

21st October 2016
Ref – 38740L009i1



Planning Department
South Holland District Council
Priory Road
Spalding
Lincolnshire
PE11 2XE

Dear Sirs

Outline Planning Application for Land at Park Farm, Donington

Amec Foster Wheeler Environment and Infrastructure UK Limited (Amec Foster Wheeler) has been commissioned by the Duchy of Lancaster to submit an outline planning application for employment development on Land at Park Farm, Donington. All matters are to be reserved for future consideration.

The application seeks approval for the construction of new employment units for use within Class B1c, B2 or B8 uses of the Use Classes Order. The site extends to 2 hectares, as identified on Site Boundary Plan A001. The wider site as outlined in blue on the site boundary plan, also within the ownership of the applicant, is allocated for employment use within the adopted South Holland Local Plan (2006). South Holland District Council (the Council) is currently preparing a new Local Plan in partnership with Boston Borough Council and Lincolnshire County Council, which is due for adoption in spring 2017. The applicant is seeking to implement the employment allocation at the site, and has received interest from a local employer in Donington called Dejex, who supply products to the agricultural and horticultural sectors. They are currently based in premises in Donington but due to the growth of their business they are considering moving to new premises. Remaining in Donington is a key requirement for them and therefore they are considering relocating to a larger unit on part of the site that is subject to this outline planning application.

The uses proposed for the site accord with the allocation and supporting policy within the adopted Local Plan. Furthermore, development at this location would secure a number of key benefits including creation and retention of jobs in the local area which we consider weigh favourably in the consideration of the application.

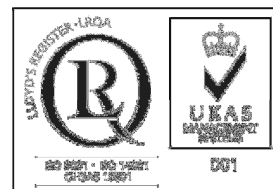
Submission Documents

This supporting Planning Statement should be read alongside the suite of documents which together form part of the planning application pack, which have been submitted in accordance with the national and local validation requirements:

- Application Forms and Certificates
- Application Fee of £7,700
- Design & Access Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment and Outline Drainage Strategy

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- Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Transport Statement
- Tree Survey and Constraints Report
- Utilities Technical Note
- 38780-LEA-PDD-P001 – Site Plan as existing (Red Line Plan)
- 38780-LEA-PDD-P002 – Illustrative Masterplan (submitted for illustrative purposes only)
- 38780-LEA-PDD-P003 – Typical Unit - Plan and Elevation (submitted for illustrative purposes only)

Site and Surrounding Area

The site extends to 2 hectares and is located to the west of Donington village, separated by the A52 that runs north south along its eastern boundary. The site forms part of Park Farm and is currently in agricultural use, with an arable wheat crop having recently been harvested.

The site is bounded by trees and hedgerow to the west, south and east, whilst the northern boundary is open with further arable fields to the north. The A52 runs adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site and continues to the northern edge of the village. Park Farm and its associated farm buildings are accessed off the existing roundabout on the A52, which will also form the main access point for the proposed development. Further arms off the roundabout provide access onto Station Street and facilities within the village.

The topography of the land is relatively flat and is only 3m AOD. The application site is within Flood Zone 1, although land further to the north and west is Flood Zones 2 and 3, according to the Environment Agency flood map. A drainage ditch, owned by the Black Sluice IDP, runs east to west through the middle of the site before heading north along the western boundary. A highway drain runs along the full extent of the eastern boundary adjacent to the A52.

The village centre of Donington is located approximately 700 metres to the east of the site, where a range of local services are available. Bus stops are located on Station Road, approximately 500 metres from the site entrance and are served by services G79, K59, 16S and 7B which provide links to Boston, Spalding and Bicker. The larger settlements of Boston and Spalding are approximately 17.1km north-east and 16.8km south-east of the site respectively, and contain a wide range of services and facilities.

