

DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No: H06-0714-26 **Applicant:** Fletcher Salads

Proposal: Conversion of existing agricultural building into 1 dwelling with incidental garden space & vehicular parking (Extant Class Q Permission - H06-0868-23)

Location: Barn On Land Off Cade Drove Broadgate Gedney

Terminal Date: 12th October 2026

Planning Policies**South East Lincolnshire Local Plan - Adopted: March 2019****National Guidance****National Planning Policy Framework August 2026**

Section 3 - Decision-making policies
Section 4 - Achieving sustainable development
Section 6 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
Section 14 - Achieving well-designed places
Section 15 - Promoting sustainable transport
Section 17 - Pollution, public protection and security
Section 18 - Managing flood risk and coastal change
Section 19 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Section 20 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Representations:

	Object	Support	No Obj.	Comments
PARISH COUNCIL	0	0	0	1
WARD MEMBER	0	0	0	0
HIGHWAYS & SUDS SUPPORT	0	0	0	1
SOUTH HOLLAND INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	0	0	0	1
SHDC INTERNAL	0	0	1	1
OTHER STATUTORY BODIES	0	0	0	3

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Proposal

This is a full planning application to convert an existing agricultural building into one dwelling, with associated garden space and parking. The proposal is presented as an alternative to the conversion of the building into two dwellings approved under Class Q prior approval H06-0868-23. Permission H06-0944-24 subsequently approved the use of adjoining agricultural land as gardens, driveways and parking for those dwellings; it did not itself grant permission for the dwellings.

The proposed dwelling would have five first-floor bedrooms. Ground-floor accommodation would include a kitchen and dining area, lounge, snug, office, utility room and reception areas. A full-height sunroom is proposed at one end, with an open carport at the other. The submitted plan shows a rectangular building approximately 27.43 metres long and 12 metres wide, with a pitched roof. Proposed materials include red brick, grey metal wall cladding, a black profiled metal roof and timber windows and doors. Solar panels are shown on the roof.

The supporting statement proposes retention of the structural portal frames, stanchions, slab and some brickwork, with replacement of the existing sheet cladding and roofing. The existing access track from Cade Drove would be retained. The application form identifies four parking spaces. The assessment below is based on conversion of the existing building, rather than its demolition and replacement.

Site Description

The site forms part of the former Broadgate Nurseries, approximately 2 kilometres southwest of Long Sutton. It lies outside a defined settlement boundary, within open countryside. The surrounding landscape is generally flat and open, with agricultural land, drainage ditches and scattered buildings. The barn is reached by a private track running south from Cade Drove.

Other buildings lie to the west. A nearby brick barn benefits from permission H06-0286-23 for residential conversion, including removal of a cold store and static caravans. Grade II listed Pulvertoft Hall lies to the north. The application site is within Flood Zone 3 and is identified in the submitted information as lying in an area of low flood hazard. Low hazard does not mean that the site is free from flood risk.

History

H06-0868-23 - Change of use of agricultural building into two dwellings with associated works. Prior approval granted 27th November 2023.

H06-0289-24 - Demolition of an existing agricultural building and erection of two dwellings with garden space and parking. Refused 9th May 2024. The reasons concerned countryside character and the failure to demonstrate betterment, together with flood risk and the extension of development beyond the fallback site.

H06-0944-24 - Change of use of agricultural land to gardens, driveways and parking for the barn conversion approved under H06-0868-23. Approved 7th January 2025.

H06-0286-23 - Conversion of an agricultural building into a dwelling, including removal of a cold store and static caravans, on adjoining land. Approved 23rd May 2023.

Consultation Responses

Parish Council

No objection.

Internal Drainage Board

The Board asks for evidence that infiltration is feasible, with ground investigation and BRE Digest 365 testing where appropriate. If infiltration is unsuitable, discharge to a watercourse should be considered in accordance with the drainage hierarchy. Watercourse discharge requires the Board's consent, with flows restricted in accordance with its policy and the national SuDS standards. A development contribution may be payable under the separate consenting process.

The Board identifies conflicting foul drainage proposals: the FRA refers to discharge of treated effluent to a watercourse, while the site plan shows a drainage field. Clarification is requested. Discharge of treated effluent to a watercourse would require separate consent. The Board also notes the riparian watercourse along the eastern boundary and advises that works affecting it may require land drainage consent.

Highways and SuDS Support

No objection. The existing access onto Cade Drove has previously been assessed as suitable. One dwelling would generate no greater, and likely fewer, vehicle movements than the two-dwelling fallback. The Highway Authority's assessment concerns the adopted road and its junction with the private track. The suitability of the private track and surface water arrangements remains a matter for the Local Planning Authority, as this is a minor application.

