DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No:	**H16-0364-26**	**Applicant:**	**Alcan Properties Limited**
Proposal:	Erection of buildings to comprise up to 70,000 square metres (Gross Internal Area) of Class B8 (storage or distribution) floorspace to include ancillary Class E(g) (office) floorspace and provision of associated Infrastructure including utilising existing vehicular access from B1173. Outline with means of access to be considered.		
Location:	Land North Of The B1173 Barrier Bank And West Of The A16 Spalding (Lincs Gateway) Spalding		
Terminal Date:	14th September 2026		

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
06	Developer Contributions
07	Improving South East Lincolnshire's Employment Land Portfolio
08	Prestige Employment Sites
28	The Natural Environment
29	The Historic Environment
30	Pollution
31	Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
36	Vehicle and Cycle Parking
APPENDIX 6	Parking Standards

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework August 2026

Chapter 3 - Decision-making Policies (DM1-DM10)
Chapter 4 - Achieving Sustainable Development (S1-S6)
Chapter 5 - Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change (CC1-CC3)
Chapter 7 - Building a Strong, Effective Economy (E1-E4)
Chapter 12 - Making Effective Use of Land (L1-L3)
Chapter 14 - Achieving Well-designed Places (DP1-DP4)
Chapter 15 - Promoting Sustainable Transport (TR1-TR8)
Chapter 18 - Managing Flood Risk and Coastal Change (F1-F9)
Chapter 19 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment (N1-N6)
Chapter 20 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (HE1-HE10)

National Planning Policy Framework Update

Since the preparation of this Officer Report, the National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026)

has been published, replacing the previous December 2024 version. A separate Supplementary Assessment Report accompanies this Officer Report and provides a detailed assessment of the proposal against the relevant policies of the updated national framework, set out above.

The Officer Report below was prepared before the publication of the August 2026 Framework and therefore refers to the corresponding sections of the December 2024 NPPF (listed below). The findings of the Supplementary Assessment Report should be read alongside this report to demonstrate that the proposal has been assessed against the current national planning policy framework.

NPPF December 2024

Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development
Section 4 - Decision-making
Section 6 - Building a Strong, Competitive Economy
Section 9 - Promoting Sustainable Transport
Section 11 - Making Effective Use of Land
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
Section 16 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Representations:

	Object	Support	No Obj.	Comments
WARD MEMBER	1	0	0	0
PLANNING LIAISON OFFICER - FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT	0	0	0	1
HIGHWAYS & SUDS SUPPORT	0	0	0	1
SPALDING & DISTRICT CIVIC SOCIETY	0	1	0	0
SOUTH HOLLAND INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	0	0	0	1
SHDC INTERNAL	0	0	0	1
OTHER STATUTORY BODIES	0	0	1	10
RESIDENTS	6	0	0	0

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Proposal

This application seeks outline planning permission for the erection of buildings comprising up to 70,000 square metres (Gross Internal Area) of Class B8 (storage and distribution) floorspace, including ancillary Class E(g) office floorspace, together with associated infrastructure. Means of access is the only matter for consideration at this stage, with layout, scale, appearance and landscaping reserved for subsequent approval.

The vehicular access to the site proposed as part of this application is via the existing access from the B1173 (Cowbit Road), with the application seeking approval for the principle of the development and the proposed means of access only. However this access was already approved under previous application and has been built. All other detailed design matters would be considered through one or more subsequent Reserved Matters applications.

Whilst a range of illustrative plans have been submitted in support of the application, including a Masterplan, Parameters Plan and Illustrative Landscape Masterplan, these are provided to demonstrate one potential form of development and to inform the assessment of the proposal. They are not submitted for approval as part of this outline application, except insofar as they assist in demonstrating that the proposed development can be accommodated on the site.

The application is supported by the following documents:

·Site Location Plan
·Masterplan
·Site Constraints Plan
·Parameters Plan
·Illustrative Landscape Masterplan
·Supporting Planning Statement
·Design and Access Statement
·Transport Statement
·Framework Travel Plan
·Flood Risk Assessment
·Addendum Ecological Appraisal
·Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and Metric
·Landscape and Visual Appraisal (including Appendices)
·Noise Impact Assessment
·Air Quality Assessment
·Lighting Impact Assessment
·Geotechnical and Geo-Environmental Site Investigation
·Archaeological Evaluation

Site Description

The application site extends to approximately 22.2 hectares and comprises the allocated Lincs Gateway Prestige Employment Site (SP002) situated to the south-west of Spalding. The site is located to the west of the B1173 (Cowbit Road), immediately south of the A16/Barrier Bank roundabout, occupying a prominent gateway location on the principal approach into the town from the south.

The site is generally flat in character and comprises predominantly agricultural land together with areas of previously disturbed land associated with the earlier phases of the Lincs Gateway development. Existing field boundaries, drainage ditches and areas of established vegetation define parts of the site, whilst the northern boundary is characterised by a principal drainage corridor managed by the South Holland Internal Drainage Board. Residential properties are located to the west along Fen End Lane, with the wider area comprising a mixture of agricultural land, commercial development associated with the Lincs Gateway employment allocation and the strategic highway network.