Proposed Development

The application seeks outline planning permission for the construction of new industrial units for use within the B1c/B2/B8 use classes. An illustrative Masterplan (Drawing 38780-LEA-PDD-P002) is submitted with the application to demonstrate how the site could be laid out and brought forward for development, however as layout is reserved for future determination this is subject to change. The description of development is as follows:

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“Outline application for the construction of new employment buildings (Use Classes B1(c) Business, B2 General Industrial and B8 Storage and Distribution), car parking, SUDs and associated infrastructure and landscaping.”

The exact uses of the building will be subject to occupier requirements with all matters to be reserved for future consideration. Notwithstanding that all matters are to be reserved, the illustrative layout indicates that two large warehouses with ancillary office space, and associated service yard, parking spaces for cars, lorries, motorcycles and cycles could be located on the site with units being situated either side of the drainage ditch that runs through the middle of the site. A culvert for the drain would be required in order to provide a vehicular access across the existing ditch, thereby linking the two halves together.

Access to the site would be from the existing roundabout junction at the current entrance to the farm. The arm serving the site will need reconfiguring to accommodate traffic associated with the proposed development and wider allocation and details of this will be provided at the reserved matters stage. Similarly, the internal road layout is not yet known and will be led to a degree by operator/occupier requirements and as such this detail will be provided at the reserved matters stage.

The development will include appropriate landscaping and planting, and the provision of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs) to mitigate any against potential flooding risk. The SuDs proposed include permeable paving under the car parking areas, and swales adjacent to the existing drainage ditch, although the exact size and extent of these will be determined in accordance with the size of buildings that are developed on the site.

Further details about the proposed development are set out within the Design & Access Statement and accompanying technical reports.

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012. The NPPF establishes a clear and compelling presumption in favour of sustainable development, indicating at Paragraph 14 that planning applications should be approved without delay where they accord with the Development Plan. Paragraph 14 also states that where the Development Plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless:

“- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole;

- or specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.”

There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- **an economic role** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- **a social role** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and

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- **an environmental role** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

The application's support for economic and social sustainable development objectives through delivery of employment uses has been addressed clearly through the proposals. The NPPF sets out at Paragraph 17 that:

“Local planning authorities should make every effort to identify and meet the housing, business and other development needs of their areas, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth...”

For the consideration of planning decisions, the NPPF is a material consideration, and indicates that Local Planning Authorities should support enterprise and facilitate housing, economic and other forms of sustainable development. It is therefore considered that the Duchy of Lancaster's land at Park Farm would provide a suitable location for employment development to contribute towards sustainable economic growth of the area.

Similarly, paragraphs 18 – 21 set out planning policies to support new economic growth to create jobs and prosperity, noting that the planning system should operate to encourage such development and not act as an impediment to such developments. The NPPF goes on to state that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system. The proposed development is entirely in accordance with these objectives of the NPPF in seeking to deliver new economic growth and job creation.

Paragraph 28 promotes planning policies that support a strong rural economy in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. The proposed development seeks to ensure the economic prosperity of a rural village within Lincolnshire by securing planning permission for new employment units to facilitate the continuation and expansion of a local business within Donington.

Accordingly, as the Indicative Masterplan and technical reports submitted for this planning application demonstrate, the scheme has been designed to ensure an accessible, integrated and sustainable development is achieved on the site. These reports demonstrate that there are no adverse impacts which would preclude the proposed development, and it is, therefore, considered that the application proposals accord with the NPPF, as well as the Development Plan, as detailed below.

Development Plan

In determining planning applications, Local Planning Authorities are required to have regard to the provisions of the Development Plan and any other material considerations. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that:

“If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”

The Development Plan for South Holland District is the South Holland Local Plan (adopted July 2006). The following saved policies are relevant to the proposed development and will be explained below.

Policy EC1 Major Employment Areas - Sites Allocated for Employment Use includes six sites within the District to be allocated for employment uses. The Duchy of Lancaster's wider landholding of 11ha is included as an allocated employment site 'land adjacent to the railway

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north of the A52 roundabout. The application site forms part of this wider allocation and the proposed uses are entirely in accordance with the provisions and objectives of the allocation.

