DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No:	**H06-0270-26**	**Applicant:**	**JEPCO Ltd**
Proposal:	Continuation of temporary consent H06-0161-23 for use of the site for temporary accommodation facilities for student farm workers including 20 units (19 accommodation units and 1 staff training unit), shower/toilet block and kitchen and recreational facilities		
Location:	Onslow Farm Onslow Lane Gedney Drove End		
Terminal Date:	20th July 2026		

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
17	Providing a Mix of Housing
28	The Natural Environment
30	Pollution
36	Vehicle and Cycle Parking

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework December 2024

Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development
Section 4 - Decision-making
Section 5 - Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes
Section 6 - Building a Strong, Competitive Economy
Section 9 - Promoting Sustainable Transport
Section 12 - Achieving Well-designed Places
Section 13 - Protecting Green Belt Land
Section 14 - Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change
Section 15 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Representations:

	Object	Support	No Obj.	Comments
PARISH COUNCIL	0	0	0	1
WARD MEMBER	0	0	0	0
PLANNING LIAISON OFFICER - FLOOD RISK	0	0	0	1

ASSESSMENT				
HIGHWAYS & SUDS SUPPORT	0	0	0	1
SOUTH HOLLAND INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	0	0	0	1
SHDC INTERNAL	0	0	0	1
OTHER STATUTORY BODIES	0	0	1	2

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Proposal

This full planning application seeks permission for the continued use of the site as temporary accommodation for seasonal student and farm workers. The development comprises 20 portacabin units (19 accommodation units and 1 staff training unit), together with shower and toilet facilities and kitchen and recreational facilities.

The application is supported by a site layout plan identifying the position of the accommodation units, together with floor plans and elevations of the accommodation units, welfare facilities, kitchen facilities and shower blocks.

The temporary accommodation comprises 20 individual portacabins, 19 of which are used for seasonal worker accommodation and one of which provides staff training facilities. The site also contains permanent buildings, formed through the conversion of existing agricultural barns, which provide communal kitchen, dining and recreational facilities for occupiers. Externally, the site comprises maintained grassed areas, gravelled circulation spaces and associated landscaping.

No alterations to the layout, scale or operation of the development are proposed as part of this application, which seeks only the continuation of the existing temporary planning permission.

Site Description

The application site is located within the countryside to the south of Gedney Drove End, on the western side of Onslow Lane. The site forms part of the wider Onslow Farm agricultural holding and is currently occupied by an established temporary accommodation facility serving seasonal student and farm workers employed within the associated farming enterprise, this has been supported by SHDC on numerous occasions by issuing a temporary permission.

The site comprises 20 portacabin units used for seasonal worker accommodation and staff training, together with converted agricultural buildings that provide communal kitchen, dining and recreational facilities. Externally, the site includes maintained grassed areas, gravelled access and circulation areas and a recreation space situated to the north of the accommodation. Onslow House lies to the north-east of the site, whilst a small number of semi-detached dwellings are located to the south-east. The site is well screened by established trees and hedgerows along its northern, eastern and western boundaries.

The site is accessed via an established vehicular access from Onslow Lane, which has served the development for a number of years.

The site lies within Flood Zone 3 on the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning. The South East Lincolnshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identifies the site as falling within an area of flood hazard classified as "Danger for All" in the event of a breach of flood defences.

History

H06-0083-07 - Accommodation for agricultural contracted seasonal workers (Renewal of H06/1020/03) - Granted 15 March 2007.

H06-0131-10 - Continuation of use without complying with the Time Limit Condition (Condition 1 of H06-0083-07) - Granted 20 April 2020.

