DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No:	**H14-0765-25**	**Applicant:**	**Mr G Harris**
Proposal:	Proposed single-storey, 3 bedroom Self-Build innovative dwelling		
Location:	Land Off Northgate Pinchbeck Spalding		
Terminal Date:	24th October 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
10	Meeting Assessed Housing Requirements
11	Distribution of New Housing
17	Providing a Mix of Housing
28	The Natural Environment
31	Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
33	Delivering a More Sustainable Transport Network
36	Vehicle and Cycle Parking
APPENDIX 6	Parking Standards

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 9 - Promoting sustainable transport
Section 12 - Achieving well designed place
Section 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Representations:

	Object	Support	No Obj.	Comments
PARISH COUNCIL	0	0	0	0
WARD MEMBER	0	0	0	1

HIGHWAYS & SUDS SUPPORT	0	0	0	1
RUBEN LOPEZ, HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT OFFICER	0	0	0	1
BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	0	0	0	1
SHDC INTERNAL	0	0	1	0
OTHER STATUTORY BODIES	0	0	0	2
RESIDENTS	1	0	0	1

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Description of Proposal

This is a Full Planning Application, seeking permission for the erection of a single storey, three-bedroom, self-build dwelling at the Land off Northgate, Pinchbeck. Proposed is a single-storey dwelling, located to the west of the site, with a detached garage to its east. A photovoltaic array and an evacuated tube solar panel array are proposed in the south-east corner of the site.

The dwelling would be "L" shaped, with maximum measurements of 24.435m (width) by 18.6m (depth). This would provide a total floor area of approximately 245sqm. Gable ended roofs are proposed, facing north and south on the eastern and western extremities of the building, providing a variety of roof heights. At its lowest, which would comprise the majority of the building, the eaves height is set at 2.75m, rising to 3m at the gable sections. The ridge height would be set at 4.95m (central section), 5.4m (western gable) and 6.55m (eastern gable). It is proposed that the dwelling would be constructed of "traditional Lincolnshire red multi-brick and Horizontal Natural Weathered Timber rebated feather edge cladding", with terracotta roof pantiles. Windows, doors and rainwater goods would be beige UPVC. The project aims to be a zero-carbon home.

The garage would be constructed of materials to match the host dwelling, although timber cladding would be more prevalent. It would measure 12m (split into a 7.55m garage and 4.45m carport) by 6.5m. A hipped roof is proposed, set at 2.4m to the eaves and 4.25m to the ridge.

Several ecological and environmental measures are proposed. These include a swift box (on the northern most gable), a sparrow street (on the north-west gable), a bat box (south-west gable) and an insect hotel (south-east corner, adjacent to the solar array). A wildflower meadow would be planted around the solar array.

Site Description

The site is outside of any of the settlement boundaries outlined within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019, and therefore can be considered to be within the Countryside from a planning perspective. The plot is approximately 2km west of Pinchbeck and 1.2km east of Northgate. The site is located east of the junction at Money Bridge Lane, Cross Lane and North Gate. The area has a clear agricultural character, with dwellings and larger scale agricultural buildings dotted between.

Relevant History

No relevant history.

Consultation Responses

The responses received from consultees during the initial consultation exercises, which can be viewed in their entirety through the South Holland website, can be summarised as follows:

Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board

"The Board would require a Land Drainage Application in respect of this, which can be found on the Board's website www.blacksluiceidb.gov.uk and assuming the guidance attached is followed have no other comment in respect of this application."

National Grid

"Please note there is an UG cable in the entrance of the land boundary. Please contact NGED if you require assistance with its exact position."

Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority

"The proposal is for single-storey, 3-bedroom Self-Build innovative dwelling, where a new vehicular access is required from Northgate to serve the proposal and is to be constructed to the County Councils specification within the extent of adopted highway. Sufficient visibility is provided at this location to allow drivers to judge if it safe to enter the highway and suitable parking and turning can be provided within the site to allow vehicles to enter and leave in a forward gear. Therefore, it does not have an impact on the Public Highway or Surface Water Flood Risk."

Cllr E Sneath

"This looks like a well thought out and 'in keeping property' for this semi rural site. Many years ago there was a small barn in the corner of the plot. We need to encourage more interesting and varied properties to be developed that suit their location."

Historic Places Team

"Thank you for consulting us on this application. It is noted that the applicant has not provided an assessment of the archaeological or heritage potential of the site, as outlined in the NPPF (paragraph 207). The site is in an area of Roman and post-medieval archaeological potential. The historic environment record (HER) contains information about post-medieval heritage assets to the southeast of the proposal: MLI22430, Moat, Money Bridge Manor; MLI23054, Money Bridge Manor House, park, and post-medieval finds, Pinchbeck. In addition, a satellite image from 1999 shows cropmarks to the north of the proposal (52 49- 26- N, 000 12- 10- W) with a different alignment to the post-drainage landscape, which might indicate a Roman origin consistent with other cropmarks in the wider landscape context. Finally, terrain models show how the area is in a roddon crest, which are often utilised within the fen landscape as stable dryer ground following their formation in the late Holocene period. The proposed development comprises 'Proposed single-storey, 3 bedroom Self-Build innovative dwelling.". The proposed development groundworks and any temporary works associated with the development (including landscaping, PV panels, drainage connections and BNG planting) will have a significant impact on any surviving archaeological remains, resulting in total or partial loss, if present. As mentioned above, there is potential for development on this site to have an impact on buried remains that should be recorded prior to their destruction - NPPF (paragraph 218). There is archaeological potential, and we do not possess evidence that previous limited agricultural activity truncated possible present heritage assets. I recommend that if permission is granted, there be an archaeological condition for a mitigation strategy to effectively deal with this site. This will comprise a phased approach of archaeological investigation and mitigation work. This will initially comprise but may not be limited to a trial trench evaluation of the site which should aim to determine the presence, absence, significance, depth and character of any archaeological remains which could be impacted by the proposed development as noted above and to inform a programme of further archaeological mitigation work which may be required if archaeological remains are identified in the evaluation. This will enable any remaining archaeology which currently survives on this site to be properly assessed and recorded prior to their