Policy SG1 General Sustainable Development explains that planning permission will be granted where proposals and the quality of life for residents is unchanged or improved. This proposed development would help retain and where possible create further local jobs, therefore, enhancing employment opportunities and economic prosperity in the local community.

Policy SG6 Community Infrastructure and Impact Assessment states that proposals for new developments must demonstrate measures that will support public infrastructure and services with the delivery of such being achieved via planning condition and planning contributions.

Policy SG11 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems states that development will be permitted if it can be demonstrated mitigation methods for surface water run-off will be in place and maintained. The FRA submitted with the application concludes that the site is not at risk of flooding and that it can adequately deal with surface water drainage. As such, the proposal will incorporate SUDs in the final design and layout, with details to be secured by way of a planning condition.

Technical Matters

Ecology

An extended Phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken in July 2016. The survey confirmed that there are no statutory designated biodiversity sites of international importance located within 10km of the site boundary, and only one statutory designated site of national importance within 5km of, namely Horbling Fen Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). There are no non-statutory designated biodiversity sites located within 1km of the site boundary.

Although no protected species have been recorded within the site, there are records of four bat species occurring from within 5km, and several records of bat roosts within 1km of the site boundary. However, no bats were recorded within the site, and there are no buildings or trees within it which could support bat roosts. There are two waterbodies within 500m of the site. However, no Great Crested Newts (GCN) were identified on-site, and these waterbodies are considered to be unlikely to support GCN populations.

The Site offers some nesting bird habitat in the form of a hedgerow along the eastern boundary, the plantation woodland on the southern boundary and the leylandii hedgerow along the western boundary. However, neither of the hedgerows along the eastern or western boundary are considered to be particularly important with regards the *Hedgerow Regulations (1997)* due to the lack of ground flora and limited woody species.

As some trees will need to be removed to facilitate access for the proposed development, it is proposed that native planting of local provenance such as field maple, rowan and hazel is incorporated in the scheme design to compensate the loss of these trees, and also provide habitat for local wildlife.

The Ecological Appraisal concludes that there are no potential positive or negative effects on biodiversity receptors resulting from the scheme that are likely to be material and that there are no ecological reasons why outline planning permission should not be granted for the site

Tree Survey

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A tree survey was undertaken in 2016, and 12 individual trees were surveyed with the addition of five groups. In summary, the survey concluded that these fell within the following categories: retention value A (1 no.), retention value B (14 no.), retention value C (2 no.). Although some trees would be lost as a result of the development, it is intended that they would be replaced on-site as part of the site's landscaping scheme.

The individual trees that constitute the groups have a relatively low arboricultural quality. T12 is a Category A tree, and is located in the large agricultural field to the north of the site outside of the application boundary. The tree is a mature oak that has significant landscape and conservation value. However, it is located outside of the site boundary, and would not be affected by the proposed development.

The group of willow trees located to the front of the farmhouse are Cat B trees (T1-T8), and are a notable feature due to their size in height, spread, and stem diameter. The trees have little individual merit as they have grown as a cohesive feature.

As access and layout are reserved matters, it is not yet known which exact trees will be removed in order to accommodate the road and internal access road to serve the new development. However, if the employment allocation within the adopted Development Plan for the area is to be implemented, there will be a loss of existing trees on and immediately adjacent to the site. Notwithstanding this, the Tree Survey indicates that no Category A trees would be lost as a result of the development and that any replanting could be secured through the submission of landscaping details at the reserved matters stage.

Historic Environment

A Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment (DBA) was undertaken in August 2016. The assessment revealed a medium level of potential for archaeological remains for the prehistoric, Roman and Early Medieval periods, and a low potential for remains relating to the medieval and post medieval to modern periods. Although there is little evidence recorded at this time, this may be the result of a lack of previous archaeological events outside of Donington itself. The wider landscape of the Fens contains a rich and varied history.