Vehicular access to the site is provided via an existing priority junction from the B1173 (Cowbit Road), which was constructed pursuant to the previous outline planning permission and associated Section 278 Agreement with the Highway Authority. No new vehicular access is proposed as part of

the current application, (despite the suggestion within teh application form that it forms consideration), with the existing junction intended to serve the proposed development.

The site is allocated within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) as Prestige Employment Site SP002 - Lincs Gateway, where Policies 7 and 8 identify the land for strategic employment development comprising Class B1, B2 and B8 uses together with associated infrastructure and landscaping. The site also benefits from an extant outline planning permission (ref. H16-0521-23) for a materially similar employment development, which represents a significant material consideration in the determination of the current application.

History

H16-0009-14 - Proposed business park, hotel, public house/restaurant, conference and function centre, petrol filling station, restaurant/cafe with ancillary retail together with associated landscaping, access, highways, parking, drainage, utilities and services and infrastructure works. Approved 10-10-14

H16-0874-15 - Proposed service station (Amended layout). Approved 16-12-15

H16-0966-17 - Proposed business park, hotel, public house/restaurant, conference and function centre, petrol filling station, restaurant/cafe with ancillary retail together with associated landscaping, access, highways, parking, drainage, utilities and services and infrastructure works - approved under H16-0009-14. Modification of Condition 2 to allow amendments to previously approved plans. Approved 03-11-17

H16-0967-17 - Proposed business park, hotel, public house/restaurant, conference and function centre, petrol filling station, restaurant/cafe with ancillary retail together with associated landscaping, access, highways, parking, drainage, utilities and services and infrastructure works - approved under H16-0025-15. Modification of Condition 2 to allow amendments to previously approved plans. Withdrawn 03-11-17

H16-0952-17 - Details of landscaping for Parcel 4 - outline application H16-0025-15. Approved 12-12-17

H16-0951-17 - Details of landscaping for Parcel 4 - outline application H16-0009-14. Approved 12-12-17

H16-0521-23 - Erection of buildings to comprise up to 70,000 square metres (Gross Internal Area) of Class B8 (storage or distribution) floorspace to include ancillary Class E(g) (office) floorspace and provision of associated infrastructure including utilising existing vehicular access from B1173. Outline with means of access to be considered. Approved 20-10-23

Consultations

Lincolnshire County Council (Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority)

Raises no objection to the proposal. The Highway Authority concludes that the development would not result in an unacceptable impact upon highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact upon the local highway network. It confirms that the proposal will utilise the existing access from the B1173, which was constructed under the previous planning permission and associated Section 278 Agreement, and considers the junction suitable to serve the proposed development.

No objection is raised subject to planning conditions relating to construction management, surface water drainage, the management of riparian watercourses, the implementation of the Framework Travel Plan and the detailed design of the internal highway infrastructure. In addition, the Highway Authority requests a Unilateral Undertaking securing a £4,500 Traffic Regulation Order contribution towards a speed limit reduction on Cowbit Road and a £5,000 Travel Plan Monitoring Contribution.

Environment Agency

Raises no objection subject to a planning condition requiring all buildings to incorporate an area of

safe refuge above the predicted flood depths identified within the submitted Flood Risk Assessment.

South Holland Internal Drainage Board

Raises no objection. The Board welcomes the applicant's commitment to restricting surface water discharge to the greenfield runoff rate and advises that separate consent under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 will be required for any infilling or alteration of existing watercourses.

Anglian Water

Raises no objection, confirming that both the Spalding Water Recycling Centre and the existing foul sewerage network have sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed development.

Historic Environment (Lincolnshire County Council)

Raises no objection subject to planning conditions.

Natural England

NE offer no comments

National Gas Transmission

Confirms that it has no apparatus affected by the proposal. National Grid Electricity Distribution advises the applicant to engage separately regarding the existing 11kV overhead electricity line crossing part of the site.

Environmental Protection

Raises no objection subject to mitigation measures identified within the submitted Noise Impact Assessment. These include the provision of a 2 metre high acoustic fence on the existing landscape bund adjacent to Fen End Lane, enhanced acoustic insulation to the nearest warehouse unit, operational controls over HGV movements adjacent to neighbouring dwellings and restrictions preventing overnight use of refrigerated trailer parking along the western boundary. These matters are addressed elsewhere within this report and are recommended to be secured through planning conditions.

Ecologist

Initially requested further environmental DNA (eDNA) surveys in respect of Great Crested Newts prior to determination. Following the submission of updated protected species information, the Council's Ecologist has confirmed that the remaining ecological survey work and mitigation can be appropriately secured through planning conditions. Biodiversity Net Gain will also be secured through the statutory biodiversity gain regime and planning conditions.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

In support the comments of the Council's Ecologist.

