negative impact the proposal might have on the townscape, roofscape, skyline and landscape; and
- r) aim to protect trees, or where losses are proposed, demonstrate how such losses are appropriately mitigated against.

Archaeology

Development affecting archaeological remains, whether known or potential, designated or undesignated, should take every practical and reasonable step to protect and, where possible, enhance their significance.

Planning applications for such development should be accompanied by an appropriate and proportionate assessment to understand the potential for and significance of remains, and the impact of development upon them.

If initial assessment does not provide sufficient information, developers will be required to undertake field evaluation in advance of determination of the application. This may include a range of techniques for both intrusive and non-intrusive evaluation, as appropriate to the site.

Wherever possible and appropriate, mitigation strategies should ensure the preservation of archaeological remains in-situ. Where this is either not possible or not desirable, provision must be made for preservation by record according to an agreed written scheme of investigation submitted by the developer and approved by the planning authority.

Any work undertaken as part of the planning process must be appropriately archived in a way agreed with the local planning authority.

Policy S59: Green and Blue Infrastructure Network

The Central Lincolnshire Authorities will safeguard green and blue infrastructure in Central Lincolnshire from inappropriate development and work actively with partners to maintain and improve the quantity, quality, accessibility and management of the green infrastructure network.

Proposals that cause loss or harm to the green and blue infrastructure network will not be supported unless the need for and benefits of the development demonstrably outweigh any adverse impacts. Where adverse impacts on green infrastructure are unavoidable, development will only be supported if suitable mitigation measures for the network are provided.

Development proposals should ensure that existing and new green and blue infrastructure is considered and integrated into the scheme design from the outset. Where new green infrastructure is proposed, the design and layout should take opportunities to:

- a) incorporate a range of types and sizes of green and blue spaces, green routes and environmental features that are appropriate to the development and the wider green and blue infrastructure network to maximise the delivery of multi-functionality;
- b) deliver biodiversity net gain and support ecosystem services;
- c) respond to landscape/townscape and historic character;
- d) support climate change adaptation and resilience including through use of appropriate habitats and species; and
- e) encourage healthy and active lifestyles.

Development proposals must protect the linear features of the green and blue infrastructure network that provide connectivity between green infrastructure assets, including public rights of way, bridleways, cycleways and waterways, and take opportunities to improve and expand such features.

Development will be expected to make a contribution proportionate to their scale towards the establishment, enhancement and on-going management of green and/or blue infrastructure by contributing to the development of the strategic green infrastructure network within Central Lincolnshire, in accordance with the Developer Contributions SPD.

Policy S60: Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity

All development should:

- a) protect, manage, enhance and extend the ecological network of habitats, species and sites of international, national and local importance (statutory and non-statutory), including sites that meet the criteria for selection as a Local Site;
- b) minimise impacts on biodiversity and features of geodiversity value;
- c) deliver measurable and proportionate net gains in biodiversity in accordance with Policy S61; and d) protect and enhance the aquatic environment within or adjoining the site, including water quality and habitat.

Part One: Designated Sites

The following hierarchy of sites will apply in the consideration of development proposals:

1. International Sites The highest level of protection will be afforded to internationally protected sites. Development proposals that will have an adverse impact on the integrity of such areas, will not be supported other than in exceptional circumstances, in accordance with the NPPF.

Development proposals that are likely to result in a significant adverse effect, either alone or in combination with other proposals, on any internationally designated site, must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations (or any superseding similar UK legislation). Development requiring Appropriate Assessment will only be allowed where it can be determined, taking into account mitigation, that the proposal would not result in significant adverse effects on the site's integrity.

2. National Sites (NNRs and SSSIs)

Development proposals should avoid impact on these nationally protected sites. Development proposals within or outside a national site, likely to have an adverse effect, either individually or in combination with other developments, will not normally be supported unless the benefits of the development, at this site, clearly outweigh both the adverse impacts on the features of the site and any adverse impacts on the wider network of nationally protected sites.

3. Irreplaceable Habitats

Planning permission will be refused for development resulting in the loss, deterioration or fragmentation of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy will be delivered.

4. Local Sites (LNR, LWS and LGS)

Development likely to have an adverse effect on locally designated sites, their features or their function as part of the ecological network, will only be supported where the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the loss, and the coherence of the local ecological network is maintained. Where significant harm cannot be avoided, the mitigation hierarchy should be followed.

Part Two: Species and Habitats of Principal Importance

All development proposals will be considered in the context of the relevant Local Authority's duty to promote the protection and recovery of priority species and habitats.

Development should seek to preserve, restore and re-create priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species set out in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan, Lincolnshire Geodiversity Strategy and Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Where adverse impacts are likely, development will only be supported where the need for and benefits of the development clearly outweigh these impacts. In such cases, appropriate mitigation or compensatory measures will be required.

