

DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No:	H14-0241-25	Applicant:	E M Coles Farms Ltd
Proposal:	Proposed Glasshouse Extension		
Location:	E M Coles Farms Ltd Small Drove Lane West Pinchbeck		
Terminal Date:	13th June 2025		

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
28	The Natural Environment
30	Pollution
31	Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
APPENDIX 6	Parking Standards

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework December 2024

Section 2: Achieving Sustainable Development
 Section 6: Building a Strong, Competitive Economy
 Section 12: Achieving Well-designed Places
 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	1	0	0
WARD MEMBER	0	0	0	0
HIGHWAYS & SUDS SUPPORT	0	0	0	1
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT OFFICER	0	0	0	1
BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE	0	0	0	1

BOARD				
SHDC INTERNAL	0	0	1	1
OTHER STATUTORY BODIES	0	0	0	2
RESIDENTS	2	0	0	1

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the construction of an extension to the glasshouse located along the northern boundary of the site. The extension will have a width of 19.2metres and length of 68metres, with the eaves and ridge continuing those of the existing building.

The static caravans to the immediate east are to be removed and the employee car park relocated to the site frontage adjacent to the an existing area of external storage.

Site Description

The application relates to an established horticultural and farming enterprise located in countryside in West Pinchbeck. The site comprises extensive glasshouses with an area of static caravans and external storage to the east facing Small Drove Lane, from where access to the site is gained. Two residential properties, within the ownership of the business are located to the south.

History

H14-0110-20: Siting of temporary caravans (retrospective) : Approved 30.03.2020

H14-0112-20: Proposed Biomass Plant (retrospective): Approved 30.03.2020

Consultation Responses

Responses Received (20th March 2025 to 10th April 2025)

Pinchbeck Parish Council

Support the application. Appropriate in scale and design, and beneficial to the local community.

Private Sector Housing Community and Neighbourhood Service

No response received.

Inward Investment Manager

No response received.

RSPB

No response received.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

No response received.

Anglian Water

No comment to make.

Natural England

No response received.

Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board

Standing advice provided.

Historic Environment Officer

Advises the proposal is unlikely to have an impact on significant archaeological remains, consequently, no further archaeological impact is necessary for this application.

Conservation Officer

No objections.

Environmental Protection Officer

No comment regarding land contamination or environmental protection.

Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority

Requests additional information.

Senior Ecologist

Agrees the proposal qualifies for the 'de minimis' BNG exemption.

Consultation Response Received 15th May 2025

Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority

No objections.

Public Representation

This application has been advertised in accordance with the Development Procedure Order and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. In this instance 4 letters of representation have been received (two of which are from the same address). The main issues referred to are:

- Concern at the increase in volume of traffic generated.
- The size, weight and length of the lorries that deliver and collect from the site are not suitable for the road.
- Pedestrians and cyclists have no footpath or protection from vehicles.
- The road is in a bad state of repair and an increase in traffic will exacerbate this.
- HGV's have hit the river wall on Glenside North turning onto Small Drove Lane. weakening this wall and increasing concern at the risk of flooding.

Planning Considerations

The main issues in this case are:

- Principle of Development and Sustainability.
- Layout, Design and Impact on the Character of the Area.
- Impact on Neighbouring Residents.
- Highway Safety and Parking.
- Flood Risk Considerations and Surface Water Drainage.
- Biodiversity Net Gain.

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.

Principle of Development and Sustainability

The National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) December 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. It advises that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives; an economic objective, a social objective, and an environmental objective, which are interdependent and should be pursued in mutually supportive ways.

Policy 1 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) sets out a spatial strategy for delivering sustainable development across South East Lincolnshire to 2036. The Policy further advises in the countryside, development will be permitted that is necessary in such a location and, or where, it can be demonstrated that it meets the sustainable development needs of the area in terms of economic, community or environmental benefits.

