

DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No: H02-0182-25 **Applicant:** NHS Property Services Ltd

Proposal: Proposed temporary siting of portacabin building to provide additional consulting rooms

Location: Crowland Health Centre Thorney Road Crowland

Terminal Date: 14th July 2025

Planning Policies

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan - Adopted: March 2019

01	Spatial Strategy
02	Development Management
03	Design of New Development
04	Approach to Flood Risk
05	Meeting Physical Infrastructure and Service Needs
28	The Natural Environment
29	The Historic Environment
32	Community, Health and Well-being
33	Delivering a More Sustainable Transport Network
36	Vehicle and Cycle Parking
APPENDIX 6	Parking Standards

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework December 2024

Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development.
Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport
Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
Section 14 - Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding, and Coastal Change
Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Representations:

	Object	Support	No Obj.	Comments
PARISH COUNCIL	0	0	0	0
WARD MEMBER	0	0	0	0
HIGHWAYS & SUDS SUPPORT	0	0	0	1

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT OFFICER	0	0	0	1
NORTH LEVEL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	0	0	0	1
SHDC INTERNAL	0	0	1	1
OTHER STATUTORY BODIES	0	0	0	1

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Description of Proposal

This is a full application for the temporary siting of a portacabin, on the land to the rear of Crowland Health Centre, in order to provide additional consulting rooms for the Health Centre.

The portacabin would measure approximately 12.45m by 4.25m, with a height of 3.15m. The structure would be constructed of galvanised steel, coated in grey plastisol. White UPVC windows are proposed.

Site Description

The site is within the settlement boundaries of Crowland, as outlined within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019. The site is a currently disused area of land, which was previously the site of a temporary cabin used as a community building. It is located between the Medical Centre and the Snowden Field, with a bowling green and sports pavilion to the north and south. The site is fenced to separate it from the adjacent playing field.

The site abuts, but is outside of, the Crowland Conservation Area and the designated green.

Relevant History

H02-0086-12 - Full - Use of land for siting of portable building for use as youth/community centre - Approved for 5 year period - 17/04/12.

H02-0453-18 - Full - Siting of portable building for use as youth/community building (retrospective). Previously approved under H02-0086-12 - Approved for 5 year period - 26/06/18.

H02-0490-23 - S73A - Siting of portable building for use as youth/community building (retrospective) approved under H02-0453-18. Modification of Condition 1 to allow building to remain for a further 5 years - Approved for 5 year period - 14/07/23.

Consultation Responses

The responses received from consultees during the initial consultation exercises, which can be viewed in their entirety through the South Holland website, can be summarised as follows:

Conservation Officer

"No objections. A temporary structure is extant on the site already, and any minor harm to the setting of the conservation area is outweighed by the public benefit inherent to adding additional facilities and provision at this NHS site. I would, however, recommend, should the proposal be

approved, that as with previous approvals on this site for similar structures, a condition is imposed making the consent temporary"

North Level Internal Drainage Board

"The Board has noted that this is an application for a temporary building on the same site as a previous unit.

Presuming that the same surface water disposal method and system as before will be used, the Board has no requirements to note for the development.

Should the applicant's plan be to use a different system and/or disposal method, I would ask them to please contact the Board to discuss this matter further."

Lincolnshire Police

"Lincolnshire police do not have any objections to this application."

Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority

No objections - "The application is for a proposed temporary siting of a portacabin building to provide additional consulting rooms. A previous portakabin was removed in May 2024 and was used for the same purpose. There will be two additional staff, The parking will not be compromised as there is sufficient parking provision on site. The proposal will not have an adverse impact on the public highway."

Environmental Protection

"No comments".

Historic Environment Officer

"Thank you for consulting us on this application. Having reviewed the application documents and the updated available Historic Environment information for this application, the proposal is unlikely to have an impact on significant archaeological remains. Consequently, no further archaeological input is necessary for this application. It is not necessary to consult us on this application again, unless there are material changes to the proposals. However, if you would like advice from us, please contact us to explain your request".

Public Representations

This application has been advertised in accordance with the Development Procedure Order and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. In this instance, no letters of representation have been received.

Key Planning Considerations

Evaluation

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended, requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The adopted South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036, adopted March 2019 (SELLP), is the development plan for the district, and is the basis for decision making in South Holland. The relevant development plan policies are detailed within the report above.

The policies and provisions set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, 2024 (NPPF) are also a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, alongside adopted Supplementary Planning Documents.