Ecology

The ecologist considers that sufficient information has been submitted to determine the application. The building has potential to support nesting birds and a pre-commencement nesting-bird survey is requested. One integrated universal nest brick and one integrated bat box are sought, with their locations agreed and the features installed during construction and retained thereafter.

The adviser has reviewed the ecological assessment and Small Sites Metric and is confident that at least 10% biodiversity net gain can be delivered on site. The submitted metric predicts a 104.03% gain in habitat units. A Biodiversity Gain Plan is required before commencement.

Conservation

The Conservation Officer considers that the existing barn does not make a positive contribution to the setting of Grade II listed Pulvertoft Hall, but is an expected type of building in the rural landscape and sits comfortably within it. Additional domestic features, including excessive windows, landscaping or boundary treatments, could draw greater attention to the building and alter the way the rural setting is experienced. The response therefore raises a concern about domestication of the setting.

Historic Places Team

The proposal is unlikely to affect significant archaeological remains. No further archaeological work is requested.

Environmental Protection

Following review of the screening assessment dated 3rd September 2026 and accompanying photographs, a standard land contamination condition is requested.

Representations

The application has been advertised in accordance with the Development Management Procedure

Order 2025 (as amended). No objection have been received.

Planning Considerations

Evaluation

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the application to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036, adopted in March 2019, is the relevant local plan.

Relevant policies are Policies 1 (Spatial Strategy), 2 (Development Management), 3 (Design of New Development), 4 (Approach to Flood Risk), 23 (The Reuse of Buildings in the Countryside for Residential Use), 28 (The Natural Environment), 29 (The Historic Environment), 30 (Pollution), 31 (Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy) and 36 (Vehicle and Cycle Parking), together with Appendix 6.

The National Planning Policy Framework published in August 2026 is a material consideration. Relevant provisions include S3 and S5, HO11 where isolation is relevant, DP3, F4-F8, N2, HE4-HE6 and DM6. Annex A requires very limited weight to be given to those parts of older development plan policies that are materially inconsistent with the national decision-making policies. The age of the Local Plan alone does not reduce the weight of its remaining policies. The assessment does not rely on the housing land supply figure quoted in the applicant's statement.

Assessment

The main considerations are:

- principle of conversion
- the approved fallback and previous refusal
- design and countryside character
- heritage and archaeology
- residential amenity
- highway safety and parking
- flood risk and drainage
- ecology and biodiversity net gain
- land contamination

Principle of development

Policy 1 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan restricts development in the countryside to proposals that require a countryside location or meet the area's sustainable development needs. Policy 23 supports the residential conversion of existing rural buildings where they are structurally suitable, contribute positively to local character and can be converted sympathetically, with an improvement to their immediate setting.

Policy S5(1)(c) of the NPPF 2026 supports the reuse of lawful buildings of permanent and substantial construction, subject to limits on enlargement. This is read alongside Policy 23 of the Local Plan which supports the 'the Reuse of Buildings in the Countryside for Residential Use' subject to certain criteria.

The proposal would convert the existing agricultural building into one dwelling, rather than the two dwellings approved under Class Q application H06-0868-23. The main structural frame would be retained, with replacement cladding and roofing, the structural assessment was considered acceptable under a previous class Q. The proposal would therefore reuse an existing building rather than introduce a separate house into the countryside. Permission H06-0944-24 also allows adjoining land to be used as gardens, driveways and parking for the approved conversion.

That permission (H06-0944-24) is extant and allows for the extended garden spaces associated with the conversion of this barn. Whilst it is unlikely that the Class Q permission will be built out before November 2026 (H06-0868-23), the building itself is likely to meet the PD requirements for a

conversion again (this time for a single dwelling) and so weight is applied given that is potential route open to the applicant.

Therefore given the proposal relates to a conversion, the principle of its reuse is supported by Policy S5(1)(c) as well as SELLP Policy 23. The countryside location does not, in itself, justify refusal. Furthermore whilst limited, some weight is still given to the extant Class Q permission and acknowledgement that this proposal would likely meet the current class Q test if applied for under this exact proposal (in addition H06-0944-24 is also an extant permission allowing the use of the extended garden space for a residential use), all being considered the proposal is therefore considered acceptable in principle.

The design, effect on the surroundings and comparison with the approved two-dwelling scheme are considered below.

Fallback and comparison with the previous refusal

Mansell v Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council EWCA Civ 1314 confirms that an alternative development can carry weight where there is a real prospect of it being carried out, even if this is not the most likely outcome. Together with the principles considered in 'ex parte PF Ahern (London) Ltd Env LR 189', this requires consideration of whether the alternative remains available, whether it could realistically proceed and how its effects compare with the current proposal.