The site is an established horticultural and agricultural rural business with extensive glasshouses and building serving the enterprise. Agricultural operations are an acceptable form of land use in the countryside, and the Framework, at paragraph 88, encourages the sustainable growth and expansion of rural businesses. There would be economic benefit through the construction of the extension and the expansion and development of an established rural enterprise would contribute to the sustainability of the rural community. Therefore, the proposal can reasonably be considered to represent an appropriate extension to this existing business.

The principle of the proposal therefore accords with the requirements of Policy 1 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019, subject to the consideration of all other material factors which are assessed in the sections below.

Layout, Design and Impact on the Character of the Area

The Framework advises, at paragraph 131, good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

The Framework further states, in paragraph 187(b), planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Policy 2 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) outlines sustainable development considerations for development proposals, providing a framework for an operational policy to be used in assessing the sustainable development attributes of all development proposals. Furthermore, Policy 3 accords with the provisions of Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), in that it requires development to comprise good design; identifying issues that should be considered when preparing schemes so that development sits comfortably with, and adds positively to its landscape surroundings.

The proposed extension will be constructed to the eastern elevation of an existing glasshouse located along the northern boundary of built development at the enterprise. The proposed extension will be clearly visible within the landscape but will be viewed in the context of the existing glasshouse and wider horticultural and agricultural development, and the backdrop of the existing buildings forming this enterprise. The proposed building would utilise similar construction materials, and would be of a smaller scale than the existing buildings presently on site, but would match the eaves and ridge height of the existing building enabling the extension to effectively tie-in with this structure visually.

The application site is hard surfaced and currently occupied by static caravans used by seasonal workers granted consent under application H14-0110-20. The applicant's agent has advised a separate application is to be submitted to relocate these, which will be considered on its individual planning merits. The remaining land between the proposed extension and highway is used for the parking of staff vehicles and external storage, this area is partially screened by a hedge to the north and established planting along Small Drove Lane. It is intended to relocate the employee car parking to the northern boundary with the external storage slightly further west. There will be no increase in parking or external storage resulting from the development, and the re-arrangement of this area will have no greater visual impact than the existing situation.

The proposal will safeguard the character and appearance of the area and in this regard would accord with Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019, along with advice contained within Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024.

Impact on Neighbouring Residents

The Framework advises, at paragraph 135, development should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Policies 2 and 3 of South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) sets out that residential amenity and the relationship to existing development and land uses is a main consideration when making planning decisions.

There are two residential properties to the south of the application building, within the ownership of the horticultural enterprise. Residential properties in the locality are located at a sufficient separation distance from the development to ensure there is no detriment to the level of amenity the occupants currently enjoy in terms of overlooking, loss of light or creating unacceptable levels of noise and disturbance. Furthermore, the proposal would represent a relatively small-scale extension to the existing business, and would not introduce a new or incongruous use type to the locality which would result in any discernible or harmful impacts upon the amenity of any neighbouring property. This view is supported by the consultation response from the Environmental Protection team which raises no concerns or objections to the proposal.

In this regard the proposal therefore accords with the provisions of the Framework and Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019.

Highway Safety and Parking

Paragraph 116 of the Framework advises that development should only be refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, considering all reasonable future scenarios.

Policy 2 of the Local Plan states that proposals requiring planning permission will be permitted provided that sustainable development considerations are met, specifically in relation to access and vehicle generation. Policy 3 of the Local Plan details that development proposals will demonstrate how accessibility by a choice of travel modes including the provision of public transport, public rights of way and cycle ways will be secured, where they are relevant to the proposal.

Further, Policy 36, to be read in conjunction with Appendix 6, of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019), sets out minimum vehicle parking standards required for development proposals.

The Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority requested further information on what surfacing is proposed for the car park, how many spaces are currently provided and how many are proposed. In addition, information on the number of staff currently employed and whether there would be an

increase in staff numbers were required. The highway authority also requested details of any increase in vehicle movements to and from the site.