alteration or destruction. This should be secured by South Holland District Council's standard conditions AR01, 02 and 03 and is in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 207 and 218 and the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (Policy 29). With respect to the attached archaeological conditions, please contact the Historic Places team at Lincolnshire County Council, Lancaster House, 36 Orchard Street, Lincoln, LN1 1YL, 07386 656079, email ruben.lopez@lincolnshire.gov.uk to discuss the requirements and request preparation of a brief for the works. It is recommended the resulting mitigation strategy and Written Schemes of Investigation are approved by the LCC Historic Environment Officer prior to formal submission to the Local Planning Authority. Ten days' notice is required before commencement of any archaeological works"

Environmental Protection

"No comments regarding land contamination."

Sir John Hayes, MP

"The applicant, Mr Harris, has advised me that he is seeking to self-build a property in order to downsize in retirement.

He has taken great care to ensure that the proposed dwelling fits in with the surrounding environment and existing properties nearby. The property will be located in a sustainable area with the village of Pinchbeck being close by. The proposal will include a solar installation for the heating and hot water, therefore, it will not be dependent on fossil fuels but, will be a zero carbon home.

To this end, I fully support Mr Harris' application for a self-build property."

Public Representations

This application has been advertised in accordance with the Development Procedure Order and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. In this instance, one letter of objection has been received. This can be summarised as:

-Unnecessary development outside of residential area
-Impact upon wildlife and habitat
-Impact upon hedging and trees
-Opportunities for self-build dwellings in more sustainable locations

Key Planning Considerations

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.

The adopted South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036, adopted March 2019 (SELLP), is 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, 2024 (NPPF) are also a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, alongside adopted Supplementary Planning Documents.

Principle of Development

Spatial Strategy Policy Context

Policy 1 of the SELLP sets out the settlement hierarchy in respect of delivering sustainable development, which meets the social and economic needs of the area whilst protecting and enhancing the environment; in order to provide enough choice of land for housing to satisfy local need, whilst making more sustainable use of land, and to minimise the loss of high-quality agricultural plots by developing in sustainable locations and at appropriate densities.

Policy 1 expresses this sustainable hierarchy of settlements, ranking the settlements deemed to be most sustainable in descending order. The most sustainable locations for development are situated within the 'Sub-Regional Centres', followed by 'Main Service Centres'. Lower down the hierarchy are areas of limited development opportunity including Minor Service Centres, with areas of development constraint comprising 'Other Service Centres and Settlements'. The countryside is at the bottom of the settlement hierarchy and represents the least sustainable location.

Although settlement boundaries are not a requirement of the NPPF, they can be used to identify more accessible locations for development. Policy 1 applies criteria that would need to be met before the development would be considered in accordance with the spatial strategy.

The site is located outside of any of the settlement boundaries outlined within the SELLP, lying at least 500m from any settlement. Policy 1 states that "the rest of the Local Plan area outside the defined settlement boundaries of the Sub-Regional Centres, Main Service Centres, Minor Service Centre and Other Service Centres and Settlements is designated as Countryside".

As such, the site should be considered to be within the Countryside from a planning policy context.

Policy 1 states that within "the Countryside development will be permitted that is necessary to 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."

Within the explanatory text of Policy 1, further discussion of what can be considered to necessitate a Countryside location can be found. This includes Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation (see Policy 20) or development to meet the specific housing needs of a settlement (see Policy 19). Neither exception is considered relevant here.

Likewise, the reuse of buildings in the Countryside for residential use (see Policy 23) or the creation of a replacement dwelling in the Countryside (see Policy 22) can be considered to necessitate a Countryside location. Once again, neither exception is considered to be applicable here.

No justification as to why the proposal necessitates this location has been put forward. As such, from a spatial context, the proposal falls to be assessed under Policy 1 of the SELLP, without the weight in favour carried by a necessary Countryside location. Assessment against the requirements of Policy 1 is found below within the "Principle of Development - Assessment" section of this report.

It should be noted that Policy 1 does not indicate flexibility on this spatial strategy if a development would be located within a Countryside location where other development is already present. The 'Countryside' designation within the spatial strategy is separate from the character of the area being described as open countryside. This position has been confirmed via appeal decisions APP/A2525/W/25/3362446 and APP/A2525/W/25/3364588.

Need for Housing

The NPPF outlines, within Paragraph 61, that "to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet an area's identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.".

Paragraph 73 of the NPPF also emphasises the importance that the contribution of small to medium sized sites can make in meeting the housing requirements. This paragraph outlines that "small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area... and are often built-out relatively quickly". Part b of Paragraph 73 states that planning authorities should "seek opportunities, through policies and decisions, to support small sites to come forward for community-led development for housing and self-build and custom-build housing". This paragraph seeks to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of homes and advises that sites of all sizes make a contribution to the housing requirement of an area.

The proposal is for a self-build dwelling. This matter is discussed in greater detail in the following section; however, pertinent to housing need here, is Section 2 of the Self and Custom Housebuilding Act, 2015, which states that: "an authority to which this section applies must give development permission for the carrying out of self-build and custom housebuilding on enough

serviced plots of land to meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in the authority's area in respect of each base period." To this end, and as reaffirmed within Footnote 28 of the NPPF, the Planning Authority are obliged to give enough suitable development permissions to meet identified demand.