H06-0976-11 - Proposed toilet and shower block - Granted 15 March 2012

H06-0576-13 - Siting of temporary contract workers portacabin accommodation (retrospective) - Granted 25 November 2013

H06-1011-16 - Continuation of siting of temporary accommodation facilities for student farm workers -Granted 10 January 2017

H06-0127-17 - Full - Additions to living quarters, plus toilet and shower facilities and extended/improved kitchen facilities for seasonal workers, split into 2 distinct stages:
1) Immediate term arrangements for the 2017 season, placing up to 9 temporary caravans at the South of the site, with enhancement to the sewerage system to accommodate increased volumes;
2) Longer term arrangements to replace 4 of the existing 5 berth cabins with 1 x 26 double berth cabin. In addition, to replace and extend the shower, wash and toilet facilities and increase kitchen areas - Granted 26 April 2017.

H06-1204-19 - Full - Continuation of siting of temporary accommodation facilities for student and farm workers - approved under H06-1011-16 - Modification of Condition 1 to allow structures to remain on site for a further period of time - Granted 7 April 2020.

H06-0161-23 - Temporary accommodation facilities for student farm workers including 20 accommodation units, shower/toilet block and kitchen and recreational facilities - renewal of H06-1204-19. Approved 16-05-23

Consultation Responses

Parish Council

No objection.

South Holland Internal Drainage Board

No objection. Advisory comments are provided regarding future drainage consents, surface water discharge, treated foul water disposal and works affecting adjacent watercourses under the Land Drainage Act 1991 and the Board's Byelaws.

Environment Agency

No objection, subject to the continued implementation of the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and mitigation measures, seasonal occupancy restrictions between 1 November and 14 March, and the imposition of a further three-year temporary planning permission to enable flood risk to be reviewed in the future.

Lincolnshire County Council Highways & Lead Local Flood Authority

No objection. The Highway Authority is satisfied that the continued use of the site would not result in an unacceptable impact upon highway safety or severe residual cumulative impacts upon the local highway network. The Lead Local Flood Authority confirms that the proposal would not increase flood risk within the immediate vicinity of the site.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

No objection.

Natural England

No objection.

Ecology

No objection.

Environmental Protection

No objection. The premises will be subject to risk rating under the Private Water Supplies (England) Regulations 2016.

Representations

The application has been publicised in accordance with the Development Management Procedure Order 2015 (as amended).

At the time of writing this report, no representations have been received.

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.

In this case, the adopted South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036, adopted March 2019, forms 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 (updated December 2024) are also a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, alongside adopted Supplementary Planning Documents.

Furthermore, where a Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted, this alongside the adopted Local Plan, forms part of the Development Plan for the District, and must be considered when assessing development proposals. In this instance, no relevant neighbourhood plans have been adopted.

Planning Considerations

This proposal is for a temporary permission to allow the site to be continually used for seasonal workers.

The key considerations:

·Planning Principle
·Renewal of temporary condition]
·Flood Risk
·Highway Safety
·Environmental Issues/noise and amenity
·Character
·Ecology
·Planning Balance

Planning Principle

The application site lies within the countryside, outside (to the south) of the nearest settlement Gedney Drove End. In these locations development is required to comply with the provisions of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (SELLP). Policy 1 identifies the countryside as the area outside defined settlement boundaries, where development will be permitted where it is necessary for such

a location and/or where it can be demonstrated that it meets the sustainable development needs of the area through economic, community or environmental benefits.

National planning policy adopts a similar approach. Paragraphs 88 and 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December, 2024) seeks to support the sustainable growth and expansion of rural businesses, including agricultural enterprises, recognising that development required to meet business and community needs may need to be located beyond existing settlements where this is justified by its function. Whilst paragraph 84 seeks to resist isolated residential development in the countryside, it recognises that there may be an essential need for rural workers to live at or near their place of work. In this instance, the proposal does not seek unrestricted residential accommodation, but the continuation of temporary accommodation directly associated with an established agricultural enterprise.

The principle of seasonal worker accommodation at this location has been established through a succession of planning permissions dating back to 2003, most recently under planning permission H06-0161-23, which granted a further temporary permission for the continued use of the site. The current application does not propose any increase in the number of accommodation units, any physical expansion of the site or any material changes to its operation. Instead, it seeks only the continuation of the existing temporary use.