Principle of Development

Policy 1 of the SELLP sets out the settlement hierarchy in respect of delivering sustainable development, which meets the social and economic needs of the area whilst protecting and enhancing the environment; in order to provide enough choice of land for housing to satisfy local

need, whilst making more sustainable use of land, and to minimise the loss of high-quality agricultural plots by developing in sustainable locations and at appropriate densities.

Policy 1 expresses this sustainable hierarchy of settlements, ranking the settlements deemed to be most sustainable in descending order. The most sustainable locations for development are situated within the 'Sub-Regional Centres', followed by 'Main Service Centres'. Lower down the hierarchy are areas of limited development opportunity including Minor Service Centres, with areas of development constraint comprising 'Other Service Centres and Settlements'. The countryside is at the bottom of the settlement hierarchy and represents the least sustainable location.

The site is within the settlement of Crowland which is classed as main service centre within Policy 1. As such development will be permitted that supports Crowland's role as a service centre, helps sustain existing facilities or helps meet the service needs of other local communities.

Policy 5 of the SELLP concerns "meeting physical infrastructure and service needs". The policy gives weight in favour of proposals which contribute to infrastructure and service provisions within the District. The specifics of requirements under Policy 5 for each settlement are contained in Appendix 5. Appendix 5 acknowledges the need for additional healthcare facilities throughout the District, and that capacity in Crowland is somewhat limited. As such, weight is given in favour of the proposal.

Section 8 of the NPPF concerns "promoting health and safe communities". Broadly, weight is given in favour of proposals which promote positive health outcomes. Accordingly, as the proposal would contribute to the meeting the health care provisions of Crowland and the wider District, weight is given in favour of the proposal under Section 8.

As the site is within Crowland, development within this location is considered appropriate. The proposal would contribute to Crowland's role as a service centre, helping to meet health care provisions for the town and wider area.

Therefore, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies 1 and 5 of the SELLP, as well as Section 8 of the NPPF. The principle of development on this site is considered acceptable subject to other material considerations being met.

Principle of Development - Community Facilities

Policy 32 of the SELLP, community health and wellbeing, concerns the preservation and enhancement of community facilities. Policy 32 sets criteria which proposals which involve the loss of a community facility would have to adhere to in order to be supported.

Previously, a portacabin has been placed on the site for a community/ youth hub. This building had been classified as a community use at the time.

That being said, the previous portacabin has been removed from the site prior to the submission of this application. As such, the community use of the site has ceased as a result of the owner's actions outside of the planning regime, rather than there being a conventional change of use through this planning application.

Likewise, whilst the previous use may have been associated with the wider playing fields, and the site is adjacent to the playing fields, no protection is offered to this land under Policy 32 or the provisions of wider planning policy relating to playing fields. The site sits outside of the area identified in the relevant inset maps as "recreational open space". A fence has been erected separating the proposal site from the wider Snowden Fields. As such, there is no functional link between the playing field and the proposed land as things stand at the time of this application.

Consequently, the existing use of the site cannot be considered a community use, and the weight and requirements under Policy 32 cannot be applied to this proposal.

Layout, Design, Scale and Consideration of the Character of the Area

Section 12 of the NPPF, "Achieving well-designed places", states that the "creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve" and as such, it is generally accepted that good design plays a key role towards sustainable development.

Paragraph 135, contained within Section 12 of the NPPF, states that new development should function well and add to the overall quality of the area (including beyond the short term) and should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. This goes on to establish that it is important that new development should be of the highest quality, to enhance and reinforce good design characteristics, and that decisions must have regard towards the impact that the proposed development would have on local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting such as topography, street patterns, building lines, boundary treatment and through scale and massing. Developments should create places that are safe, inclusive, and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, among other considerations.

Likewise, Policy 2 of the SELLP outlines sustainable development considerations for proposals; providing a framework for an operational policy to be used in assessing the sustainable development attributes of all development proposals. Furthermore, Policy 3 of the SELLP requires development to comprise good design; identifying issues that should be considered when preparing schemes so that development sits comfortably with, and adds positively to, its historically designated or undesignated townscape or landscape surroundings.

These policies accord with the provisions of the NPPF and require that design which is inappropriate to the local area, or which fails to maximise opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area, will not be acceptable. Proposals for new development would therefore require the aforementioned considerations to be adequately assessed and designed, including the siting, design, and scale to be respectful of surrounding development and ensure that the character of the area is not compromised.

The proposed portacabin is of no architectural or visual merit. It is a utilitarian design, typical of temporary buildings.