Self and Custom Building Housing - Policy Context

The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016) provides a legal definition of self-build and custom housebuilding. The Act does not distinguish between self-build and custom housebuilding and provides that both are where an individual, an association of individuals, or persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals, build or complete houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals. The definition contained within the Act is as follows:

"In this Act "self-build and custom housebuilding" means the building or completion by -
(a)individuals,
(b)associations of individuals, or
(c)persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals,
of houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals."

Pages 7 and 8 of the submitted Design and Access Statement outlines that South Holland are currently unable to demonstrate that sufficient self/custom build plots have been permissioned. Whilst the Local Planning Authority do not have a specific published position in this regard, and appropriate weight should be given in favour of the proposal accordingly as a self-build, the shortfall figure stated within the Statement has been calculated based upon permission obtained by a single planning agent; and therefore, is not necessarily representative of the actual figure. As such, evidence of the extent of shortfall has not been demonstrated.

The SELLP has a number of allocated sites, a number of which are yet to be delivered. Likewise, the district has plentiful opportunity for windfall sites within settlement boundaries; both means to which self-build projects could come forward, within sustainable locations.

Whilst the SELLP does not have a policy dedicated to self-build proposals, Policies 10, 11 and 17 provide a strategy for the provision of these dwellings. Paragraph 5.3.5 of the SELLP states:

"Within the defined settlement boundaries there will be numerous opportunities for infill and larger-scale housing development that will be available to the local builder, self-builder, custom-builder and larger house-building companies. It is not practical to identify or anticipate all such opportunities; however, the positive tone of the Local Plan encourages such development provided that the material considerations of the Local Plan and particular sites can be met."

Policy 17 expands upon this briefly, outlining that the "Local Plan will also seek to meet the housing needs of custom and self-builders as they may come forward." Paragraph 5.9.4 of the reasoned justification for this policy reiterates that "opportunities for infill development within Settlement Boundaries can also meet the known interest registered by self and custom house builders".

In this regard, it is clear that proposals for self-build dwellings should be consistent with the Development Plan as a whole and appropriately located within settlement boundaries. This approach has been confirmed within Appeals APP/A2525/W/23/3319481, APP/A2525/W/24/3343297 and APP/A2525/W/25/3359058 amongst others. Within these previous appeals, it was outlined that proposals which break from the spatial strategy of the SELLP would require significant justification, including evidence that a search for alternative sites within settlements has been conducted. No such justification or search for sites has been presented to the Council at this time.

In this vein, while weight is given in favour of proposals for self and custom builds, these proposals must be consistent with the provisions of the SELLP as a whole, and cannot be used as the sole justification for divergence from policy. The weight given in favour of proposals for self-build dwellings is tempered accordingly.

Several appeal decisions have been quoted within the submitted Design and Access Statement relating to the weighting to be given to self/custom build applications. Whilst these are noted, each case must be considered on its own merits. The majority of these decisions relate to applications outside of South Holland, and therefore, were considered in light of a significantly different context

(including different Local Plans, housing land supply positions etc). As such, the weight afforded to these is limited. Likewise, references to past decisions in South Holland are noted; however, each case must be considered on its own merits, and therefore, the ability to transplant the outcomes and conclusions made regarding these cases into this context is diminished.

Principle of Development - Assessment

As outlined above, the site is considered to be within the Countryside from a planning policy context. Within the Countryside "development will be permitted that is necessary to 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" (Policy 1).

It has been demonstrated previously that the site does not necessitate a Countryside location, failing to meet any of the exceptions to Policy 1 outlined the SELLP. Likewise, as established, the development of a self-build dwelling is not justification for a Countryside location or a break with the principles underpinning the spatial strategy of the Local Plan. To this end, the proposal would fall to be assessed against the three sustainable development needs.

Assessing the proposal against these points, the following is considered:

Economic - It is accepted, as outlined in the Design and Access Statement, that the occupants of the dwelling would work locally and support what local services are available to them. However, the economic contribution this would generate would be relatively small and generate limited weight in favour. Likewise, the surrounding services are detached from the application site, with the predominant services being located within more sustainable locations.

The assertion within the Design and Access Statement that self-builders are more likely to buy locally sourced materials may be the case, this is not a matter of fact; furthermore, equally it does not mean that the applicant will do so in this instance, and, whilst conditions could be attached to any such permission to seek appropriate materials, such provisions, to dictate that only a local material could be used, could not be suitably or reasonably conditioned. As such, only minimal weight can be attached to this point.

Employment opportunities via construction would be short lived, and cannot be said to be a meaningful long-term benefit, thereby limiting the weight attached. It should be noted at this time that these benefits outlined are not specific to a Countryside location, and the same gains would be generated if the proposal was located within settlement boundaries. In light of this, the weight that can be attributed to this point is significantly reduced, and the proposal does not provide an economic benefit that would be afforded as a result of the site.

Community - within the Design and Access Statement, it is argued that the provision of a dwelling to meet the Council's shortfall for self-build dwellings would represent a significant community benefit. Whilst the matter raised, that the proposal would provide a self-build dwelling in this regard, is not argued to a certain extent, the contribution made in the form of a single dwelling would be negligible and should be considered within the wider policy context outlined in the previous section of this report, with weight attributed accordingly.