Part Three: Mitigation of Potential Adverse Impacts

Development should avoid adverse impact on existing biodiversity and geodiversity features as a first principle, in line with the mitigation hierarchy. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable they must be adequately and proportionately mitigated. If full mitigation cannot be provided, compensation will be required as a last resort where there is no alternative.

Development will only be supported where the proposed measures for mitigation and/or compensation along with details of net gain are acceptable to the Local Planning Authority in terms of design and location, and are secured for the lifetime of the development with appropriate funding mechanisms that are capable of being secured by condition and/or legal agreement.

If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission will be refused.

Policy S61: Biodiversity Opportunity and Delivering Measurable Net Gains

Following application of the mitigation hierarchy, all development proposals should ensure opportunities are taken to retain, protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity features proportionate to their scale, through site layout, design of new buildings and proposals for existing buildings with consideration to the construction phase and ongoing site management.

Development proposals should create new habitats, and links between habitats, in line with Central Lincolnshire Biodiversity Opportunity and Green Infrastructure Mapping evidence, the biodiversity opportunity area principles set out in Appendix 4 to this Plan and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (once completed), to maintain and enhance a network of wildlife sites and corridors, to minimise habitat fragmentation and provide opportunities for species to respond and adapt to climate change.

Proposals for major and large scale development should seek to deliver wider environmental net gains where feasible.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The following part of the policy applies unless, and until, subsequently superseded, in whole or part, by national regulations or Government policy associated with the delivery of mandatory biodiversity net gain arising from the Environment Act 2021. Where conflict between the policy below and the provisions of Government regulations or national policy arises, then the latter should prevail.

All qualifying development proposals must deliver at least a 10% measurable biodiversity net gain attributable to the development. The net gain for biodiversity should be calculated using Natural England's Biodiversity Metric.

Biodiversity net gain should be provided on-site wherever possible. Off-site measures will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that, after following the mitigation hierarchy, all reasonable opportunities to achieve measurable net gains on-site have been exhausted or where greater gains can be delivered off-site where the improvements can be demonstrated to be deliverable and are consistent with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

All development proposals, unless specifically exempted by Government, must provide clear and robust evidence for biodiversity net gains and losses in the form of a biodiversity gain plan, which should ideally be submitted with the planning application (or, if not, the submission and approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development commences will form a condition of any planning application approval), setting out:

- a) information about the steps to be taken to minimise the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the onsite habitat and any other habitat;
- b) the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat;
- c) the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat following implementation of the proposed ecological enhancements/interventions;
- d) the ongoing management strategy for any proposals;
- e) any registered off-site gain allocated to the development and the biodiversity value of that gain in relation to the development; and

f) exceptionally any biodiversity credits purchased for the development through a recognised and deliverable offsetting scheme.

Demonstrating the value of the habitat (pre and post-development) with appropriate and robust evidence will be the responsibility of the applicant. Proposals which do not demonstrate that the post-development biodiversity value will exceed the pre-development value of the onsite habitat by a 10% net gain will be refused.

Ongoing management of any new or improved onsite and offsite habitats, together with monitoring and reporting, will need to be planned and funded for 30 years after completion of a development.

Policy S66: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

Development proposals should be prepared based on the overriding principle that:

- the existing tree and woodland cover is maintained, improved and expanded; and
- opportunities for expanding woodland are actively considered, and implemented where practical and appropriate to do so.

Existing Trees and Woodland

Planning permission will only be granted if the proposal provides evidence that it has been subject to adequate consideration of the impact of the development on any existing trees and woodland found on-site (and off-site, if there are any trees near the site, with 'near' defined as the distance comprising 12 times the stem diameter of the off-site tree). If any trees exist on or near the development site, 'adequate consideration' is likely to mean the completion of a British Standard 5837 Tree Survey and, if applicable, an Arboricultural Method Statement.

Where the proposal will result in the loss or deterioration of:

- a) ancient woodland; and/or
- b) the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland,

permission will be refused, unless and on an exceptional basis the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.

Where the proposal will result in the loss or deterioration of a tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order or a tree within a Conservation Area, then permission will be refused unless:

- c) there is no net loss of amenity value which arises as a result of the development; or
- d) the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.

Where the proposal will result in the loss of any other tree or woodland not covered by the above, then the Council will expect the proposal to retain those trees that make a significant contribution to the landscape or biodiversity value of the area, provided this can be done without compromising the achievement of good design for the site.

Mitigating for loss of Trees and Woodland

Where it is appropriate for higher value tree(s) (category A or B trees (BS5837)) and/or woodland to be lost as part of a development proposal, then appropriate mitigation, via compensatory tree planting, will be required. Such tree planting should be on-site wherever possible and should:

- e) take all opportunities to meet the six Tree Planting Principles (see supporting text); and
- f) unless demonstrably impractical or inappropriate, provide the following specific quantity of compensatory trees:

Trunk diameter(mm) at 1.5m above ground of tree lost to development	Number of replacement trees required, per tree lost*
75 - 200	1
210 - 400	4
410 - 600	6
610 - 800	9
810 - 1000	10
1000+	11

* replacement based on selected standards 10/12 cm girth at 1m

New Trees and Woodland

Where appropriate and practical, opportunities for new tree planting should be explored as part of all development proposals (in addition to, if applicable, any necessary compensatory tree provision). Where new trees are proposed, they should be done so on the basis of the five Tree Planting Principles. Proposals which fail to provide practical opportunities for new tree planting will be refused.