The supporting Planning Statement confirms that J.E. Piccaver & Co. is one of the largest outdoor leafy salad producers in the United Kingdom and requires a substantial seasonal workforce between March and November each year to undertake the planting, harvesting and processing of leafy salads and salad onions. It is understood that these workers are employed on short-term seasonal contracts and require temporary accommodation in close proximity to the farming operations. The continued need for such accommodation is therefore directly linked to the operational requirements of the agricultural business.

Having regard to the established planning history, the continued operational need for seasonal worker accommodation and the support afforded to sustainable agricultural businesses through both the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework, the principle of the continued temporary use of the site is considered acceptable, subject to the detailed assessment of flood risk and all other material planning considerations set out below.

Renewal of temporary condition

The application seeks a further temporary planning permission for the continued use of the site as seasonal worker accommodation. The principle of temporary accommodation at this location has been established through a succession of planning permissions dating back to 2003, with the most recent consent granted under planning permission H06-0161-23 in May 2023. The current application does not propose any increase in the scale of development, alterations to the site layout or any material changes to the operation of the accommodation. Instead, it seeks only to continue the existing temporary use.

The Local Planning Authority must nevertheless consider whether there remains an appropriate planning justification for granting a further temporary consent, rather than a permanent permission.

In this regard, significant weight is afforded to the site's location within Flood Zone 3 and within an area identified by the South East Lincolnshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment as being at a flood hazard rating of "Danger for All" in the event of a breach of flood defences. Whilst the Environment Agency has raised no objection to the continued use of the site, it has specifically requested that any permission should again be limited to a period of three years to enable flood risk to be reviewed against the most up-to-date evidence and policy position in the future.

The previous planning permission recognised that the temporary nature of the development, together with the need to periodically review flood risk and the continued condition of the accommodation, justified the imposition of a temporary time limit. Those circumstances have not materially changed since the previous permission was granted. The accommodation continues to serve an essential operational need for the associated agricultural enterprise (J.E. Piccaver & Co.) and there have been no material changes to the development that would justify a permanent planning permission at this time.

It is therefore considered appropriate that any permission granted should again be limited to a period of three years. This will enable the Local Planning Authority to reassess the continued

acceptability of the development in light of the most up-to-date flood risk information, national and local planning policy, the condition of the accommodation and the ongoing operational needs of the agricultural enterprise before any further continuation of the use is considered.

Flood Risk

Policy 4 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan seeks to direct development away from areas at risk of flooding unless it can be demonstrated that the development can be made safe for its lifetime, will not increase flood risk elsewhere and, where applicable, is supported by an appropriate Sequential Test, Exception Test and site-specific Flood Risk Assessment.

The application site lies within Flood Zone 3 and is identified within the South East Lincolnshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment as falling within an area of flood hazard classified as "Danger for All" in the event of a breach of flood defences. The proposal is therefore accompanied by an updated Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan.

The proposal does not seek a new area of development or an intensification of the existing use, but the continuation of an established temporary accommodation facility that has operated at this location for many years. The accommodation serves the operational requirements of the adjoining agricultural enterprise and provides seasonal accommodation for workers employed during the principal growing and harvesting season. Consequently, it is considered that the development has a clear functional need to be located in close proximity to the farming operations it serves. In these circumstances, it is not considered that a Sequential Test would be necessary. The proposal is therefore considered to satisfy the locational requirements of Policy 4 having regard to the specific circumstances of the development.

The Environment Agency acknowledges that the application seeks the renewal of an existing temporary planning permission and, whilst recognising the site's flood hazard classification, raises no objection to the proposal. The Environment Agency is satisfied that, subject to the continued implementation of the submitted Flood Risk Assessment, Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan, the existing seasonal occupancy restrictions and a further temporary planning permission, the flood risks can continue to be appropriately managed. The Environment Agency has requested that the permission again be limited to a period of three years in order that flood risk can be reassessed against the most up-to-date evidence in the future.