The proposal does not include a community facility or any potential for interaction with the local community. The siting of the development, within a countryside location provides residential development within a more remote location (albeit not isolated), somewhat lessens its likelihood for increased community interaction. As such, no significant community benefit is considered to have been provided here. In any event, as with the economic assessment, any gains would not be generated because the development is in the Countryside, but are merely a natural bi-product of development irrespective of location.

Environmental - the environmental benefits of the proposal are discussed at greater length within the "Impacts of Climate Change" and "Biodiversity and Ecology" sections of this report. To briefly summarise, the credentials of the proposal as a zero-carbon home are not disputed. Likewise, the fact that the wildflower meadow and habitat enhancement measures proposed would provide a biodiversity net gain (BNG) are not disputed either. However, it has not been evidenced, through the submission of a biodiversity metric, how significant these gains would be. Likewise, the proposed zero-carbon nature of the dwelling is admirable, but that does not change the fact the development will still see a negative environmental impact, at least initially, via emissions during the construction process. Furthermore, the isolation of the dwelling creates an increase reliance on private vehicles,

which would undercut the environmental credentials of the development.

In any event, the provisions of Policy 1 are such that any benefits gained should "meet the sustainable development needs of the area". It has not been demonstrated within the submission what the actual needs of the area are; and therefore, it cannot be evidenced that the needs of the area have been met. Moreover, it has not been demonstrated that the provisions proposed would be enjoyed by the wider area. A reduction in emissions as a zero-carbon home, for instance, would offer no tangible benefits to the area, merely benefiting the dwelling's owner/ occupant. Likewise, the planting proposed would be on private land, and not accessible to the public. The benefits proposed would therefore fail to meet the requirements of Policy 1 in that they do not meet the development needs of the area.

Conversely to a number of the matters raised, additional benefit could be considered likely should the development be located within a more acceptable and sustainable location.

As discussed above, the weight attributed to the self-build nature of the dwelling is proportionate. The provisions of Policies 10, 11 and 17 of the SELLP are such that the development should still be directed to within settlement boundaries in the first instance, a matter that has been regularly reinforced through recent Appeal decisions. Accordingly, the weight attributed to the self-build nature of the proposal would not be sufficient on its own to justify the principle of a residential development on this site, or warrant a departure from the aims of the spatial strategy.

It should be noted that the Council's 5 Year Housing Land Supply Assessment and the inset maps supporting the SELLP, identify a number of single plot and small sites, not identified for a particular dwelling type or sector. It would be unlikely that at least some of those sites could not be considered as being suitable for self-build housing particularly given the straightforward requirements for such sites to be considered as a serviced plot of land as defined in the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 and explained in the PPG. No such evidence of a search for sites within such allocations or within the broader settlement boundaries has been provided.

The proposal therefore is considered to be contrary to the provisions of Policy 1 of the SELLP. The principle of a residential development on the site is not considered acceptable.

Layout, Design, Scale and Consideration of the Character of the Area

Policy Context

Section 12 of the NPPF, "Achieving well-designed places", states that the "creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve" and as such, it is generally accepted that good design plays a key role towards sustainable development.

Paragraph 135, contained within Section 12 of the NPPF, states that new development should function well and add to the overall quality of the area (including beyond the short term) and should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. This goes on to establish that it is important that new development should be of the highest quality, to enhance and reinforce good design characteristics, and that decisions must have regard towards the impact that the proposed development would have on local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting such as topography, street patterns, building lines, boundary treatment and through scale and massing. Developments should create places that are safe, inclusive, and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, among other considerations.

Paragraph 139 of the NPPF states the following:

"Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:
a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or
b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout

of their surroundings".

South Holland do not have a local design guide, meaning that supplementary guidance on design matters is principally driven by national documents, including the National Design Guide (NDG). The NDG outlines broad principles for well designed places. The entire document is of note to this application; however, Paragraphs 41, 43, 44, 50, 51, 52, 53, 56, 57 and 75 of the NDG are highlighted here as being particularly relevant to the case at hand.

Policy 2 of the SELLP outlines sustainable development considerations for proposals; providing a framework for an operational policy to be used in assessing the sustainable development attributes of all development proposals. Furthermore, Policy 3 of the SELLP 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 historically designated or undesignated townscape or landscape surroundings.

These policies accord with the provisions of the NPPF and require that design which is inappropriate to the local area, or which fails to maximise opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area, will not be acceptable. Proposals for new development would therefore require the aforementioned considerations to be adequately assessed and designed, including the siting, design, and scale to be respectful of surrounding development and ensure that the character of the area is not compromised.

Assessment

Page 24 and 25 of the Design and Access Statement outline that the site is within a perceived settlement at the Northgate/Moneybridge Lane Junction. This small cluster of development would reduce the level of physical isolation of the proposed dwelling; however, it is considered that the sporadic nature of this development prevents it from being read as a settlement, either aerially or on the ground.

Settlements are characterised by a far higher density and number of buildings than is present in the immediate area. Instead, this cluster better reflects the isolated pockets of development which characterise agricultural housing in the 20th century, and which are present throughout South Holland. To this end, the Local Planning Authority, whilst acknowledging that the site would not be isolated, refute the claim that the site is within a perceived settlement. To this end, the visual intrusion of the development would be exacerbated.

The site is well screened, with large hedges enclosing the plot. When combined with the single storey nature of the dwelling, the effect is to reduce the visual impact of the dwelling upon the street scene, under existing conditions, to a negligible level. This is evidenced by the submitted Street Scene document. However, this softening of impact is based upon existing hedge heights and conditions, which could not be ensured in perpetuity. The Planning Authority's ability to enforce additional protections upon an existing hedgerow, beyond the powers afforded by The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 amongst other legislative powers, would be limited; and therefore, it could not be ensured that the hedge would be maintained to the necessary level as to minimise the visibility of the dwelling to the necessary level.

Should the hedge be removed, then the plot would be readily visible from the street. In this eventuality, the proposal would result in a relatively significant intrusion into the openness of the area. The National Character Area for the Fens, which South Holland falls within, describes the region as "Expansive, flat, open, low-lying wetland landscape influenced by the Wash estuary, and offering extensive vistas to level horizons and huge skies throughout, provides a sense of rural remoteness and tranquillity. "

To this end, the landscape of South Holland is sensitive to intrusion beyond clearly defined areas of development, as such expansion would break from the established sense of place. As outlined above, the proposal does not immediately read as an appropriate furtherance of the built form of the area, and in any event, said built form is so sparse, as to have a reduced intrusion into the openness of the area. As a result, there would be some level of conflict with the established sense of place of the Fens. Albeit it is acknowledged that the lowered ridge height of the proposed dwelling would reduce the visual impact to a certain extent.

The design itself is relatively typical. It is not necessarily representative of vernacular South Holland architecture or even rural settings more broadly. This typicality would reduce the visual impact of the

development to a certain extent, as it prevents the development from appearing as immediately incongruous in any setting. However, it equally contributes to a sense of placeness, failing to route itself in the established vernacular of the area. Therefore, whilst the design itself does not necessarily harm the character of the area, it equally benefits it in no significant way.

The submitted documents have discussed the provisions of Paragraph 139 of the NPPF at great length. Accordingly, it is considered appropriate to discuss both whether the proposal would conform to the provisions of this paragraph from a design perspective (the provisions of other matters relevant to Paragraph 139 such as environmental sustainability are discussed in greater detail in their relevant sections) and the appropriate weight afforded to this paragraph here.

Beginning with the provisions of Part A, it is considered that, whilst the proposal is not necessarily harmful, it would fail to reflect the provisions of the NDG, in that it does not fully root itself in a sense of place. On this basis, the proposal would fail to accord with the provisions of Paragraphs 41, 43 and 53 of the NDG, which encourage proposals to reflect the local vernacular. Whilst not specifically mentioning the term "vernacular", Paragraph 56 of the NDG outlines that buildings should contribute to local distinctiveness, in that they should draw upon local architectural precedents, adopt typical building forms and create a positive and coherent identity. As established above, the proposal is not considered to truly reflect the built form of the area or root itself in its locality, instead providing a wholly standard design.

Points on accessibility and movement are discussed at greater length within the "Highway Safety, Parking and Accessibility" section of this report; however, broadly, the proposal is considered to fail to reflect the guidance in Section 4 of the NDG on "movement" in that the site is inaccessible by sustainable methods of transport. As such, the proposal is not afforded weight under Part A of Paragraph 139.

Turning to Part B, further discussion on the innovative nature of the proposal with respect to environmental sustainability can be found in the "Impacts of Climate Change" and "Biodiversity & Ecology" sections of this report. In brief here, it should be noted that the submission is not considered to be truly innovative in either regard.

The design itself is not considered to be outstanding or innovative, and nor is it considered to raise the standard of design more generally. The design is largely visually unimaginative. Therefore, there are no features within it, from a purely aesthetic perspective, which would enhance other settings should they be transplanted.

As such, the proposal is not considered to reflect the established vernacular of the District in a meaningful way or to raise the standard of design in the area. To this end, whilst the design itself is not of a poor quality and is not considered to be harmful to the character of the area, it is not of substantial enough merit as to warrant weight being given in favour of the proposal.

Impacts Upon Resident Amenity

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that development should create places that are safe, inclusive, and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Policies 2 and 3 of SELLP sets out that residential amenity and the relationship to existing development and land uses is a main consideration when making planning decisions.

The significant distance to neighbouring dwellings would prevent any significant overshadowing effect. Likewise, the single storey nature would prevent any significant overlooking from occurring.

As detailed above, the scale and design of the proposal is considered to have no significant or unacceptable impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of adjacent properties or land users, when also taking account of the conditions recommended. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with Section 12 of the NPPF and Policies 2 and 3 of the Local Plan in terms of impact upon residential amenity.

Highway Safety and Parking

Section 9 of the NPPF is titled 'Promoting sustainable transport'. Within this, Paragraph 116 advises that "development should only be prevented or 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, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios".

Paragraph 117 of the NPPF states that applications for development should "give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme, and with neighbouring areas; and second - so far as possible - to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use". Likewise, Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that proposals should consider transport issues at the earliest stage, including "identifying and pursuing opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use". Paragraph 110 does caveat these other paragraphs somewhat, stating that "opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making."

In respect of highway matters, Policy 2 details that proposals requiring planning permission for development will be permitted provided that sustainable development considerations are met, specifically in relation to access and vehicle generation. Policy 3 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. Policy 33 further reinforces the need for developments to be accessible via sustainable modes of transport.

The provisions of the SELLP and NPPF are supported by the "Movement" chapter of the NDG. Paragraph 75 states "patterns of movement for people are integral to well-designed places. They include walking and cycling, access to facilities, employment and servicing, parking and the convenience of public transport". Paragraph 79 expands upon this, stating that in "a well-designed place, all modes of transport are positively designed into the built form". The points raised in these two paragraphs are echoed throughout the NDG; however, most relevant here is the provisions of Paragraph 83 which states: "in well-designed places, people should not need to rely on the car for everyday journeys, including getting to workplaces, shops, schools and other facilities, open spaces or the natural environment". To this end, development proposals should be accessible via sustainable methods of transport, and new development should not be reliant on private vehicles to be accessed.

Throughout the NDG, the idea of accessibility on foot is discussed at length, although no definition of what would be walking distance is provided. Therefore, the provisions of the Manual for Streets are used here to define suitable walking distance. Paragraph 4.4.1 defines walking distance as within 10 minutes or up to 800m.

Lincolnshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 5, a guidance document produced by Lincolnshire County Council in their role as Highway Authority, again reiterates the need for sites to be accessible and to promote the use of sustainable methods of transport. Policy GREEN4 states that the development management process should "ensure that development is planned, delivered and managed to reduce the need to travel and support the delivery of sustainable transport modes".

Policy 36 of the SELLP, in conjunction with Appendix 6, sets out minimum vehicle parking standards and requires at least two spaces for dwellings of up to three bedrooms and three spaces for dwellings with four or more bedrooms. Ample space has been made available to meet residential parking need.

The site is approximately 2km from Pinchbeck and 1.2km to Northgate. These settlements are classified as a "main service centre" and an "other service centre" respectively. "Other service centres" are relatively small settlements, with a limited number of services. Therefore, interaction with this settlement is unlikely to form an integral part of the daily activity of the occupants of the dwelling. To this end, residents would be more reliant on forming a relationship with Pinchbeck, which is located a greater distance from the dwelling.

Northgate is a relatively narrow country road with no footpath. As such, there is limited scope for pedestrians to access the site. The distances present would exceed what is considered appropriate within the Manual for Streets, reducing the sites accessibility significantly.

Furthermore, said walk would take place entirely in the road, which, in accordance with the guidance found within the Manual for Streets, would reduce pedestrian safety and is not a recommended method of access.

The site would have only limited access to conventional bus services, and therefore, it is not anticipated that occupants would be able to utilise this as a viable transport method. The Design and Access Statement outlines that the occupants would have access to the Call Connect service; however, the hours that this service operates and the nature of the service (which is in effect an on-demand bus service) would limit its potential viability as a transport method for the occupants. As a result, residents would not be able to use public transport for their daily needs.

As a result of this inaccessibility via foot and public transport, there would be a clear reliance on private vehicles to access the site. This directly conflicts with the provisions of the SELLP, NPPF, NDG, Manual for Streets and Local Transport Plan outlined above. The provisions of Paragraph 110 are noted here; however, there are still provisions within rural areas to maximise sustainable transport solutions, such as locating dwellings within settlements where connectivity is higher.

Turning to the provisions of Paragraph 116 of the NPPF, it is considered that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety and the impact on the road network would not be severe.

However, irrespective of the provisions of Paragraph 116, the lack of accessibility by any methods of transport other than private car ownership would be indicative of an unsustainable development within an inappropriate location. As a result, the site would fall short of the sustainability requirements of the SELLP, NPPF and NDG; and therefore, there would be significant weight against the proposal. To this end, whilst there would not necessarily be a safety concern, there would be a conflict with Policies 2, 3, and 33 of the SELLP and Sections 9 and 12 of the NPPF.

Flooding Considerations

Section 14 of the NPPF requires development plans to "apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development - taking into account all sources of flood risk and the current and future impacts of climate change - so as to avoid, where possible, flood risk to people and property. They should do this, and manage any residual risk, by: applying the sequential test and then, if necessary, the exception test as set out below".

Paragraph 174 of the NPPF states "the aim of the sequential test is to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding". The strategic flood risk assessment provides the basis for applying this test.

Paragraph 175 of the NPPF states that "the sequential test should be used in areas known to be at risk now or in the future from any form of flooding, except in situations where a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that no built development within the site boundary, including access or escape routes, land raising or other potentially vulnerable elements, would be located on an area that would be at risk of flooding from any source, now and in the future (having regard to potential changes in flood risk)."

If, following the application of the Sequential Test, it is not possible, consistent with wider sustainability objectives, for the development to be located in zones with a lower probability of flooding, the Exceptions Test can be applied if appropriate. The process for applying the Exception Test is outlined within Paragraphs 177, 178 and 179 of the NPPF. Paragraph 178 states "to pass the exception test it should be demonstrated that: a) the development would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk; and b) the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall"

The site lies within Flood Zone 1 of the Environment Agency's Flood Maps. These have been created as a tool to raise awareness of flood risk with the public and partner organisations, such as Local Authorities, Emergency Services and Drainage Authorities. The Maps do not take into account any flood defences.

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 SELLP 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.

It is worth noting that large parts of the district of South Holland lie within Flood Zone 3. It is therefore necessary to use the refined flood risk information (Hazard and Depth maps) within the SFRA as a basis to apply the sequential test.

Within the SFRA the site is outside of any identified hazard zone.

On this basis, the proposal is considered to be sequentially preferable from a flood risk perspective. The proposal therefore passes the sequential test, and is acceptable from a flood risk perspective.

Overall, when considering the development on balance, it is considered, given the mitigation measures detailed and recommended by condition, that the proposal accords with Policies 2, 3 and 4 of the SELLP and the intentions of the NPPF with regards to flood risk.

Impacts of Climate Change

In respect of the climate emergency, Section 14 of the NPPF states that new development should be planned for in ways that: "avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change" with care taken to ensure that, where development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, "risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through incorporating green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems; and help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design".

Paragraph 166 of the NPPF details that when determining planning applications, Local Planning Authorities should "expect new development to: a) comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and b) take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption", with 'significant weight' given to "the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights)".

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Paragraph 161 states that the "planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050 and take full account of all climate impacts including overheating, water scarcity, storm and flood risks and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure".

Paragraph 163 states: "the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change should also be considered in preparing and assessing planning applications, taking into account the full range of potential climate change impacts."

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Policy 31 of the SELLP titled "Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy" outlines South Holland's strategy for addressing the consequences of climate change through the planning regime. This includes "reducing the need to travel through locational decisions" and also providing criteria which proposals for renewable energy production should conform to. These criteria are listed in Part B of Policy 31, stating that:
"With the exception of Wind Energy the development of renewable energy facilities, associated infrastructure and the integration of decentralised technologies on existing or proposed structures will be permitted provided, individually, or cumulatively, there would be no significant harm to:
1. visual amenity, landscape character or quality, or skyscape considerations;
2. residential amenity in respect of: noise, fumes, odour, vibration, shadow flicker, sunlight reflection, broadcast interference, traffic;
3. highway safety (including public rights of way);
4. agricultural land take;
5. aviation and radar safety;
6. heritage assets including their setting; and
7. the natural environment."

Beginning with an assessment of the photovoltaic (PV) array, it is considered that the proposal conforms to the seven criteria. There would be no impact upon the visual or residential amenity, as the panels would be to the rear of the property and obscured by existing boundary treatments. There would be no impact on highway or aviation safety due to the small scale of the works. No heritage assets are within such close proximity to the property as to be affected. The impact upon agricultural land take and the natural environment would be minimal due to the small scale of the proposal.

Turning to the assessment of the dwellinghouse itself; proposed here is a zero-carbon dwelling. The Standard Assessment Procedure results are shown on page 37 of the Design and Access Statement, and clearly show that the building conforms to the Zero Carbon Home criteria. To this end, the proposal conforms to the broad aims of Paragraph 161 of the NPPF to a certain extent, even if it does not conform to the exact minutia of the paragraph. That being said, this effect is a result of the design of the dwelling, rather than the location. As such, the same effect could be achieved if the proposal was located within a settlement boundary.

However, as established previously in this report, the positioning of the site means that occupants would be reliant on private vehicles. To a certain extent, this reliance on private vehicles reduces the environmental sustainability credentials of the proposal, as there would be an increase in daily emissions through travel.

As established within the "Layout, Design, Scale and Consideration of the Character of the Area" section of this report, the submitted Design and Access Statement has asserted that the design would be innovative, particularly with respect to adaptation to climate change, in line with the provisions of Paragraph 139 of the NPPF. The Design and Access Statement has drawn particular attention to the solar water heating proposed on the site (see pages 33 and 34 of the Design and Access Statement). The technique behind this method is explained in the Design and Access Statement.

Solar water heating, whilst not a commonplace feature, is not a new or particularly innovative mechanism for providing heating or hot water. A cursory search provides a raft of advice pages and installation companies, all of which suggest that the technique in itself is not a complete novelty. From the information provided, the proposal does not appear to innovate upon these industry norms, instead providing a more comprehensive array arrangement in the aim of providing year-round heating. Providing a larger array is not an innovative strategy for the purposes of the NPPF. Likewise, choosing this method as to singular method of heating the home is not necessarily innovative, as there is no evidence provided that the technique has not been used elsewhere.

In any event, the efficacy of this solar water heating mechanism has not been demonstrated here. To this end, it has not necessarily been wholly demonstrated that this is a viable method for heating the entire dwelling and that alternative methods would not be used as a supplement (although it should be clearly noted that, as stated on page 33 of the Design and Access Statement, in the event a supplementary heating method is required, this would be powered by the PV array, and would therefore not result in an increase in emissions). As such, without sufficient information to the contrary, it has not been fully demonstrated that the proposed solar water heating technique would be truly innovative, as outlined in Paragraph 139 of the NPPF.

It should also be reiterated at this time that the provisions of Policy 1 are such that any environmental gains should meet the development needs of the area, not just the development itself. As outlined within the principle discussion above, the gains emerging from the climate change mitigation and adaptation methods proposed would be principally felt by the occupants of the dwelling and would not cascade into the wider area. To this end, regardless of the weight attached to the environmental measures discussed above, the proposal would still fundamentally conflict with the provisions of Policy 1 in this regard.

To summarise, the proposal is for a zero-carbon design, which in itself in commendable and meets the aims of Section 14 of the NPPF to a certain extent. However, the submitted scheme is not considered to be innovative, appearing, from the submitted information, to transplant ideas that have already been applied as opposed to truly evolving them or developing wholly new concepts. Moreover, in locating the dwelling outside of a settlement, a reliance on private vehicles is created, which itself would have a harmful environmental impact.

As such, only limited weight in favour of the proposal can be attached with respect to climate change matters.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021) 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.

"Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met ("the biodiversity gain condition"). This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits".

The biodiversity gain condition is a pre-commencement condition. This relates to a condition that seeks, once planning permission has been granted, a Biodiversity Gain Plan that must be submitted and approved by the planning authority before commencement of the development, alongside the need to submit a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan.

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.

Provision 8 of The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, outlines that:
"The biodiversity gain planning condition does not apply in relation to planning permission for development which
(a)consists of no more than 9 dwellings;
(b)is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares; and
(c)consists exclusively of dwellings which are self-build or custom housebuilding"

As a self/ custom build dwelling, subject to the appropriate legal agreement confirming this to be the case, the proposal is considered to meet the requirements of this provision and is therefore exempt from the need for the statutory biodiversity gain condition. A statement to confirm agreement to a legal agreement has been provided within this submission.

Further discussion of biodiversity and ecology matters is found below.

Biodiversity & Ecology

Section 15 of the NPPF seeks to protect sites of biodiversity value, and minimise and provide net gains for biodiversity, including establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures, including the need to incorporate features which support priority or

threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs.

Paragraph 193 of the NPPF details that Local Planning Authorities should apply the following principles:
"a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate".

Despite being exempt from the need for the gain condition, a planting scheme has been provided and a biodiversity enhancement plan. The details of this are broadly outlined within the "Description of Proposal" section of this report. While it could be assumed that the proposal would deliver a net gain based upon this level of planting, this has not strictly been evidenced via the submission of a biodiversity metric. Likewise, at this time, no management plan for the habitat has been provided, and so it is unclear if any environmental benefits gained from planting would be maintained long term. To this end, the weight attributed to this point is tempered accordingly.

It should be noted once more at this time that the provisions of Policy 1 are such that the environmental gains should meet the development needs of the area, not just the development itself. It is unclear from the submitted details that the proposed works would cascade into the wider area. As the majority of the planting is within a private residence, there is limited scope for interaction with residents. To this end, the ability of the proposal to meet the sustainable development needs of the area is reduced.

Historic Environment

Policy 29 of the SELLP, alongside Section 16 of the NPPF, relates to the preservation of the historic environment. Both outline that all applications which may impact upon the historic environment, including archaeological remains, should preserve or enhance historic assets.

Part C of Policy 29 concerns "archaeology and scheduled monuments". This Policy outlines five assessment points for an application which may impact upon archaeological remains, the first three of which are particularly relevant here:

"1. Proposals that affect archaeological remains, whether known or potential, designated or non-designated, should take every reasonable step to protect and, where possible, enhance their significance.
2. Planning applications for such development should be accompanied by an appropriate and proportionate assessment to understand the potential for and significance of remains, and the impact of development upon them.
3. If initial assessment does not provide sufficient information, developers will be required to undertake field evaluation in advance of determination of the application. This may include a range of techniques for both intrusive and non-intrusive evaluation, as appropriate to the site."

Paragraph 205 of the NPPF states:
"Local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and be used to:
a) assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment; and
b) predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future."

In this instance, the historic environment record comes from the Lincolnshire Historic Environmental Record (LHER). The LPA's interpretation of the information within the LHER is informed via consultation with the Historic Places Team of Lincolnshire County Council (HPT), who maintain the LHER.

The public information relating to the LHER is taken from the Lincolnshire Heritage Explorer (LHE). The LHE is not a comprehensive database, and the information contained within it is constantly evolving. The LHE webpage is explicit that "the information provided through the Lincolnshire Heritage Explorer is only part of that held by the LHER, and will not be sufficient on its own to inform the planning process".

Sites of archaeological interest can broadly be separated into two categories: designated assets and non-designated assets. Designated assets, such as scheduled monuments, are far rarer and only occur in places where the requirements of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 can be applied. These are sites which have a pre-established significance to archaeological understanding at a wider national level, and must be designated by the Secretary of State as such. Accordingly, such sites are rare and are often designated after the scope of the asset has been established. The site in this instance is not designated.

Footnote 75 of the NPPF states that: "Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets."

It has been stated by the relevant consultee from the HPT that the site is in an area of Roman and post-medieval archaeological potential, with the following sites identified in the HER: MLI22430, Moat, Money Bridge Manor; MLI23054, Money Bridge Manor House, park, and post-medieval finds, Pinchbeck. The HPT has also identified evidence of cropmarks on the site. On this basis, the site can be considered a site of archaeological interest, and a potential non-designated heritage asset.

On this basis, they have recommended that, in the event the proposal is approved, the standard suite of archaeological conditions is imposed. The conditions would require the submission of a written scheme of archaeological investigation, followed by archaeological works to be done in accordance with the approved scheme. There is no evidence before the Planning Department which would indicate that this would be excessive.

Without the imposition of the requested condition, there is the potential for harm to a non-designated heritage asset, via the disturbance of a site of potential archaeological interest. On this basis, it is considered necessary to impose these conditions.

Planning Balance

Policy 1 outlines that in the "Countryside development will be permitted that is necessary to 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." It is not considered that the proposal necessitates this Countryside location or that it meets the needs of the area in terms of economic, community or environmental benefits.

Some weight is given in favour of the proposal as a self-build dwelling. Notwithstanding this, paragraph 5.3.5 of the supporting text to SELLP Policy 11 states that there may be opportunities for infill self-build development within defined settlement boundaries, although housing need may also be met through rural exception sites where appropriate. The application site is not within a settlement boundary, and it has not been suggested that it would be a rural exception site. Accordingly, the proposed site would still conflict with the spatial strategy and policy regarding self-buildings of the SELLP. In any event, the contribution towards meeting self-build dwelling needs made by a single dwelling is limited and is not substantive enough as to outweigh spatial considerations in isolation.

The sustainability of the dwelling with respect to green house gas emissions and energy efficiency during its lifetime are not disputed here. Nor is it disputed that there would be some form of biodiversity net gain arising from the development. However, no clear indication of the extent of the gains has been provided and it is unclear as to the extent that these benefits would cascade into the wider area. In any event, the energy efficiency and zero-carbon nature of the dwelling house would offer benefits solely to the occupant of the dwelling, rather than benefiting the wider area. Accordingly, the weight attributed to these points is reduced as the requirements of the SELLP and

the NPPF have not been fully met in this regard.

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

Taking these factors into consideration, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policy 1 of the SELLP. There are no significant benefits or factors in this case that would outweigh this identified policy conflict; therefore, the planning balance is not in favour of the proposal.

Recommendation

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