In response, the applicants' agent advised the existing area and car parking is laid to existing road plans and this will not be changed. There are currently 20 spaces and these 20 spaces are to be relocated and retained for staff use. The existing staff numbers will not change, the existing glasshouse extension is for additional space for storing before being packaged. There will be no increased vehicle movements to and from the site following the glasshouse extension.

The Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority were re-consulted on this additional information and advised as there will be no increase in vehicular movement to and from the site as a result of the proposal the highway authority does not consider that the development would have an unacceptable impact upon highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact upon the local highway network and has no objection to the proposal.

Concern has been raised by local residents at the impact of an increase in traffic to the site on the current state of the highway. There is also concern that the size, weight and length of the lorries are not suitable for the road and refer to damage that has occurred to the river wall by HGV vehicles.

Whilst these concerns are acknowledged, the applicant's agent has advised the development will not increase vehicular activity to and from the site and the highway authority are satisfied with the details provided. Moreover, there is no weight restriction on the road that prevents large vehicles accessing the highway. Residents' concerns at any potential increase in the risk of flooding resulting from damage to the river wall is acknowledged, however, this is not a planning issue that can be taken into consideration, any damage to property would be a private civil matter between the parties concerned.

It is considered the proposal accords with Policies 2, 3 and 36 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019, and Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024, in that the proposal would result in no adverse harm being caused to the existing highway network from either a safety or capacity perspective.

Flood Risk Considerations and Surface Water Drainage

Paragraph 170 of the Framework advises that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk. Further stating, where development is necessary in such areas the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

Paragraph 173 states a sequential risk-based approach should be taken to individual applications in areas known to be at risk now or in future from any form of flooding, with the aim of steering new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding from any source.

The South East Lincolnshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) provides an overview of how flood risk has been considered in shaping the proposals of the Local Plan; including the spatial strategy and the assessment of housing and employment sites.

Policy 4 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) is clear in that "Development proposed within an area at risk of flooding (Flood Zones 2 and 3 of the Environment Agency's flood map or at risk during a breach or overtopping scenario as shown on the flood hazard and depths maps in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment) will be permitted" in instances where specific criteria is met.

The application site is located within Flood Zone 3, agricultural development is classed as 'less vulnerable' development within Annex 3 of the Framework and Table 2 of the PPG (Flood risk vulnerability and flood zone incompatibility) confirms an Exception Test for less vulnerable development within Flood Zone 3 is not required.

A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted as part of the application which also refers to the Sequential Test. In respect of the latter the FRA states the proposed development is an extension to a glasshouse within an existing horticultural holding, it would not be practicable to undertake the development at an alternative located and as such the proposal is considered to pass the Sequential Test.

The site forms part of an established horticultural enterprise and the buildings are required to serve

the functional needs of the business. it is therefore not considered there are any sequentially preferable or acceptable sites available and in this regard the conclusion of the FRA is accepted that the Sequential Test is met and the development is therefore suitable for the proposed location.

The FRA considers the probability of this development flooding from localised drainage systems is low although failure of Gosberton Pumping Station could lead to an increase level of risk at the site.

The probability of the site flooding from any Environment Agency system is less than 1% annual probability (1 in 100 chance each year) because of the standards of the existing flood defences. Over time there will be a gradual increase in risk to the site due to climate change. During the design life of the development it is not anticipated that the site would flood.

The SFRA considers the residual risk associated with a breach in the defences. The site is at risk during a breach of defences with depths up to 0.5m. The proposed arrangement increases the impermeable area and therefore has the potential to increase rate of surface water runoff from the site.

The Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board have been consulted and provided standing advice of guidance to applicant's which may be attached as an informative to any planning permission granted.

The Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority advised no drainage strategy has been submitted, as this is a major application sustainable drainage strategy principles should be incorporated into the design, in addition, no details have been submitted to detail the ground conditions.