That being said, the site is relatively well screened from the roadside and reasonably discreet. Therefore, the tangible impacts upon the character of the area are reduced. The functional appearance is somewhat consistent with the appearance of the Health Centre, which is itself of limited merit.

The proposed impact upon the character of the area should also be considered in light of the previous building on the site, which was of a comparable design. Considering that the previous building had been in place for a period of 10 years at the time of its removal, it would be inappropriate to resist the application on the basis of character harm in light of the site history.

Furthermore, the proposed building is temporary in nature. The submitted design and access states that it is estimated the building would only be in place for a period of 5 years. As such, any impacts identified would not be permanently felt and would cease with the removal of the building at the expiry of this temporary permission.

Taking account of the design, scale, and nature of the development, as detailed above, the proposal is considered to be acceptable. The proposal would not cause an adverse impact to the character or appearance of the area and would therefore be in accordance with Policies 2 and 3 of the SELLP and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Impacts Upon Resident Amenity

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that development should create places that are safe, inclusive, and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Policies 2 and 3 of SELLP sets out that residential amenity and the relationship to existing development and land uses is a main consideration when making planning decisions.

The building would be a suitable distance to any dwellings as to prevent overlooking or overshadowing. Any increase in footfall would be limited to the hours of operation, which are not unsociable. As such, the impacts of the development upon residential amenity would be limited.

As detailed above, the scale and design of the proposal is considered to have no significant or unacceptable impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of adjacent properties or land

users, when also taking account of the conditions recommended. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with Section 12 of the NPPF and Policies 2 and 3 of the Local Plan in terms of impact upon residential amenity.

Highway Safety and Parking

Section 9 of the NPPF is titled 'Promoting sustainable transport'. Within this, Paragraph 116 advises that "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".

In respect of highway matters, Policy 2 details that proposals requiring planning permission for development will be permitted provided that sustainable development considerations are met, specifically in relation to access and vehicle generation. Policy 3 details that development proposals will demonstrate how accessibility by a choice of travel modes including the provision of public transport, public rights of way and cycle ways will be secured, where they are relevant to the proposal. Policy 33 further reinforces the need for developments to be accessible via sustainable modes of transport.

Policy 36 of the SELLP, in conjunction with Appendix 6, sets out minimum vehicle parking standards. No parking requirements for health care facilities are specified with Appendix 6 of the SELLP, and as such, the requirement falls to be assessed on a site-by-site basis.

It is considered that adequate parking is currently provided on the site to accommodate any increased need created by the additional consulting space. In any event, the site is located within Crowland, and towards the centre of the settlement. As such, users of the Health Centre can be reasonably expected to access the site via sustainable methods of transport (such as walking, cycling and public transport). This would decrease the tangible need for parking on the site.

The proposal would not increase trip generations to the Centre by such an extent as to impact upon highway safety or the proper function of the local network. As outlined above, the site is accessible via sustainable modes of transport, and therefore, the expected vehicular movements associated would be decreased accordingly.

The proposal would therefore be acceptable and would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on highway safety in accordance with Policies 2, 3, 33 and 36 of the SELLP, as well as Section 9 of the NPPF.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021) requires developers to deliver a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain using standardized biodiversity units measured by statutory biodiversity metrics. This is often referred to as the mandatory requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain.

"Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met ("the biodiversity gain condition"). This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits".

The biodiversity gain condition is a pre-commencement condition. This relates to a condition that seeks, once planning permission has been granted, a Biodiversity Gain Plan that must be submitted and approved by the planning authority before commencement of the development, alongside the need to submit a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan.

The effect of Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the "biodiversity gain condition". The effect of this "biodiversity gain condition" is that development granted by this notice must not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan, or
- (c) the development is exempt from the biodiversity gain condition.

It is proposed that the required net gains would be achieved via the planting of wildflowers adjacent to the portacabin. This would achieve a net gain of 10.43%.

The proposed scheme is considered acceptable in principle, subject to the submission of a HMMP and Biodiversity Gain Plan within the statutory Condition Discharge application.

Heritage and Conservation

Policy 29 of the SELLP, alongside Section 16 of the NPPF, relates to the preservation of the historic environment. Both outline that all applications within the Conservation Area should preserve or enhance the setting.

In this regard, in respect of any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, through Section 72 the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The NPPF expresses the importance of considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets; advising that development and alterations to designated assets and their settings can cause harm. These policies ensure the protection and enhancement of the historic buildings and environments. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance should be treated favourably.