The submitted Flood Risk Assessment confirms that the existing mitigation measures remain appropriate and proposes no changes to the approved strategy. These include finished floor levels set no lower than 400mm above existing ground levels, the secure anchoring of all accommodation units and the continued operation of a Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan. These mitigation measures can be secured through planning condition, together with the continued restriction preventing occupation between 1st November and 14th March, avoiding occupation during the period of greatest tidal flood risk.

The Lead Local Flood Authority raises no objection, concluding that the continuation of the existing temporary consent would not increase flood risk within the immediate vicinity of the site. Likewise, the South Holland Internal Drainage Board raises no objection in principle. As no changes to the approved drainage strategy form part of this application, these matters can be addressed through conditions and informative notes.

Having regard to the established planning history, the absence of any material changes to the development, the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan, together with the absence of objections from the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority and Internal Drainage Board, it is considered that the proposal satisfies the objectives of Policy 4 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan. Subject to the recommended planning conditions, including a further temporary permission, seasonal occupancy restrictions and the continued implementation of the approved flood mitigation measures, the proposal is considered acceptable in flood risk terms.

Highway Safety

Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan require development to provide safe and suitable access arrangements and ensure that proposals do not result in unacceptable impacts upon the operation or safety of the highway network. Policy 36 and Appendix 6 set out the Council's parking standards.

The application seeks only the continuation of an established temporary accommodation facility and does not propose any physical alterations to the existing access arrangements, internal layout or parking provision. The site continues to be served by an established vehicular access from Onslow Lane, with sufficient on-site parking available to serve the development.

The Local Highway Authority raises no objection to the proposal, confirming that the existing access provides appropriate visibility in both directions and affords safe access for vehicles and pedestrians. Furthermore, the Highway Authority is satisfied that the continued use of the site would not result in an unacceptable impact upon highway safety or give rise to severe residual cumulative impacts upon the local highway network. It is also noted that occupiers are generally transported between the accommodation and the farming operations by minibus, thereby limiting private vehicle movements associated with the development.

The continued operation of the accommodation has not resulted in any identified highway safety issues during the lifetime of the previous planning permissions and no evidence has been submitted to suggest that the proposal would materially alter existing traffic movements or parking demand.

Accordingly, having regard to the established nature of the development, the absence of any proposed changes to the operation of the site and the advice of the Local Highway Authority, the proposal is considered to comply with Policies 2, 3 and 36 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan. The continued use of the site would not result in an unacceptable impact upon highway safety or the efficient operation of the local highway network.

Environmental Issues, Noise and Amenity

Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan seek to ensure that development provides a satisfactory relationship with existing land uses and safeguards the amenity of existing and future occupiers. Policy 30 further requires that development does not give rise to unacceptable impacts upon public health, residential amenity or the wider environment through matters such as noise, air quality, lighting and land contamination. These objectives are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to secure a high standard of amenity for existing and future users of development.

The proposal seeks only the continuation of an established temporary accommodation facility and does not involve any increase in the number of accommodation units, any intensification of the approved use or any alterations to the layout of the site. The accommodation has operated for a number of years as part of the wider agricultural holding without any identified adverse amenity impacts that would indicate the use is incompatible with its surroundings.

The site occupies a relatively isolated position within the countryside and is functionally related to the adjoining farming enterprise. Whilst there are a limited number of residential properties in the wider locality, the accommodation is separated from those dwellings by intervening land, existing buildings and established boundary planting. Having regard to the existing relationship between the site and surrounding land uses, it is not considered that the continued use of the accommodation would result in unacceptable levels of noise, disturbance, overlooking or loss of privacy.

In considering the amenity of future occupiers, it is recognised that the accommodation is intended to provide temporary seasonal living accommodation for agricultural workers rather than permanent residential accommodation. The site benefits from purpose-built welfare facilities, communal kitchen and dining areas, recreational space and access to outdoor amenity areas, providing an acceptable standard of accommodation for its intended occupants. The continuation of the use therefore remains appropriate to its intended purpose.