The Ramblers Association

no objection

Active Travel England

no objection

Pedals

no objection

The Spalding and District Civic Society

Supports the application.

Third Party Representations

The application has been publicised in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order. A total of seven objections have been received, including an objection from the local Ward Member. The principal concern relates to the capacity of the drainage system serving Fen End Lane, with representations requesting that improvements to the drainage network are undertaken before any increase in development within the area. These matters have been considered in the assessment of flood risk and drainage elsewhere within this report

Planning Considerations

The application seeks outline planning permission with means of access to be determined and all other matters reserved for the erection of buildings comprising up to 70,000 square metres Gross Internal Area of Class B8 storage and distribution floorspace including ancillary Class E(g) office floorspace together with associated infrastructure. The proposal would utilise the existing vehicular access from the B1173 and seeks, in effect, to renew the extant outline planning permission for a materially identical form of development.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In determining this application the principal planning considerations are:

·Principle of Development
·Planning Obligations
·Highway Safety and Sustainable Transport
·Flood Risk and Drainage
·Ecology and Biodiversity
·Heritage and Archaeology
·Environmental Quality Residential Amenity and Pollution
·Land Contamination
·Reserved Matters and Scope of this Permission
·Planning Balance and Conclusion

Principle of development

The application site is allocated within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) as the Lincs Gateway Prestige Employment Site (SP002) under Policies 7 and 8. The allocation identifies the site for high-quality employment development, including Class B1, B2 and B8 uses, supported by associated infrastructure and landscaping. The proposal, comprising up to 70,000m² of Class B8 storage and distribution floorspace with ancillary Class E(g) office accommodation, therefore falls squarely within the range of employment uses anticipated by the allocation.

Policy 8 seeks to ensure that development on Prestige Employment Sites delivers high-quality employment opportunities with good connectivity to the strategic highway network, appropriate landscaping, sustainable transport links and suitable consideration of flood risk and infrastructure

requirements. The proposal has been designed around the existing strategic access from the B1173, with all other matters reserved for subsequent approval. The supporting technical information demonstrates that the site is capable of accommodating the proposed development, with detailed matters relating to layout, appearance, landscaping, drainage and design to be considered at the Reserved Matters stage.

The application site also benefits from outline planning permission under reference H16-0521-23, granted on 20th October 2023, for materially the same form of development. Whilst each application must be determined on its own planning merits, the previous permission is a significant material consideration. The current proposal seeks to renew that outline consent, with no substantive changes to the description of development, the extent of the site or the proposed means of access. Furthermore, there have been no material changes to the Development Plan allocation or the site's role as a strategic employment location since that permission was granted.

At the national level, the National Planning Policy Framework places significant weight on supporting economic growth and productivity and requires planning decisions to help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. It also requires planning authorities to maintain a sufficient supply of employment land through the plan-led system. The proposed development would contribute towards these objectives by facilitating a strategically allocated employment site capable of accommodating large-scale storage and distribution uses in a location specifically identified for such development.

Accordingly, the principle of employment development on this site is considered to accord with Policies 7 and 8 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) and the economic objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework. The acceptability of the proposal therefore turns on the detailed technical considerations addressed elsewhere within this report.

Planning Obligations and Viability

Policy 6 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) requires assessing developments to mitigate their impacts upon infrastructure, services and the environment where necessary to make development acceptable in planning terms. The policy confirms that developer contributions should be secured through Section 106 agreements where they satisfy the statutory tests set out within Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended).

The application is accompanied by a draft Unilateral Undertaking pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In response to the proposed development, Lincolnshire County Council, in its capacity as Highway Authority, has requested the following obligations:

·A Traffic Regulation Order Contribution of £4,500, payable prior to commencement of development, towards the Highway Authority's legal and administrative costs associated with the investigation and implementation of a Traffic Regulation Order to reduce the speed limit on the B1173 (Cowbit Road) between the existing 30mph limit and the A16; and

·A Travel Plan Monitoring Contribution of £5,000, payable prior to commencement of development, towards the Highway Authority's costs of coordinating and monitoring the Framework Travel Plan throughout its lifetime.

The Highway Authority has confirmed that these obligations are necessary to mitigate the transport impacts arising from the proposed development and has raised no objection to the application subject to these obligations and appropriate planning conditions. The Traffic Regulation Order contribution was also secured through the previous outline planning permission (ref. H16-0521-23).

The existing highway access has been constructed and is available to serve the development. However, the financial contributions secured in association with H16-0521-23 have not been paid. It is therefore necessary for the current permission to secure the Traffic Regulation Order and Travel Plan Monitoring contributions independently.

Officers are satisfied that the proposed planning obligations are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, are directly related to the development, and are fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind. The obligations therefore satisfy the requirements of Policy 6 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) and Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). Subject to the completion of the accompanying

Unilateral Undertaking, the proposed obligations are considered acceptable.