Section 16 of the NPPF states that "When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance".

Paragraph 220 of the NPPF states: "loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 214 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 215, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole". Following this point to the relevant part of the NPPF, Paragraph 215 states: "where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."

Whilst the proposal would not result in the loss of a positive element, it would see the introduction of a potentially harmful feature. As such, the broad principle of weighing harm against community benefits can be applied here.

Policy 29 (The Historic Environment) states amongst other matters that the distinctive elements of the South East Lincolnshire historic environment will be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced, in keeping with the policies in the NPPF. Development proposals will be expected to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of designated and non-designated heritage assets, including archaeology, historic buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, street patterns, streetscapes, landscapes, parks (including Registered Parks and Gardens), river frontages, structures and their settings through high-quality sensitive design.

The site immediately abuts the Conservation Area. The building would therefore impact upon views into and from the Conservation Area. The proposed portacabin is considered inappropriate within the setting of a Conservation Area due to its overall design and choice of materials.

It is considered that the proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the asset. Para 215 of the NPPF details that "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use".

The proposed building is temporary in nature. As such, any potential harm would not be permanent and would cease upon the removal of the building at the end of the temporary period permission may granted for. Accordingly, the weight which may be attributed against the proposal under Policy 29 or Section 16 is reduced. Furthermore, the building is largely obscured from the most prominent

views within the Conservation Area, thereby reducing its actual impact upon the area itself.

In any event, any short term harm which may emerge would be outweighed by the public benefits arising from the proposal. Further discussion can be found above in the relevant section; however, it is considered that the proposal would help to meet an identified need for health care facilities in Crowland and the wider District, thereby providing a substantial public benefit.

It should be noted here that the Conservation Officer has raised no objections to the proposal, stating that although the proposal may create some minor harm, this should be weighed against the circumstances of the case. The Conservation Officer has also highlighted the previous temporary structure on site and recommended, that in the event the recommendation is for approval, a comparable temporary permission be granted.

For the reasons outlined above, any less than substantial harm identified to the Conservation Area, as a result of potential impacts upon its setting, would be clearly outweighed by the wider public benefits emerging from the proposal. In any event, the temporary nature of the permission would prevent any long-term impact upon the historic environment. On balance, the proposal is considered to be consistent with the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF and Policy 29 of the SELLP.

Planning Balance

As detailed above, Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended, requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The proposal represents appropriate development within the defined settlement boundary. The development hereby proposed would provide a significant benefit to the area by meeting an identified health care infrastructure need, without representing the loss of a community facility or green space. Any impact upon the Conservation Area or character of the area would not be permanent, due to the temporary nature of the proposed use; and therefore, it is considered that any harm identified is outweighed by the benefits arising from this application.

Additional Considerations

Public Sector Equality Duty

In making this decision the Authority must have regard to the public sector equality duty (PSED) under s.149 of the Equalities Act. This means that the Council must have due regard to the need (in discharging its functions) to:

- A. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- B. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This may include removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; taking steps to meet the special needs of those with a protected characteristic; encouraging participation in public life (or other areas where they are underrepresented) of people with a protected characteristic(s).
- C. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The PSED must be considered as a relevant factor in making this decision but does not impose a duty to achieve the outcomes in s.149. It is only one factor that needs to be considered, and may be balanced against other relevant factors.

It is not considered that the recommendation in this case will have a disproportionately adverse impact on a protected characteristic.

Human Rights

In making a decision, the Authority should be aware of and take into account any implications that may arise from the Human Rights Act 1998. Under the Act, it is unlawful for a public authority such as South Holland District Council to act in a manner that is incompatible with the European

Convention on Human Rights. The Authority is referred specifically to Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property).

It is not considered that the recommendation in this case interferes with local residents' right to respect for their private and family life, home and correspondence, except insofar as it is necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others (in this case, the rights of the applicant). The Council is also permitted to control the use of property in accordance with the general public interest and the recommendation is considered to be a proportionate response to the submitted application based on the considerations set out in this report.

Conclusion

Taking these factors into consideration, the proposal is considered to comply with Policies 1, 2, 3, 5, 28, 29, 32, 33, and 36 of the SELLP, as well as Sections 8, 9, 12, 15 and 16 of the NPPF. There are no significant factors in this case that would outweigh the benefits of the proposal; therefore, the planning balance is in favour of the proposal.

Recommendation

Based on the assessment detailed above, it is recommended that the proposal should be approved under Delegated Authority.