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Jepco Norfolk House Farm Salad Storage & Dispatch Upgrade Gedney Marsh Spalding PE 12 9PB, UK Planning Transport Statement

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1. Introduction

This Transport Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the proposed upgrade of the existing salad storage and dispatch facilities at Norfolk House Farm. The development will provide temperature-controlled crop intake, additional chilled storage, a dedicated dispatch area, tray-return and washing facilities, refrigeration plant rooms, improved internal vehicle access and hardstanding, and surface-water attenuation. The purpose of the scheme is to improve cold-chain integrity, operational efficiency and site circulation; it will not increase crop production, processing throughput or the volume of goods handled at the site.

JEPCO occupies over 300 hectares of essentially flat and fertile land approximately 2.5km from the Lincolnshire coast and the Wash, an expansive protected area designated as a Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area and Site of Special Scientific Interest bordering the site to the North and East.

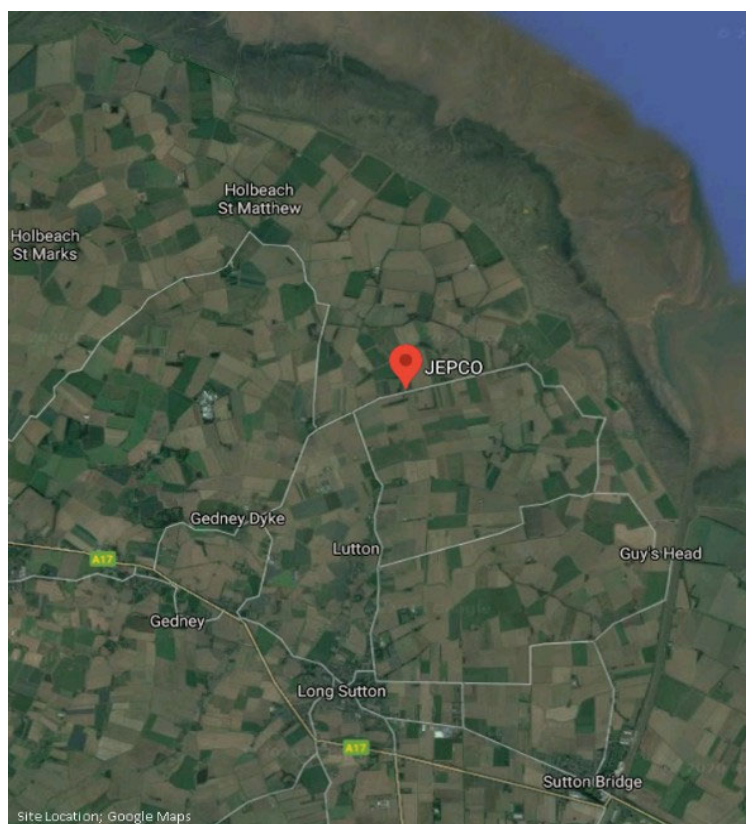


Figure 1 Site Location

The application site lies within the existing Norfolk House Farm complex.



Figure 2 Existing Site

The site is currently being used as Jepco's main processing factory. The site is bounded on the North, East and West by additional Jepco holdings and on its South by the Main Road.

This Transport Statement has been prepared in accordance with good-practice guidance published by the Department for Transport (DfT) and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). That guidance indicates that the baseline conditions against which the effects of the proposal are assessed should be clearly established and that the lawful uses of the site should be identified.

2. Proposed Development

JEPCO proposes a proportionate upgrade of the existing chill-store and dispatch building. The works comprise a temperature-controlled crop-intake and product-administration area on the southern side, an additional chill store within the existing building envelope, a dedicated temperature-controlled dispatch area on the northern side, tray-return and washing facilities, refrigeration plant rooms, truck hardstanding, an internal access roadway and surface-water attenuation.



Figure 3 Proposed Site

The proposed works will consolidate and improve JEPCO's established rural food-production and distribution operations. They are designed to improve product quality, resilience and energy efficiency by maintaining temperature-controlled conditions from crop intake through storage and dispatch.

Harvested product will be unloaded directly into the chilled intake area for administration, quality control and weighing. It will then remain in a controlled environment through storage and transfer to the dedicated dispatch area, where refrigerated vehicles will seal against the loading interface.

The proposal does not itself drive the improvements to the existing site entrance. Those works are required in connection with the separately approved hydroponics development on the adjacent site. The salad storage and dispatch upgrade will, however, connect to and benefit from the improved access arrangement by using the approved route for outbound dispatch vehicles.