In response, the applicant's agent advised no drainage strategy has been submitted as the proposed extension will be connected to the existing drainage of the glasshouses which is all connected to a reservoir on site for attenuation and use in the glasshouses. Further advising the ground has natural drainage to the existing drains around the site.

The Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority were re-consulted on the additional information provided and advised the site at low risk of surface water flooding and there are no known historical flooding instances. The proposed extension will be connected to the existing drainage for the glasshouses which is all connected to a reservoir on site for attenuation and use in the glasshouses. Therefore the Lead Local Flood Authority does not consider that this would increase flood risk in the immediate vicinity of the site and has no objection to the proposal.

The submitted FRA recommends several mitigation measures including a water entry strategy, elevating services above the flood level and reducing vulnerability by receiving flood warnings. It is considered reasonable to attach these mitigation measures as a condition of any planning permission granted. Subject to such measures, The proposal would be made safe for the lifetime of the development and would not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

The proposal therefore accords with Policies 2, 3 and 4 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) and the intentions of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) in this regard.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is required under a statutory framework introduced under Schedule 7

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is required under a statutory framework introduced under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021) and requires developers to deliver a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain using standardized biodiversity units measured by statutory biodiversity metrics. This is often referred to as the mandatory requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain.

The effect of Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the "biodiversity gain condition". The effect of this "biodiversity gain condition" is that development granted by this notice must not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan, or

(c) the development is exempt from the biodiversity gain condition.

For applications that are submitted prior to the introduction of this requirement, the development would exempt from the mandatory 10% requirement and as such, the Biodiversity Gain Condition would not apply. However, this application was submitted following the introduction of this legislation. As such, unless comprising development that is exempt from this mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (10%), a condition would be required, as mandatorily set.

The applicant has submitted a 'de minimis exemption' as the development:

- a) does not impact a priority habitat and
- b) impacts less than 25square metres (5m by 5m)of on-site habitat that has a biodiversity value greater than zero, and less than 5m of on-site linear habitat.

It is advised the development meets this requirement as the site is fully hard surfaced and occupied by parking and storage along with worker accommodation.

The Council's Ecologist advises, after reviewing the proposed BNG exemption statement, the site layout plans, application form, and satellite imagery, it is agreed that the proposal qualifies for the 'de minimis' BNG exemption because it will only impact land with 0 biodiversity value (pre-existing hard standing). The Council's Ecologist, however, advised there are 5-6 trees within the red line application site, immediately adjacent to the proposed development, confirmation was therefore required whether any of these trees are to be removed for the construction works or access as in the event they are this would necessitate the need for BNG.

The applicants' agent confirmed no trees will be removed for the glasshouse development. The trees within the red line application site between the two blocks of glasshouses are to remain and these will not be affected by the proposed development.

It is therefore considered the development meets the requirement of exempt development and is not required to provided Biodiversity Net Gain.

Planning Balance

As detailed above Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 20024, as amended, requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The site is an established horticultural and farming enterprise, agricultural operations are an acceptable form of land use in the countryside. There would be economic benefit through the construction phase and social benefit through the contribution to the sustainability of the rural community, to which moderate weight is attached.

The proposal would represent an appropriate extension to an existing business which would safeguard the character of the area, and also the level of amenity currently afforded to nearby residential properties, nor would there be any detriment to highway safety. Subject to appropriate mitigation measures the development would be safe for its lifetime and would not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

The proposal accords with the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019, and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024, when viewed as a whole.

In this instance, there are no material considerations that weigh against the proposal and as such the planning balance is in favour of the development.

Conclusion

Taking the above considerations into account, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with policies 1, 2, 3, 4, and 36 (including Appendix 6) of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019), along with the identified sections contained within the National Planning Policy Framework(December 2024). The are no significant factors in this case that indicate against the proposal and outweigh the consideration in favour of the proposal and the policies referred to above.

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.

Recommendation

Based on the assessment above, it is recommended that the proposal should be approved under Delegated Authority.