The fallback comprises the two-dwelling conversion approved under H06-0868-23 and the gardens, driveways and parking approved under H06-0944-24. However, the conversion must be completed by November 2026.

Given the limited time remaining, completion appears unlikely. The fallback therefore attracts limited weight, rather than the substantial weight that might be given to a scheme with a clear prospect of implementation. The council do however, in addition to that fall back give weight to the potential that this proposal would meet with the current tests set out under Class Q.

The current proposal would provide one dwelling within the existing barn rather than two dwellings with separate gardens. This is likely to reduce vehicle movements and domestic activity. It also differs substantially from the scheme refused under H06-0289-24, which involved demolition of the barn and two detached houses spread across a wider area. Retaining a single building in its existing position addresses the main concern behind that refusal.

The proposal is not dependent solely on the fallback. Policy S5(1)(c) of the NPPF 2026 supports the appropriate reuse of existing buildings in the countryside, alongside the relevant conversion and design requirements of Local Plan Policy 23.

On balance, although limited weight is given to the fallback, the policy support for conversion and the more contained form of development as well as this proposals compatibility with current Class Q tests provide a basis for supporting the principle of this proposal. Its acceptability remains subject to the detailed matters considered below.

Design and countryside character

Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan require development to respect the character and appearance of its surroundings. Policy DP3 of the NPPF 2026 requires design to respond to local character, while Policy N2 seeks to conserve the character and natural beauty of the countryside.

The proposed building's scale is commensurate with the existing barn, retaining its long rectangular form and simple pitched roof. Brickwork and profiled metal cladding reflect its agricultural character, while the carport sits beneath the main roof, avoiding a separate garage.

The larger glazed openings, particularly around the sunroom and rear elevation, would give the building a more domestic appearance. However, these features would sit comfortably within its simple overall form, allowing it to remain recognisable as a converted agricultural building. Dark roofing and cladding, native planting and simple boundary treatments would help the development fit into the surrounding landscape.

Both the approved two-dwelling conversion and the current proposal retain a single building. The reduction to one dwelling does not, by itself, demonstrate an improvement in its appearance. Nevertheless, the proposed design retains an acceptable agricultural form. The potential benefits of accommodating one household rather than two are considered separately under residential amenity and in the planning balance.

Unlike the scheme refused under H06-0289-24, the proposal would not introduce two detached houses across a wider area. It therefore avoids the spread of residential built form that was a principal concern in that decision.

Conditions will be attached to secure the external materials, landscaping, boundary treatments and external lighting. A condition will also remove specified permitted development rights for extensions, roof alterations and outbuildings. This is necessary to control further domestic development that could harm the barn's character and the openness of its surroundings.

The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in design and countryside character terms, in accordance with Policies 2 and 3 of the Local Plan and Policies DP3 and N2 of the NPPF 2026.

Heritage and archaeology

Policy 29 and NPPF Policies HE4-HE6 seek to conserve heritage significance, including the contribution made by setting. Section 66(1) requires special regard to preserving listed buildings and their settings.

The Conservation Officer raised no objection to the previous two-house proposal but now highlights the effect of domestic features on the rural setting of Grade II listed Pulvertoft Hall. This concern has been considered alongside the approved two-dwelling conversion and subsequent garden permission.

The proposal retains the barn's agricultural form. One household is likely to generate fewer comings and goings than two and reduces the need for separate domestic facilities. Conditions controlling materials, landscaping, boundaries and lighting will limit its effect on the rural setting. These considerations support the proposal alongside the policy support for conversion. Given the exiting location of the building and that this proposal would be on its footprint, commensurate in scale and given the previous approval on this site, this proposal is considered acceptable.

On this basis, the proposal is considered to preserve the setting of Pulvertoft Hall and cause no harm to its significance, in accordance with Policy 29 and Policies HE4-HE6.

Furthermore the Historic Places Team identifies no likely impact on significant archaeological remains. No archaeological condition will be attached.

Residential amenity

Policies 2, 3 and 30 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan seek to protect residential amenity and provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers.

Given the building's scale, separation from neighbouring dwellings and the position of its windows, the proposal would not cause unacceptable overlooking, loss of light or overbearing effects. The dwelling would also provide generous internal accommodation and outdoor space.

Compared with the approved two-dwelling conversion, the single dwelling would avoid potential overlooking and noise between adjoining homes and their gardens. Although the approved arrangement was considered acceptable, removing this relationship provides an amenity benefit and contributes to the overall betterment of the proposal.

The proposal is therefore acceptable in residential amenity terms, in accordance with Policies 2, 3 and 30.

Highway safety and parking

Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan require safe and suitable access. Policy 36 and Appendix 6 require appropriate parking provision.