The project will not increase production or dispatch volumes and will therefore not generate additional staff-car, service-vehicle, delivery or HGV movements. It is an operational and safety improvement rather than an expansion of activity.

3. Description of Existing Highway Access

Norfolk House Farm is served from the B1359 by its established site access. The application is for an upgrade to the existing salad storage and dispatch operation and does not seek a new primary access or a general redistribution of traffic entering the holding.



Figure 4 Existing Site Entrance

The existing access accommodates JEPCO's established operational traffic, including staff, service vehicles, deliveries and HGVs associated with the receipt, processing, packing and dispatch of harvested crops.

All vehicle movements associated with the upgraded facility already occur as part of JEPCO's established operations. The improvements to the existing entrance are being driven by the requirements of the separately approved hydroponics development on the adjacent site, rather than by this application. Once available, the improved entrance road will also serve as an outbound route for dispatch vehicles from the upgraded facility, providing a clearer route away from the operational yard and reducing interaction between departing HGVs and other internal movements.

4. Proposed Access and Internal Circulation

The improvements to the existing entrance and the associated access road are required to support the separately approved hydroponics development on the adjacent site. They are not necessitated by the salad storage and dispatch upgrade, which does not increase production throughput or vehicle movements. This application nevertheless proposes to use the improved route for outbound dispatch traffic.

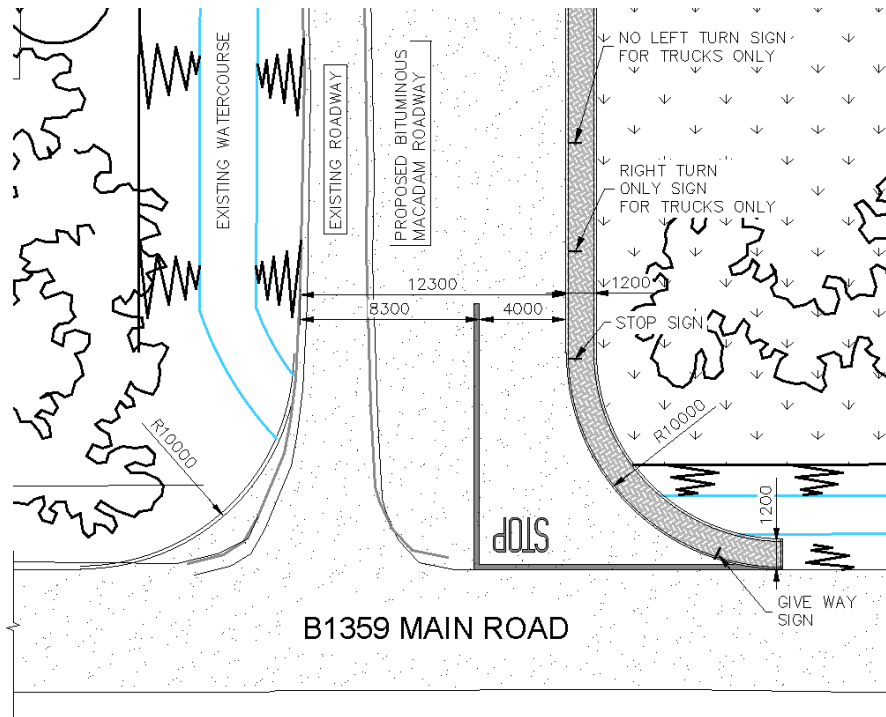


Figure 5 Site Entrance Modification

The improved entrance arrangement is therefore delivered in response to the adjacent hydroponics development. Dispatch vehicles serving the upgraded salad storage facility will travel from the new dispatch area along the internal site road and leave by that improved route. Other existing access arrangements will continue to operate as at present.

Using the approved road for outbound dispatch traffic will provide a clear and direct route away from the operational yard, reduce interaction between departing HGVs and other internal movements, and improve circulation without adding vehicle trips to the local highway network.

The submitted access drawing should demonstrate suitable geometry, visibility, surfacing, signage and safe manoeuvring for the proposed outbound route.

Because the proposal will not increase crop production, processing throughput or dispatch volumes, it will not generate any increase in staff cars, service vehicles, deliveries or HGV movements above current levels. The nature, frequency and routing of traffic on the B1359 and the wider highway network will therefore remain materially unchanged.

The proposal is therefore neutral in traffic-generation and parking-demand terms and represents an operational and safety improvement. Subject to the access plan confirming appropriate geometry and visibility, the arrangement is consistent with the relevant transport and parking policies of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.

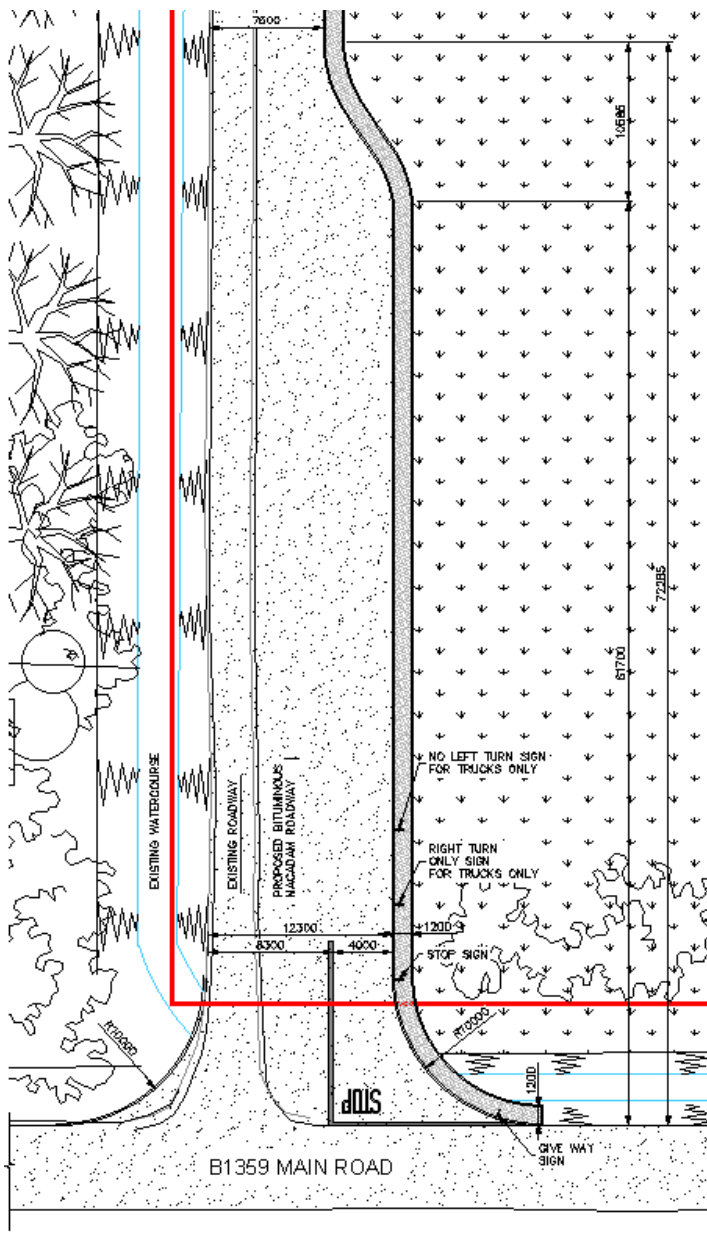


Figure 6 Proposed Site Entrance

5. Description of Existing Highway Network

The site is accessed by a local road system consisting exclusively of B standard roads which pass through small village areas on relatively restricted routes. The key aspect in the transportation to and from the site is access to the A17 which at present can be achieved through one of three routes, Gedney Drove End, Black Barn or Gedney Dyke as noted on Figure 7 below.

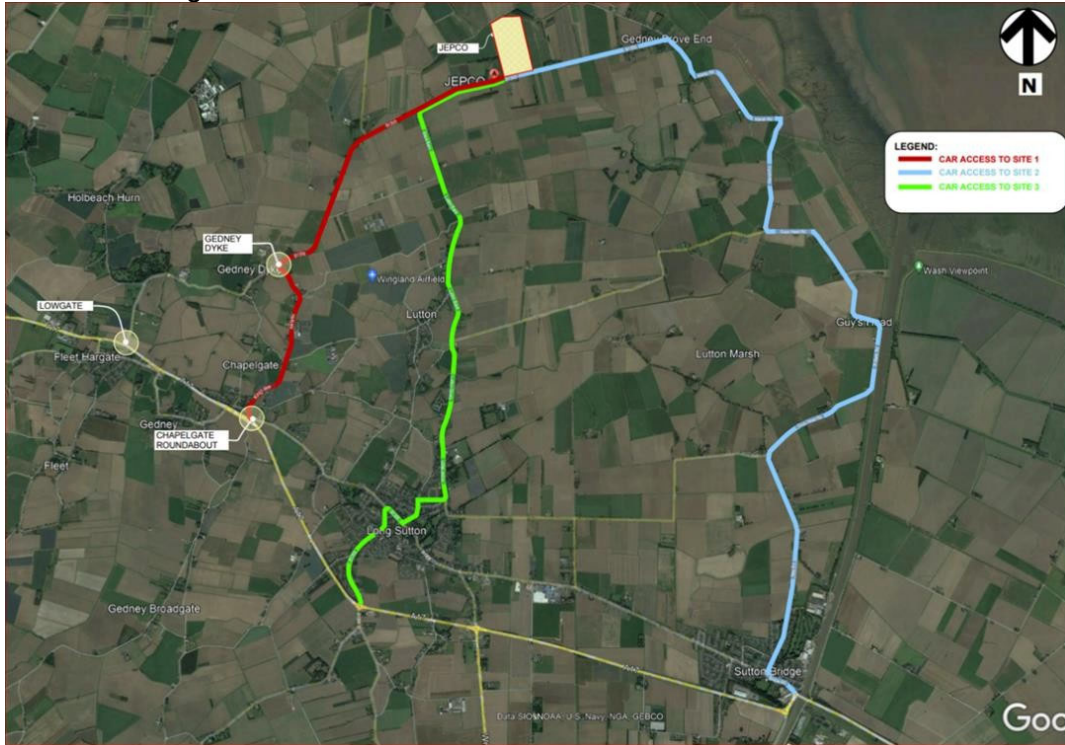


Figure 7 Route Options to A17

The Gedney Drove End route, shown in yellow on Figure 7, is the longest of the three routes and includes a number of significant turns. It passes through the built-up area of Sutton Bridge and includes a major T-junction in the town centre before rejoining the B1359 and reaching the A17 roundabout at Sutton Bridge.

The route through Black Barn, shown in green on Figure 7, is more direct and reaches Long Sutton, where two options are available for accessing the A17. The first, via Long Sutton Services, is the more convenient and requires a single junction movement at Roman Bank. The alternative is a more circuitous route through the main commercial and residential centre of Long Sutton to Cowpers Gate.

Of the three options, the shortest and most convenient route runs westwards through Gedney Dyke to the Chapelgate roundabout. The route requires a single left turn at Chapelgate before joining the A17. Southbound traffic can then reach the A10 at King's Lynn and continue to the M11 at Cambridge, while northbound traffic can use the A1151 and A16 at Spalding to reach the A1(M).

Traffic can also travel through Gedney Dyke towards Lowgate, where the A17 is accessed at a T-junction. Vehicles turning north onto the A17 and vehicles turning east from the junction can experience difficulty crossing the carriageway, which may cause congestion at this location.

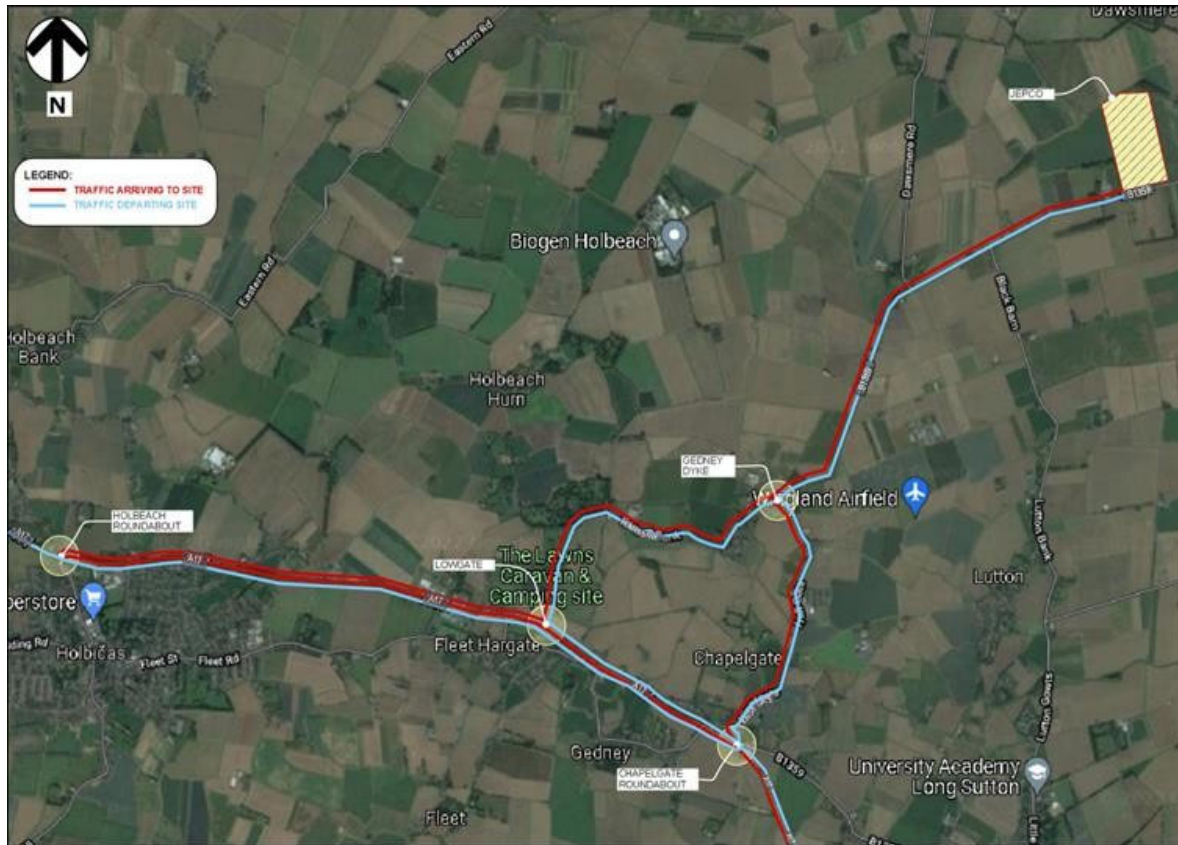


Figure 8 Gedney Dyke Access Routes

6. Recorded Injury Accident Statistics

The reviewed accident records identify no recorded collisions associated with the existing site access during the three-year study period. On the evidence reviewed, no existing collision pattern has been identified at the access.

7. Visibility at the Highway Egress Position

The B1359 is subject to the national speed limit of 60 mph in the vicinity of the site access which requires a visibility distance of 160m. A traffic survey undertaken at the site entrance location in December 2021 recorded an average West Bound speed of 49.9mph with an 85-percentile speed of 58.8 mph confirming the design speed for the entrance.

Drawing no. 25035-20-DR-0028 and Figure 9 demonstrate that the required visibility plays can be achieved. The proximity of the access to the easternmost Norfolk House Farm cottage also creates a potential conflict with private vehicles reversing onto the road. A pole-mounted convex mirror at the cottage access would alert HGV drivers to vehicles emerging from that location and alert residents to approaching site traffic.

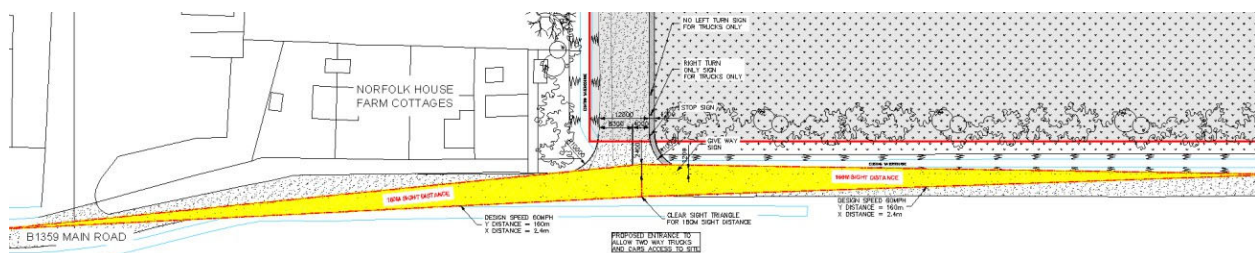


Figure 9 Site Visibility

JEPCO has planning permission for a new access road associated with the hydroponics development adjacent to Norfolk House Farm. A substantial start has been made on its construction. Once operational, the road will provide an alternative route for HGVs that currently travel through Gedney Dyke and Gedney Drove End; the present salad storage and dispatch proposal will use it solely for outbound dispatch traffic.

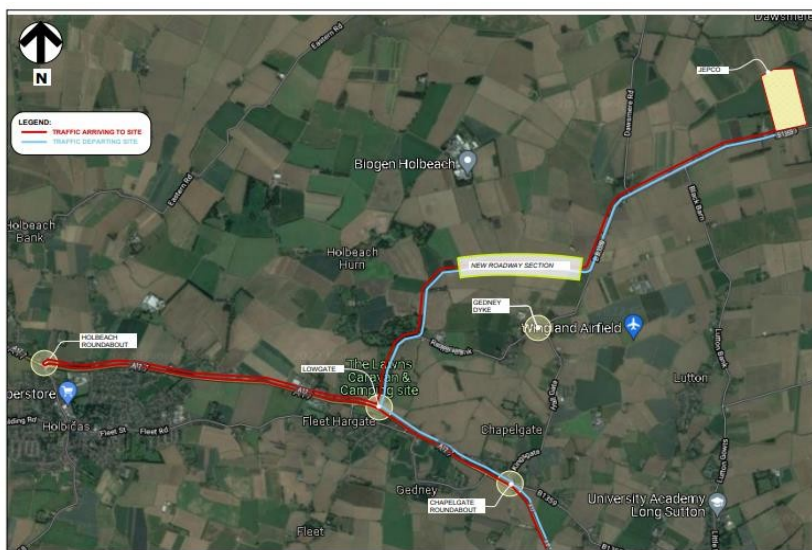


Figure 10 Approved Hydroponics Access Road

8. Public Transport Access

Given its rural location, the site is not currently on a regular public service bus or train route.



Figure 11 Local Bus Route 505

It is, however, accessible through a combination of regular and on call services.

The Stagecoach operated Route 505 is a regular route which runs between Spalding and Kings Lynn approx. every 30mins from 0700hrs to 1930 hrs daily.

At Chapelgate Gedney, Holbeach and Long Sutton, the 505-service links to the Call Connect area, which is an on-demand bus service run by Lincolnshire County Council. The Call Connect buses serve hamlets, villages and market towns throughout Lincolnshire and neighboring counties, and offer passengers the flexibility to connect to their local communities and other transport options.

the freedom to request a bus online or by phone at times to meet their needs.



Figure 12 Call Connect Area

Anyone can use the Call Connect bus service for any reason and as frequently as required. The service is operated using fully accessible minibuses and most services operate between 7am-7pm Monday to Friday and 7:30am-6:30pm Saturday. The Call Connect minibus will pick up and set down at designated locations in each village or town. Registration to the service is free but patrons must be registered to book a journey. Once registered, transport bookings and cancellations can be made using this online portal or by phone.

Although Callconnect is less convenient than a walk-on, walk-off service, it provides a viable public-transport option for staff travelling to the site from Spalding, King's Lynn and intermediate locations.

9. Emergency Access

The entrance-road widening associated with the separately approved hydroponics development will provide clear and direct access for fire and other emergency services. In addition, the perimeter roadway provides access to approximately 70% of the operational building footprint.

10. Conclusions

The proposed development is a proportionate upgrade of JEPCO's existing salad storage and dispatch facilities at Norfolk House Farm. By providing temperature-controlled crop intake, additional chilled storage and a dedicated dispatch area, the scheme will improve cold-chain integrity, operational efficiency and internal circulation without increasing crop production, processing throughput, dispatch volumes or staffing requirements. It will therefore generate no additional staff-car, service-vehicle, delivery or HGV movements and will be neutral in traffic-generation and parking-demand terms.

The improvements to the existing entrance and the associated access road are being delivered in connection with the separately approved hydroponics development on the adjacent site and are not necessitated by this application. Once operational, that route will be used for outbound dispatch vehicles from the upgraded facility, providing a clearer route away from the operational yard and reducing interaction between departing HGVs and other internal movements. All other existing access arrangements will continue to operate as at present.

Figure 9 demonstrate that the required visibility splays can be achieved at the B1359 egress position. The reviewed accident records identify no recorded collisions associated with the existing site access during the three-year study period and no existing collision

pattern at the access. The proposed convex mirror at the nearby cottage access provides an additional precaution for emerging private vehicles and approaching site traffic.

The site is not served directly by a regular bus or rail route, but the Stagecoach 505 service and Callconnect provide a viable public-transport option for staff travelling from Spalding, King's Lynn and intermediate locations. The entrance-road widening associated with the adjacent hydroponics development will also provide clear and direct access for fire and other emergency services, while the perimeter roadway gives access to approximately 70% of the operational building footprint.

Overall, the proposal will improve the efficiency and safety of established operations without materially changing the nature, frequency or routing of traffic on the B1359 or the wider highway network. Subject to the submitted access drawing confirming appropriate geometry, visibility, surfacing, signage and manoeuvring arrangements, the development is acceptable in transport terms and consistent with the relevant transport and parking policies of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.