Highway safety and parking

Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) seeks to promote sustainable transport and requires development to ensure that safe and suitable access can be achieved for all users. Paragraph 115 requires development to prioritise sustainable transport modes where appropriate, secure safe and suitable access, provide well-designed streets and parking areas, and ensure that any significant impacts on the transport network can be appropriately mitigated. Paragraph 116 advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or where the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

At the local level, Policy 2 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) requires development to have regard to access arrangements and vehicle generation, whilst Policy 3 requires proposals to demonstrate how accessibility by a choice of travel modes, including walking, cycling and public transport, will be achieved where relevant. Policy 36 further requires vehicle and cycle parking to be provided in accordance with the Council's adopted parking standards.

Transport Statement

The application is accompanied by a Transport Statement and Framework Travel Plan which assess the transport implications of the proposed development. Although this is an outline application with means of access to be determined, the proposal does not seek the construction of a new vehicular access. Instead, the development would utilise the existing vehicular access from the B1173, which was approved and constructed pursuant to the previous outline planning permission and associated Section 278 Agreement. The Highway Authority confirms that "both proposals utilise the same point of access onto the B1173 Cowbit Road, which is a Ghost Island Right-turn Lane junction that was constructed some years ago under a Section 278 Agreement with the Highway Authority" and further advises that "the junction has been constructed to the appropriate Design Manual for Roads and Bridges standards and is suitable to provide safe access and egress for the use being proposed in this Application."

The submitted Transport Statement concludes that there have been no material changes to the scale or nature of the proposed development since the previous outline permission and that the existing access remains suitable to accommodate the anticipated traffic generation. The Highway Authority agrees with this assessment and concludes that the proposal would "not be expected to have an unacceptable impact upon highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact upon the local highway network".

In respect of sustainable transport, the application is supported by a Framework Travel Plan which promotes travel by walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing through a package of measures, including the appointment of a Travel Plan Coordinator, monitoring arrangements and initiatives to encourage sustainable travel. The Highway Authority has accepted the submitted Framework Travel Plan, subject to a Travel Plan Monitoring Contribution secured through the accompanying Unilateral Undertaking and the implementation of the Travel Plan through planning condition.

Bridleway

The Highway Authority has also referred to Spalding Public Bridleway No. 894 and has confirmed that the entire definitive route between Fen End Lane and Barrier Bank has bridleway status. The definitive alignment lies outside the application red-line boundary and no works to, obstruction of, diversion of or temporary closure of the bridleway form part of the application. The Site Constraints Plan is illustrative and does not form part of the approved plans. Consequently, a planning condition relating to the bridleway is not considered necessary or relevant to the development permitted. Any future works affecting the route would require separate statutory authorisation.

The Highway Authority raises no objection to the proposal subject to planning conditions and the completion of the accompanying Unilateral Undertaking. The recommended conditions principally relate to the submission of a Construction Management Plan, surface water drainage, the

management of watercourses, implementation of the Framework Travel Plan. These conditions are considered reasonable and appropriate having regard to the outline nature of the application, where only the means of access is to be approved at this stage.

A condition is recommended defining the sole vehicular access as the existing ghost-island right-turn junction from the B1173, approved and implemented under H16-0521-23 and constructed pursuant to the Section 278 Agreement. No additional vehicular access from the B1173 would be permitted.

Having regard to the submitted Transport Statement, Framework Travel Plan and the consultation response of the Highway Authority, Officers are satisfied that the existing means of access is suitable to serve the proposed development, that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact on the highway network, and that the transport impacts of the development can be appropriately mitigated through planning conditions and the accompanying Unilateral Undertaking. The proposal therefore accords with Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and Policies 2, 3 and 36 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019).

Ecology and Biodiversity

Policy 28 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) seeks to protect and enhance the natural environment. In particular, criterion 2 requires development to safeguard nationally and locally designated sites together with protected and priority habitats and species, whilst criterion 3 seeks to strengthen ecological networks and secure biodiversity enhancements. Chapter 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) similarly requires planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

Protected Species

The application is supported by an Addendum Ecological Appraisal together with updated protected species surveys, which assess the ecological value of the site and the potential effects of the proposed development. The reports conclude that, subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation and safeguarding measures, the proposal would not result in significant adverse effects on protected species or habitats. The majority of the site comprises previously disturbed land and temporary grassland, with areas of scrub and woodland to be retained and enhanced as part of the development.

The Council's Ecologist is satisfied that the submitted ecological information provides a robust basis upon which to determine the application. Mitigation and enhancement measures identified within the Ecological Appraisal, including ecological safeguards during construction, bat-sensitive lighting, updated protected species surveys where appropriate and species-specific mitigation, can be secured through appropriately worded planning conditions.

Given the extended period allowed for the submission of Reserved Matters and implementation of the development, a condition is recommended requiring an Ecological Survey Review to accompany each Reserved Matters application. The review will determine whether the ecological information remains valid and sufficient having regard to the time elapsed, changes to habitats and the current presence or status of protected species. Updated eDNA or other protected-species surveys will only be required where the review identifies that the existing information is no longer valid or sufficient. A further review will also be required where works do not commence within 18 months of the most recent relevant survey or review. This provides a proportionate mechanism for ensuring that ecological information remains current throughout the delivery period.