The proposal would use the existing private access from Cade Drove and provide four parking spaces, including the open carport, with turning space within the site. The Highway Authority raises no objection and confirms that traffic generation "would be no greater and is likely to be reduced" compared with the two-dwelling scheme.

The Highway Authority's assessment covers the adopted road and its junction with the private track. Given the established access arrangement and the proposed use by one household, the private track is also considered suitable to serve the development.

A condition will be attached requiring the parking and turning areas to be provided before occupation and retained thereafter, allowing vehicles to leave in forward gear.

The proposal is therefore acceptable in highway safety and parking terms, in accordance with Policies 2, 3 and 36 and Appendix 6.

Flood risk and drainage

Policy 4 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan and NPPF Policies F4-F8 require development to be safe from flooding without increasing risk elsewhere. As a conversion, the proposal is exempt from the sequential and exception tests under Policies F5(2)(c)(iii) and F6(2)(a), but must still demonstrate flood safety.

The site lies within Flood Zone 3. The May 2026 Flood Risk Assessment identifies tidal breach risk and proposes a minimum finished floor level of 3.35 metres ODN, flood-resistant and resilient construction, raised services and flood warning and evacuation arrangements. An upper floor would provide refuge. A condition will secure the FRA's minimum floor level and construction measures, with an agreed flood warning and evacuation plan required before occupation.

The approved conversion would accommodate two households in the same building. Reducing this to one household is a favourable consideration, although it does not establish a precise reduction in the number of people exposed to flooding. Limited weight is given to this fallback because of its approaching completion deadline. It supports, but does not replace, the assessment of the proposal's flood safety.

The IDB identifies conflicting foul drainage details and requests evidence that surface water infiltration is feasible. These matters require clarification. A condition will secure an agreed surface and foul water drainage scheme, supported by infiltration testing where appropriate, together with implementation and maintenance arrangements. Any necessary watercourse discharge consent will be required separately.

Subject to the aforementioned mitigation, the proposal is considered acceptable under Policy 4 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan and Policies F4-F8 of the NPPF 2026.

Ecology and biodiversity net gain

Policy 28 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan and Policy N2 of the NPPF 2026 seek to protect and enhance biodiversity. The development is also subject to the statutory requirement for at least 10% biodiversity net gain.

The ecologist considers the submitted information sufficient and is satisfied that the required gain can be achieved on site. The metric predicts a 104.03% increase in habitat units. A Biodiversity Gain Plan will require approval before commencement under the statutory biodiversity gain condition.

The approved two-dwelling conversion and subsequent garden permission provide a relevant comparison to the gain achieved on this proposal. The garden permission already includes habitat enhancements, so only additional benefits secured by this proposal can contribute to the betterment assessment. The Biodiversity Gain Plan will need to account for those existing commitments and secure any necessary long-term habitat management.

Conditions will be attached requiring a nesting-bird survey before works commence, protection of any active nests, and installation and retention of one integrated nest brick and one integrated bat box.

Subject to these measures, the proposal is considered acceptable under Policy 28 and NPPF Policy N2.

Land contamination

Policy 30 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan requires land to be suitable for its proposed use, with contamination risks properly addressed.

Environmental Protection requests a land contamination condition, consistent with the condition attached to the Class Q approval. A condition will therefore be attached to secure investigation, any necessary remediation and verification.

Subject to this condition, the proposal is considered acceptable under Policy 30.

Planning balance

The proposal would reuse an existing agricultural building as one dwelling, retaining its agricultural form and avoiding the spread of built development that contributed to the previous refusal. National policy S5(1)(c) supports this reuse alongside Local Plan Policy 23 which also supports the reuse of agricultural buildings in the countryside, subject to criteria.

Whilst limited weight is given to the two-dwelling fallback because of its approaching completion deadline, notwithstanding this, the council acknowledge that this proposal likely meets the current Class Q test and this is given weight. The proposal offers modest amenity benefits and is likely to reduce vehicle movements and domestic activity compared with that scheme. These benefits support the proposal but are not its sole justification.

The assessment also identifies no unacceptable effects on countryside character (given the location of the existing building and planning history and PD rights available), heritage significance, neighbouring amenity or highway safety. Flood risk, drainage, ecology and contamination will be addressed through the identified mitigation and conditions.

On balance, the material considerations support approval.

Conclusion

Subject to the identified mitigation and conditions, the proposal accords with Policies 2, 3, 4, 28, 29, 30 and 36 and Appendix 6 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, and Policies S5(1)(c), DP3, F4-F8, N2 and HE4-HE6 of the NPPF 2026. Having considered Policies 1 and 23 and the material considerations set out above, approval is recommended.

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.