Due to the land within the site having remained undeveloped with the exception of a building that no longer survives dating from the 1970s being located within the south of the site, there is potential for archaeological remains to survive. Therefore, it is considered that further archaeological investigations will be required prior to determination of the outline planning application and prior to the detailed design stage. The exact extent and scope of this would be agreed with the County Archaeologist.

Two listed buildings are located in the village and therefore the impact of the proposed development on their setting has been considered within the DBA, concluding that there would be no adverse impact on them as a result of the development. New landscaping to be implemented as part of the development would help limit further any impact on these heritage assets.

It is considered that the presence of any archaeological remains or the proximity to heritage assets would not preclude development on the site and, therefore, there are no heritage reasons why outline planning permission should not be granted on the site.

Transport

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A Transport Statement (TS) was prepared in September 2016, which has assessed the impact of the proposed development on the local transport network. Records of accidents have been obtained for the last five years from 2012 to 2016 on the A52 south-west and north, Park Farm, and the site access. No accidents have been recorded, which suggests that there is no inherent safety problem in the immediate vicinity of the site.

The TS concludes that the local highway network can accommodate the proposed development, and there are no safety issues which would be exacerbated by the proposals. Although there will be an increase in vehicles utilising the A52 roundabout junction and site access, the TS confirms that the junction will continue to operate satisfactorily and well within capacity. The proposed development will also have the effect of taking existing vehicle movements associated with the existing business that is proposing to relocate to the site away from the centre of Donington, thereby resulting in localised improvements to the network for other users in the village.

It is considered that the proposed development will have a negligible traffic impact on the local highway network and, therefore, there are no transport reasons why outline planning permission should not be granted on the site.

Flooding and Drainage

A Flood Risk Assessment and Outline Drainage Strategy has been prepared for the site, which confirms that it is located in Flood Zone 1 and therefore at low risk of flooding from fluvial sources.

In respect of the outline drainage strategy, reference has been had to the SUDS manual in order to arrive at the most effective and suitable way to address surface water drainage at the site. Due to the topography of the site (3m AOD) and the high water table present below the site, a number of options were not considered suitable and were discounted i.e. underground storage tanks. The outline drainage strategy proposes a combination of permeable paving in staff parking and circulation areas coupled with the construction of swales within the site. These would capture surface water run off and allow it to drain to the existing IDP ditch that runs east west through the middle of the site, thereby ensuring that the existing greenfield run off rate was maintained. The exact size and areas of permeable paving required will be dependent on the size of the units and the amount of impermeable surfaces on the developed site, and therefore these details will need to be secured by planning condition and provided once a detailed proposal is in front of the Council.

Utilities

A utilities study has been prepared for the site, which assesses the extent of existing utilities within the site and in the immediate vicinity.

There is an underground cable running along the Eastern side of the A52. The presence of another cable is also shown in the BT records coming from Park Farm to a joint box located in Station Approach from that joint box there are cables to the A52, to the train station and to the North.

There is a high voltage underground electricity line running along Barnes Road coming from an Electric Substation located in the junction between Barnes Road and Cowleys Road. That line turns to the North East and runs along Station Street before it turns right and takes Mill Field Road.

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There is low voltage (LV) apparatus within the site boundary. These underground lines cross the Site to serve the existing Park Farm buildings. The two main lines run either side of the access road located within the Site boundary. All of the electricity lines in the surroundings of the roundabout are underground, and there are more LV lines in the surrounding area.

The water mains present in the area are owned and operated by Anglian Water. No foul sewers have been identified in the records coming from Park Farm, however a mains sewer runs along Station Street to the east of the site and it would be the intention to connect into this. Further investigation would be required in the detailed design stage to establish how such a connection would be possible. Details regarding surface water drainage are set out in the FRA.