Subject to the recommended planning conditions, Officers are satisfied that the proposal would conserve and enhance biodiversity and would accord with Policy 28 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Biodiversity Net Gain

The application is accompanied by a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and Statutory Biodiversity Metric which demonstrate that the development is capable of delivering the mandatory biodiversity

net gain through a combination of habitat retention, habitat creation and long-term ecological management. Existing woodland and scrub habitats are retained, whilst the proposals introduce new landscaping and habitat creation throughout the site.

The Council's Ecologist raises no objection in principle to the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, subject to the submission and approval of a Biodiversity Gain Plan in accordance with the statutory biodiversity net gain requirements and the implementation of the proposed habitat creation and management measures. These matters can be secured through planning condition and the statutory biodiversity net gain regime.

Given that the submitted metric and biodiversity baseline relate to the application site as a whole, the recommended conditions require an overall Biodiversity Gain Plan and a single site-wide Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan. This will provide a coordinated framework for habitat creation, management, monitoring, adaptive management and reporting across the entire development. The HMMP will apply for the required 30-year period and will not be subdivided between individual development phases.

Accordingly, subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy 28 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019), the Environment Act 2021 and the biodiversity objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Flood risk and drainage

Paragraph 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) confirms that where planning applications come forward on sites allocated through the development plan following application of the Sequential Test, applicants are not required to reapply the Sequential Test. The application site forms part of an allocated employment site within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan and the principle of development within this location has therefore already been established through the plan-making process.

Policy 4 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) permits development within areas at risk of flooding where it is supported by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment demonstrating that the proposed development will be safe for its lifetime, incorporates appropriate mitigation measures, provides sustainable drainage wherever practicable, does not increase flood risk elsewhere, secures satisfactory foul drainage and maintains access to flood risk infrastructure.

The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy prepared by Eastwood Consulting Engineers (April 2026). The site lies within Flood Zone 3; however, the assessment concludes that whilst the site is located within the defended floodplain, the existing flood defence network significantly reduces the risk of fluvial and tidal flooding. The Flood Risk Assessment also considers the risks arising from surface water, groundwater, sewer, reservoir flooding and climate change throughout the lifetime of the development. The proposed development is classified as Less Vulnerable development and is therefore compatible with Flood Zone 3a.

The Flood Risk Assessment concludes that raising finished floor levels is neither practical nor appropriate owing to the extent of level raising required and the consequential requirement for floodplain compensation. Instead, a flood resilient approach is proposed, incorporating flood resistant construction techniques, resilient materials, raised electrical services, first floor areas of refuge and Flood Evacuation Management Plans for future occupiers.

The Environment Agency raises no objection to the proposal subject to a planning condition requiring all buildings to incorporate an area of safe refuge above the predicted flood depths identified within the submitted Flood Risk Assessment. Officers consider this condition to be reasonable and necessary to ensure the development remains safe throughout its lifetime in accordance with national policy.

With regard to drainage, the Flood Risk Assessment demonstrates that infiltration drainage is not feasible due to the underlying impermeable clay soils and shallow groundwater. Surface water is therefore proposed to discharge at a restricted greenfield rate of 1.4 litres per second per hectare into the surrounding drainage network, with attenuation provided through a combination of permeable paving, swales, underground storage and attenuation basins. Anglian Water has confirmed that the local foul sewerage network has capacity to accommodate the proposed development.

Lincolnshire County Council, in its capacity as Lead Local Flood Authority, raises no objection to the application. Given the outline nature of the proposal, where only means of access is to be approved, the Lead Local Flood Authority advises that the submitted surface water drainage proposals should be treated as indicative at this stage and recommends conditions requiring the submission of a detailed surface water drainage strategy, together with details of the future management of the site's riparian watercourses, as part of the Reserved Matters process. The Authority also notes that the existing drainage corridor along the northern boundary should be improved through the widening and re-cutting of the existing watercourse, rather than the creation of a parallel channel, in order to facilitate its future maintenance.

The South Holland Internal Drainage Board also raises no objection. The Board welcomes the applicant's commitment to restricting surface water discharge to the greenfield runoff rate and confirms that separate consent under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 will be required for the proposed infilling and alteration of existing watercourses. This requirement is separate from the planning process.

Having regard to the submitted Flood Risk Assessment, the consultation responses of the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority and South Holland Internal Drainage Board, Officers are satisfied that the proposed development can be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Subject to the recommended planning conditions securing detailed drainage design, flood resilience measures, safe refuge, watercourse management and long-term maintenance, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy 4 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Contaminated Land

Policy 30 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) seeks to ensure that development does not give rise to unacceptable adverse impacts arising from pollution. Amongst other matters, the policy requires proposals to safeguard land quality and condition and to ensure that any contamination risks are appropriately identified, assessed and mitigated.