Planting schemes should include provision to replace any plant failures within five years after the date of planting. Planting of trees must be considered in the context of wider plans for nature recovery which seeks to increase biodiversity and green infrastructure generally, not simply

planting of trees, and protecting / enhancing soils, particularly peat soils. Tree planting should only be carried out in appropriate locations that will not impact on existing ecology or opportunities to create alternative habitats that could deliver better enhancements for people and wildlife, including carbon storage. Where woodland habitat creation is appropriate, consideration should be given to the economic and ecological benefits that can be achieved through natural regeneration. Any tree planting should use native and local provenance tree species suitable for the location.

Management and Maintenance

In instances where new trees and/or woodlands are proposed, it may be necessary for the council to require appropriate developer contributions to be provided, to ensure provision is made for appropriate management and maintenance of the new trees and/or woodland.

Hedgerows

Proposals for new development will be expected to retain existing hedgerows where appropriate and integrate them fully into the design having regard to their management requirements.

Proposals for new development will not be supported that would result in the loss of hedges of high landscape, heritage, amenity or biodiversity value unless the need for, and benefits of, the development clearly outweigh the loss and this loss can be clearly demonstrated to be unavoidable.

Development requiring the loss of a hedgerow protected under The Hedgerow Regulations will only be supported where it would allow for a substantially improved overall approach to the design and landscaping of the development that would outweigh the loss of the hedgerow. Where any hedges are lost, suitable replacement planting or restoration of existing hedges, will be required within the site or the locality, including appropriate provision for maintenance and management.

Policy S67: Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

Proposals should protect the best and most versatile agricultural land so as to protect opportunities for food production and the continuance of the agricultural economy.

With the exception of allocated sites, significant development resulting in the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land will only be supported if:

- a) The need for the proposed development has been clearly established and there is insufficient lower grade land available at that settlement (unless development of such lower grade land would be inconsistent with other sustainability considerations); and

- b) The benefits and/or sustainability considerations outweigh the need to protect such land, when taking into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land; and
- c) The impacts of the proposal upon ongoing agricultural operations have been minimised through the use of appropriate design solutions; and
- d) Where feasible, once any development which is supported has ceased its useful life the land will be restored to its former use (this condition will be secured by planning condition where appropriate).

Where proposals are for sites of 1 hectare or larger, which would result in the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land, an agricultural land classification report should be submitted, setting out the justification for such a loss and how criterion b has been met.

Policy S84: Ministry of Defence Establishments

Part One: Development related to operational purposes

Defence related non-residential development within or adjoining an operational MOD site that is required for operational purposes will be supported in principle.

Development for housing or communal accommodation for MOD personnel connected to an operational MOD site will be supported provided that it satisfies relevant policy requirements in the Local Plan including but not limited to Policy S53 Design and Amenity, Policy S21 Flood Risk and Water Resources, and Policy S47 Accessibility and Transport.

Part Two: Development affecting MOD establishments

Development will not be supported where it would adversely affect military operations or capability unless those impacts can be appropriately mitigated in agreement with the MOD.

Part Three: Development of MOD land and assets surplus to Defence requirements

The redevelopment of RAF Scampton is addressed in Policy S75.

The redevelopment or change of use of any other operational MOD land and facilities which are surplus to MOD requirements, whether for the whole or part of the MOD landholding in that area, will be supported provided that:

- a. where feasible the majority of the proposal is on brownfield land;
- b. any increase in traffic likely to arise as a result of the development can be safely accommodated on the local road infrastructure;
- c. the proposal would not conflict with the existing land uses on neighbouring land; and
- d. in cases where large scale redevelopment of a site is planned, a comprehensive masterplan is prepared which demonstrates how the site will be redeveloped to ensure the holistic planning of the site and avoid piecemeal development.

Where the proposal is to create a civilian community, proposals must also:

- e. include appropriate infrastructure and community facilities for the new community and any existing community remaining; and
- f. demonstrate that the new community is sustainably located with reasonable access to essential services such as jobs, education, health, leisure, retail and culture either within the development or at other nearby settlement(s) by sustainable modes of travel; and
- g. through satisfying the above criteria a-f clearly demonstrate how the proposal supports the spatial strategy of the Local Plan.

Further to Policy S56, an Unexploded Ordnance Certificate and Land Quality Assessment (LQA) may be required (where relevant) as part of a proposal, or required through condition to a grant of permission, in order to assess and identify the necessary remedial action for defence specific contaminants.