Gas apparatus in the area is owned and operated by National Grid. The gas supply to the area comes from the North East end of Station Street with a Low Pressure main.

Further details are provided in the utilities study and accompanying plan of existing utilities.

Design and Access

A Design & Access Statement has been submitted with the outline planning application. This sets out details of land use, amount, scale, landscape, open space and movement. The intention underlying the proposals is for the site to comply with good practice with the development being built to the current building regulations at the time of construction.

Planning Balance

Paragraph 14 of the NPPF states that in respect of decision taking, development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay. We therefore consider that the application should be granted permission as it is demonstrated above that there are no adverse impacts which would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposals, or any policies within the NPPF which restrict development on the site.

The proposed development is clearly in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF, and no policies within the NPPF have been identified which indicate the proposals do not constitute sustainable development. In addition, the site accords with local planning policy and the allocation of the site for employment uses within the adopted Local Plan.

As demonstrated below, the proposals are concluded to represent sustainable development by virtue of:

Economic Role

- Delivery of employment uses on an allocated site, with the potential relocation to it by a local employer (Dejex) helping to retain/increase employment opportunities within the local area;
- The site will provide economic opportunities and benefits through the construction phase of the development in terms of local construction jobs, but also through use of local services and purchase of materials during this time, thereby adding to local GDP;
- The additional employment uses created will increase economic prosperity within the local rural area;
- There is scope for further employment development within the wider allocation in the future. The impact of this proposal would be to encourage other new enterprises to the site which would generate increased wealth and prosperity for the benefit of the local economy;

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- Relocation of the existing business would also free up an existing site within the village to be reused by a new or growing business looking to start up or expand;

Social Role

- The development will provide a key social role in supporting and enhancing local employment opportunities within the rural area;
- The proposed development will allow an existing business operating within the village of Donnington to expand, thereby retaining the workforce within the community and helping to maintain the range of services and facilities present in the village.

Environmental Role

- The site is currently greenfield land in agricultural use and therefore has limited ecological value. The key landscape features of the site and the wider area will play a strong role in the scheme and the localised topography and character of the area are incorporated into the Illustrative Masterplan design;
- The site is located adjacent to the existing settlement of Donnington, within walking distance of existing public transport provision and facilities within the village;
- The proposal will remove vehicular trips (including HGVs) through the centre of the village by relocating an existing business to the site;
- New businesses that operate at the site will have little adverse impact on the amenity of existing residents;
- The proposal will be designed to relate well to its surroundings; and
- It is anticipated that the use of sustainable means of transport coupled with high standards of energy efficiency in new build will help the District reduce local CO2 emissions and improve air quality.

Conclusions

This outline planning application has been submitted to the Council seeking planning permission for new employment facilities for use within Classes B1/B2/B8 uses on 2 hectares of land at Park Farm, Donnington. All matters apart from access are to be reserved for future consideration.

The technical reports submitted as part of the application including those relating to flood risk, heritage, ecology, transport and utilities, have fully assessed the proposals and demonstrate that the development can be suitably accommodated on the site with no overriding constraints to delivery.

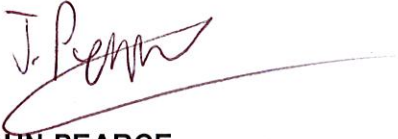
The planning policy assessment undertaken has had regard to the NPPF and relevant saved policies of the adopted South Holland Local Plan. The proposals accord with up-to-date Development Plan policies and are fully in accordance with the allocation of the wider site for employment uses. A future application for the balance of the site is intended to follow in due course.

In accordance with Paragraph 14 of the NPPF, the application proposals are in accordance with the policies of the adopted Development Plan and there are no adverse impacts arising from the proposals which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits this development will deliver. Furthermore, there are no specific policies in the NPPF which would preclude the development. Therefore, in the circumstances we commend the application to

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you and seek the support of the Council for the proposals through the grant of outline planning permission.

Yours faithfully,



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