The application is supported by a Geotechnical and Geo-environmental Site Investigation (July 2022), which informed the previous outline planning permission granted under reference H16-0521-23. The investigation comprised both desk-based and intrusive investigations, including trial pits, boreholes, groundwater monitoring, ground gas monitoring and laboratory testing. The assessment concludes that no significant contamination has been identified requiring remediation and that the site is suitable for the proposed employment use, subject to the recommendations contained within the report.

Environmental Protection raises no objection to the proposal. However, having regard to the scale of the site, the phased nature of the development and the fact that the application relies upon the same Geo-environmental Site Investigation that supported the previous outline permission, Officers consider it appropriate to adopt the same precautionary approach previously accepted by the Local Planning Authority. Accordingly, planning conditions are recommended requiring the submission of a remediation strategy should contamination be encountered, together with a verification report where remediation is undertaken, in addition to the standard unexpected contamination provisions. These conditions will ensure that any contamination encountered during the implementation of the development is appropriately investigated, remediated and verified before the affected areas are brought into use.

Subject to these conditions, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy 30 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019).

Heritage and Archaeology

SELLP Policy 29 seeks to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the distinctive elements of South East Lincolnshire's historic environment. In respect of archaeology, the policy requires proposals affecting archaeological remains, whether known or potential, designated or non-designated, to take every reasonable step to protect and, where possible, enhance their significance. Policy 29 further requires planning applications to be accompanied by an appropriate and proportionate assessment to understand the significance of archaeological remains and the

impact of development upon them. Where sufficient information is not available, developers will be required to undertake field evaluation and, where appropriate, mitigation should seek to preserve archaeological remains in-situ or, where this is not possible, secure preservation by record through an agreed Written Scheme of Investigation.

The application is supported by an Archaeological Evaluation (APS Report No. 114/13), which comprised a programme of archaeological trial trenching undertaken across the site. The evaluation was commissioned in recognition of the site's archaeological potential, arising from known cropmarks within the surrounding landscape and nearby recorded Roman and medieval remains. The investigation identified evidence of post-medieval agricultural activity in the form of historic dyling ditches but found no evidence of prehistoric, Roman or medieval archaeological remains within the application site. The report concludes that no archaeological remains earlier than the post-medieval period were encountered during the evaluation.

The Historic Environment Officer raises no objection in principle to the proposed development subject to a programme of archaeological evaluation and, where necessary, mitigation secured through an approved Written Scheme of Investigation.

Having regard to the scale of the site and the potential for archaeological evidence or mitigation requirements to extend across the boundaries of individual delivery phases, Officers consider that the archaeological controls should apply to the application site as a whole. The recommended conditions therefore require a site-wide written scheme of archaeological investigation and, where the evaluation identifies a requirement for mitigation, an overarching Archaeological Mitigation Strategy. The required mitigation must be completed in its entirety prior to the first occupation or use of the development. Subject to these conditions, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019).

Environmental Quality, Noise and Residential Amenity

Policy 2 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) requires development to have appropriate regard to its relationship with existing development and to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring occupiers. Policy 30 further seeks to ensure that development does not result in unacceptable impacts arising from pollution, including noise, disturbance and poor air quality.

The application is supported by a Noise Impact Assessment and an Air Quality Assessment, which consider the likely environmental effects arising during both the construction and operational phases of the proposed development.

The submitted Noise Impact Assessment considers the effects of operational plant, service yard activities, HGV movements and traffic associated with the proposed B8 development. Baseline monitoring identifies that the existing acoustic environment is influenced predominantly by traffic associated with the A16, A1175 and B1173. The assessment concludes that, subject to the incorporation of appropriate mitigation, the operational development can be accommodated without giving rise to significant adverse effects upon nearby residential receptors.

The Air Quality Assessment identifies that the principal source of existing air pollution arises from the surrounding highway network. During the construction phase, there is potential for temporary dust and particulate emissions; however, these can be effectively managed through standard construction management and dust suppression measures. During operation, the assessment concludes that the proposed development would result in an overall negligible impact upon local air quality and that there are no air quality constraints which would prevent the development proceeding.

Environmental Protection has reviewed the submitted Noise Impact Assessment and raises no objection to the proposal subject to appropriate mitigation. In particular, it recommends that the existing landscape bund adjacent to Fen End Lane is enhanced through the provision of a 2 metre high close-board acoustic fence, together with enhanced acoustic insulation to the northern and western elevations of the warehouse unit closest to Fen End Lane. Environmental Protection further advises that HGV movements should, where reasonably practicable, be minimised within the service yard adjacent to the nearest residential property (NSR1) and that overnight parking or use of refrigerated trailers should not take place along the western boundary. Officers consider these measures to be necessary to safeguard the amenities of neighbouring residents.

Officers acknowledge that the proposed acoustic fencing has the potential to influence the visual appearance of the development, particularly when viewed from Fen End Lane and the surrounding open countryside. However, this is an outline application with all matters other than means of access reserved. Accordingly, the detailed design, height, materials and landscaping associated with the proposed acoustic barrier can be fully assessed through the Reserved Matters process. This will enable the Local Planning Authority to ensure that an appropriate balance is achieved between protecting residential amenity and maintaining the character and appearance of the area, including the incorporation of structural landscaping where necessary to soften the visual impact of the acoustic fencing.

Subject to planning conditions securing the recommended acoustic mitigation, enhanced building insulation, operational controls relating to HGV activity and refrigerated trailers, together with the submission of detailed boundary treatment and landscaping proposals at the Reserved Matters stage, Officers are satisfied that the proposal would not result in unacceptable impacts upon the amenities of neighbouring occupiers or the wider environment by reason of noise, disturbance or air quality. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policies 2 and 30 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019).

Reserved Matters and Scope of this Permission

Policy 2 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) requires development to contribute positively to local identity and distinctiveness, responding appropriately to the character of the area whilst respecting its relationship with neighbouring development. The policy requires proposals to demonstrate appropriate consideration of their size, scale, layout, density, landscaping and impact upon the character and appearance of the area. Similarly, Policy 3 seeks to ensure that new development achieves a high standard of design, confirming that development which is inappropriate to its local context, or which fails to maximise opportunities to improve the character and quality of an area will not be supported.

This application has been submitted in outline, with means of access being the only matter for determination. Accordingly, the detailed matters of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping are expressly reserved for subsequent approval under one or more Reserved Matters applications.

The application is supported by a Design and Access Statement, Masterplan, Parameter Plan, Illustrative Landscape Masterplan and Landscape and Visual Appraisal. Collectively these documents demonstrate that the allocated employment site is capable of accommodating the proposed quantum of development whilst incorporating structural landscaping, sustainable drainage, ecological enhancement and appropriate stand-off distances from neighbouring residential properties. The Landscape and Visual Appraisal concludes that the wider landscape has a medium-low sensitivity to the proposals, that the site itself has a low landscape sensitivity, and that the principal visual effects would be experienced by a limited number of nearby residential receptors, with those effects reducing over time as the proposed landscape strategy matures. The assessment further concludes that the retention and enhancement of the existing bund, together with substantial native tree and shrub planting, would assist in integrating the development into its landscape setting and mitigating visual impacts.

Notwithstanding the above, these documents are illustrative in nature and have informed the supporting technical assessments rather than seeking approval of the detailed design. Consequently, they do not fix the future disposition of buildings, internal estate roads, servicing arrangements, parking areas, landscaping, finished floor levels or architectural appearance, all of which remain matters for future determination through the Reserved Matters process.

Future Reserved Matters applications will therefore be required to demonstrate, amongst other matters:

·an appropriate layout that responds positively to the site's context and relationship with neighbouring development;
·a high-quality architectural design, including the scale, massing, external materials and appearance of the proposed buildings;
·comprehensive structural landscaping and boundary treatments, including the detailed design of acoustic mitigation measures and landscape planting to soften their visual impact where necessary;
·the detailed design of the internal highway network, servicing areas, parking provision and pedestrian and cycle infrastructure;

·the detailed design of the sustainable drainage network, attenuation features and management of existing watercourses;
·ecological mitigation, biodiversity enhancement and habitat creation;
·detailed flood resilience measures where required; and
·any other technical details required by the planning conditions attached to this permission.

The purpose of this outline permission is therefore to establish the principle of up to 70,000 square metres (Gross Internal Area) of Class B8 storage and distribution development with ancillary Class E(g) office floorspace on this allocated employment site, together with the acceptability of utilising the existing means of access from the B1173. The detailed design of the development remains subject to the future approval of the Local Planning Authority through the Reserved Matters process.

Given the outline nature of the application, together with the scale and complexity of the proposed development, it is considered both necessary and reasonable to impose a comprehensive suite of planning conditions. In addition to the statutory outline conditions requiring the submission of Reserved Matters relating to layout, scale, appearance and landscaping, conditions are recommended to secure matters including drainage, flood resilience, ecology, biodiversity net gain, archaeology, contamination, construction environmental management, acoustic mitigation, external lighting, Travel Plan implementation and other technical mitigation identified through the consultation process. Officers are satisfied that the recommended conditions are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms and meet the relevant tests for planning conditions.

Accordingly, should planning permission be granted, it is considered appropriate that the approved plans are limited to the Site Location Plan, which defines the application site and the extent of the planning permission. The remaining submitted drawings, including the Masterplan, Parameter Plan and Illustrative Landscape Masterplan, are considered illustrative documents which demonstrate the site's capacity to accommodate the proposed development but do not form part of the approved plans. Their detailed implementation will instead be considered through future Reserved Matters applications and the discharge of planning conditions.

Phasing and Site-wide Controls

The applicant has indicated that the development is likely to be delivered in phases and has requested that, where possible, the planning conditions allow details to be submitted and approved separately for each phase. Officers have reviewed the proposed conditions on that basis and have sought to accommodate phased delivery where the subject matter can reasonably be considered in isolation without prejudicing the delivery of the development as a whole.