No objections have been raised by Environmental Protection in respect of residential amenity. Their comments relate solely to the ongoing regulation of the site's private water supply under separate legislation, which can be addressed outside the planning process.

Accordingly, it is considered that the continued temporary use of the site would not result in any unacceptable impacts upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers or future users of the accommodation and therefore complies with Policies 2, 3 and 30 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.

Character and Appearance

Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan seek to ensure that development responds positively to the character of its surroundings and achieves a satisfactory standard of design.

The application seeks only the continuation of an established temporary accommodation facility and does not propose any alterations to the layout, scale or external appearance of the existing development. Consequently, there would be no material change to the visual appearance of the site or its relationship with the surrounding rural landscape.

The site is well contained by existing boundary trees and hedgerows, which continue to provide effective screening from the surrounding area. Furthermore, the temporary accommodation has been present on the site for many years under successive planning permissions and has become an established feature associated with the wider agricultural holding.

Accordingly, the proposal would have no greater impact upon the character or appearance of the countryside than the existing lawful development and is considered to comply with Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.

Ecology

Policy 28 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan seeks to ensure that development protects and, where possible, enhances biodiversity and geodiversity.

The application seeks only the continuation of an established temporary accommodation facility and does not propose any physical works, engineering operations or alterations to the layout or extent of the existing development. Consequently, the proposal would not result in the loss or degradation of habitats or otherwise give rise to adverse ecological impacts.

The Council's Ecologist, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and Natural England have all considered the proposal and raise no objection.

The application has also been considered against the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain provisions introduced by the Environment Act 2021. As the proposal does not comprise or include any physical development, there would be no impact upon onsite habitat and no biodiversity loss requiring compensation. Accordingly, it is considered that the statutory biodiversity gain condition is not engaged in the circumstances of this application and there is no requirement for the submission of a Biodiversity Gain Plan.

Having regard to the nature of the proposal and the consultation responses received, the continued use of the site is not considered to give rise to any unacceptable ecological impacts and therefore complies with Policy 28 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan

Other Matters

The application has been screened against the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements and, as no physical development is proposed, no Biodiversity Gain Plan is required.

Planning Balance

The application seeks the continuation of an established temporary accommodation facility serving the operational needs of an existing agricultural enterprise. The principle of the development has been established through successive planning permissions dating back to 2003 and no material changes are proposed to the scale, layout or operation of the site.

The principal material consideration is flood risk. However, the Environment Agency raises no objection to the proposal, subject to the continued implementation of the Flood Risk Assessment, seasonal occupancy restrictions and the imposition of a further three-year temporary planning permission. The Lead Local Flood Authority and South Holland Internal Drainage Board similarly raise no objection.

Furthermore, no objections have been raised in respect of highway safety, residential amenity, character and appearance or ecology. The proposal would continue to support an established rural business whilst giving rise to no greater impacts than the existing lawful development.

On balance, it is considered that the proposal represents sustainable development and complies with Policies 1, 2, 3, 4(locationally), 28, 30 and 36 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, together with the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Accordingly, the application is recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions.

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

The application seeks the continuation of an established temporary accommodation facility serving an existing agricultural enterprise. No material changes are proposed to the scale, layout or operation of the development and the principle of the use has been established through successive planning permissions.

Whilst the proposal does not fully accord with the objectives of Policy 4 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan by virtue of its location within Flood Zone 3, it is considered that there are material considerations which justify a further temporary planning permission in this instance. These include the established planning history of the site, the absence of objection from the Environment Agency and other technical consultees, the continued operational need for the accommodation, and the temporary nature of the permission, which enables the Local Planning Authority to periodically review the continued acceptability of the development having regard to flood risk and the latest available evidence.

Taking these matters into account, the proposal is considered to accord with the development plan when read as a whole and the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework. Accordingly, planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions.