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Naylor Flowers Limited

Design and Access Statement
Erection of a General Purpose Agricultural Building on Land at Vickers Farm, Washway Road, Moulton Marsh, Spalding, PE12 6LP

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by the Robert Doughty Consultancy Ltd on behalf of Naylor Flowers Limited to support a Full Planning Application for the erection of a general purpose agricultural building in connection with the applicant's current horticultural business.

1.2. The business grows potatoes and cut flowers on approximately 202 hectares land in a 16km radius of Moulton Seas End. The products are all grown for supermarkets, including Waitrose, the Co-operative group and Aldi, on a contracted basis through partners and agents including the Butters Group, JZ Flowers and Nene Potatoes. The business is a leading producer in the British flower industry, producing over 50 million stems of flowers each year.

1.3. Cut flower production is a major industry in South Holland and, with the UK leaving the EU, it is likely that there will be a significant impact on this sector. The UK imports 85% of the cut flowers that consumers buy and now the value of the sterling has weakened, the demand for home-grown production is likely to increase.

1.4. A new general purpose agricultural building on site is essential to the continued growth of the business, whilst enabling the business to operate and plan more effectively.

1.5. A Flood Risk Assessment is incorporated into this Statement.

2. APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1. Vickers Farm is an established part of the Naylor Flowers Limited's holding, comprising a large general-purpose agricultural building, parking and turning, polytunnels for flower production and the surrounding fields.

2.2. There is a variety of landscaping along the north and west boundaries, neither of which are impacted upon by the proposal and there is a field drain to the north.

2.3. The application site is generally flat with no other features of note.

2.4. There is an existing access to Washway Road and a pair of semi-detached dwellings that presently are not under the control of the applicant company.

3. PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK POLICY (NPPF)

3.1. The NPPF sets out Central Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

3.2. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF confirms the commitment to sustainable development based on three dimensions:

"a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) **an environmental objective** – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."

3.3. This is followed by a commitment to a presumption in favour of sustainable development, with paragraph 11 stating,

"For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. 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."

3.4. Paragraph 38 confirms this to be the case stating decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development wherever possible.

3.5. Paragraph 47 states that planning law requires applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan.

3.6. The NPPF commits to supporting a prosperous rural economy, with paragraph 83 stating planning policies and decisions should enable:

> "a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
>
> b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
>
> c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
>
> d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship."

3.7. Paragraph 84 also confirms this commitment by stating:

> "Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport)."

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

3.8. 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."

3.9. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application is the saved policies of the South Holland Local Plan (2006) (the 'Local Plan').

3.10. South Holland District Council has subsequently joined with Boston Borough Council and Lincolnshire County Council to form the South East Lincolnshire Strategic Planning Committee. This Committee is preparing a joint local plan for the South East Lincolnshire area, comprising the administrative areas of Boston Borough Council and South Holland District Council.

3.11. The NPPF and the evidence base for the emerging South East Lincolnshire Local Plan are also material considerations in respect of this planning application.

3.12. It is for the decision maker to apportion the necessary weight that the emerging plan has in the decision making process.

South Holland Local Plan

3.13. A number of saved local plan policies from the 2006 Adopted Local Plan are relevant to the current proposal and these are set out below.

3.14. Policy SG1 states that all proposals for development will be permitted where that development follows the principles of sustainable development. The proposal does not impair quality of life for the residents and South Holland's essential character and main environmental assets are not damaged.

3.15. Policy SG4 requires proposals to not have an unacceptable impact upon the landscape character of the area and that they must be essential in the proposed location. This type of development cannot be accommodated within defined settlement limits, is in line with current business operations at Vickers Park and does not have a negative impact on the landscape character of the area.

3.16. Policy SG14 considers the design and layout of new development. This proposal is in keeping with its surroundings and the location of the development will help act as a buffer between the residential dwellings and day to day operations in the farmyard.

3.17. Policy SG15 considers the impact on the local highway network, pedestrians and cyclists. The proposal will make use of the existing access of Washway Road and will not result in the increase of traffic movements, as the proposal is in connection with the existing agricultural/horticultural use.

3.18. Policy SG17 surrounds the protection of residential amenity. This proposal will help act as a buffer between operations in the farmyard and the existing dwellings bordering the west of the application site.

3.19. Policy EC3 considers development in relation to existing employment areas/premises. This proposal will help operations at Naylor Flowers Limited and will not result in a negative environmental impact or increased traffic movements.

Emerging South East Lincolnshire Local Plan

3.20. The Emerging South East Lincolnshire Local Plan is yet to be adopted, however, policies to consider are:

3.21. Policy 1 – Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

3.22. Policy 4 – Design of New Development

3.23. Policy 5 – Strategic Approach to Flood Risk

4. FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1. The application site lies within Flood Zone 3a, and is identified as being at high risk for tidal and fluvial flooding in the Environment Agency's flood mapping.

4.2. The proposal is classified as "less vulnerable" in table 2 of the Planning Practice Guidance and, as such, it is appropriate development in Flood Zone 3a.

4.3. With climate change up to year 2115, the flood maps in the South East Lincolnshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (March 2017), show the application site to be a mixture of not being affected, Breach Hazard Area less than 0.75m (low hazard) and between 0.75 – 1.25m (danger for some). The maximum depth for the affected area is 0-0.25m, with the velocity reaching 0-0.3m/sec.

4.4. The building will not be occupied as a place of work and, therefore, it is only appropriate to ensure any services are placed at least 600mm above finished floor levels.

4.5. The proposal is for the erection of a general use agricultural building. The development will help current operations on site for storing agricultural equipment/machinery and, to be effective, cannot be constructed elsewhere.

5. DESIGN AND ACCESS

Use

5.1. The proposal is for the erection of a general use agricultural building.

5.2. The application site is on land farmed by Naylor Flowers Limited and is adjacent to land used by the business for growing produce and day to day operations.

5.3. It is proposed to store agricultural equipment and machinery in the building which would be used in connection with the current operations of Naylor Farms Limited.

5.4. This development is, therefore, appropriate having regard to the existing horticultural use of the site.

Appearance and scale

5.5. The proposed development measures 60.2 metres long, 15 metres wide and 6 metre to the eaves.

5.6. The side cladding will consist of plastisol coated metal box profile juniper green side cladding and fixings.

5.7. The roofing will consist of Marley Eternit fibre cement roof, ridge and fixings, with a roof pitch of 15 degrees.

5.8. The development will be open on the side facing away from the A17.

Access

5.9. Access to the proposed development will be from the existing access off Washway Road.

5.10. There will not be an increase in traffic movements as a result of this application, as the use is in line with current operations at Naylor Flowers Limited and is simply for storage.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1. Naylor Flowers Limited has been in operation since the 1940s and is a well-established local horticultural and agricultural business with major national food retailers amongst its clients.

6.2. Vickers Farm is surrounded by land under cultivation by the applicant company and provides an ideal location for a general use agricultural building.

6.3. There will be no detrimental impact arising from the proposal and the two nearest dwellings will be shielded from the existing agricultural activity in the yard by the proposed building.

6.4. The site is open agricultural land and there are no natural features of note on site.

6.5. The proposal represents a sustainable form of development, one that is essential for the applicant company and that demands a rural location adjacent to the existing agricultural/horticultural.

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A design consultancy specialising in Town and Country Planning, Landscape Architecture and Architecture

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