Accordingly, the conditions allow phase-specific submissions in relation to construction management, detailed surface-water and foul-water drainage schemes, detailed site and finished-floor levels, employment and skills measures and ecological survey reviews. Reserved Matters applications may also be submitted for individual phases, provided that each submission accords with the overarching requirements of the outline permission.

Given the scale of the development and the extended period allowed for the submission of Reserved Matters, a Site-wide Phasing and Infrastructure Plan is nevertheless required before or concurrently with the first Reserved Matters application. This will establish the extent and sequence of the proposed phases and coordinate the delivery of shared access, drainage, utilities, watercourses, landscaping, ecological measures and other infrastructure or mitigation serving more than one phase.

The surface-water and foul-water drainage conditions similarly require site-wide strategies before detailed phase schemes are approved. This is necessary because individual phases may share drainage catchments, discharge points, attenuation, pumping or downstream infrastructure. Approval of drainage for one phase in isolation could otherwise prejudice the capacity, operation or delivery of subsequent phases.

A Site-wide Levels Strategy is also required to coordinate earthworks, finished-floor levels, roads, service yards, drainage falls, flood-risk measures and exceedance routes and to avoid abrupt or incompatible changes in level between adjoining phases. Detailed levels may subsequently be approved separately for each phase where they accord with that overarching strategy.

The overall Biodiversity Gain Plan and Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan are required to relate to the entire application site. The biodiversity baseline, habitat targets and long-term management and monitoring obligations must be considered consistently across the development as a whole. A single site-wide approach will ensure that habitat creation and enhancement are properly coordinated and that the required gains are maintained and monitored throughout the relevant 30-year period.

Archaeological evaluation and mitigation will also remain subject to site-wide control. Archaeological evidence and necessary mitigation may extend across the boundaries of individual development phases and should not be fragmented or discharged on a parcel-by-parcel basis. The conditions therefore require a written scheme of archaeological investigation relating to the development as a whole and, where mitigation is required, an overarching Archaeological Mitigation Strategy. The required archaeological mitigation must be completed in its entirety before the development is first occupied or brought into use.

Officers consider that this approach provides appropriate flexibility for the practical delivery of the development while ensuring that shared infrastructure, cumulative effects and environmental mitigation are properly coordinated across the permission as a whole. The conditions are therefore considered necessary, relevant, enforceable, precise and reasonable having regard to the scale, nature and likely implementation period of the development.

Planning Balance

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The application seeks outline planning permission for up to 70,000 square metres (Gross Internal Area) of Class B8 storage and distribution floorspace, including ancillary Class E(g) office accommodation, on land allocated within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) as the Lincs Gateway Prestige Employment Site (SP002). The principle of employment development on the site is therefore firmly established through the Development Plan and is further reinforced by the site's extant outline planning permission (ref. H16-0521-23), which represents a significant material consideration.

The proposal has been supported by a comprehensive suite of technical assessments addressing highways, flood risk and drainage, ecology, biodiversity, archaeology, contamination, air quality, noise and other environmental matters. The relevant statutory consultees, including the Highway Authority, Lead Local Flood Authority, Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Board, Historic Environment Officer and Environmental Protection, raise no objection to the proposal subject to the imposition of planning conditions and the completion of the accompanying Unilateral Undertaking. Officers are satisfied that the technical matters arising from the development have been appropriately assessed and that any residual impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated.

The proposal would make effective use of a strategically allocated employment site, supporting economic growth and investment in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies 7 and 8 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019). The development would also make use of the existing vehicular access from the B1173, previously approved and implemented under the earlier outline permission, with no evidence to suggest that the proposal would give rise to unacceptable impacts on highway safety, flood risk, ecology, heritage assets or the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.

Whilst only the means of access is to be determined at this stage, Officers are satisfied that the submitted technical information demonstrates that the site is capable of accommodating the proposed quantum of development. The detailed design of the development, including its layout, scale, appearance, landscaping, internal highway network, drainage infrastructure and other design matters, remains subject to future Reserved Matters applications. These matters, together with the comprehensive suite of planning conditions recommended as part of this permission, provide the Local Planning Authority with appropriate control over the detailed form and implementation of the development.

Having carefully considered the Development Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework, the consultation responses received and all other material planning considerations, Officers conclude

that the proposal represents sustainable development and accords with the Development Plan when read as a whole. There are no material considerations which indicate that planning permission should be withheld.

It is therefore recommended that outline planning permission be granted, subject to the completion of the accompanying Unilateral Undertaking and the planning conditions set out in this report.

Conclusion

Accordingly, Officers conclude that the proposal accords with Policies 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 28, 29, 30 and 36 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) together with the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024). There are no material considerations which indicate that planning permission should be withheld.

It is therefore recommended that outline planning permission be granted, subject to the completion of the accompanying Unilateral Undertaking and the planning conditions

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.