

DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No: H16-0588-25 **Applicant:** Rollins Group

Proposal: Proposed construction of staff car park to accommodate shift change parking, together with associated drainage, lighting, fencing and external works

Location: Pilgrims Europe Fulney Lane Spalding

Terminal Date: 18th September 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
07	Improving South East Lincolnshire's Employment Land Portfolio
28	The Natural Environment
30	Pollution
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 places
Section 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Representations:

	Object	Support	No Obj.	Comments
WARD MEMBER	0	0	0	0
PLANNING LIAISON OFFICER - FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT	0	0	0	1
HIGHWAYS & SUDS SUPPORT	0	0	0	1

SOUTH HOLLAND INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	1	0	0	0
SHDC INTERNAL	0	0	1	0
OTHER STATUTORY BODIES	0	0	0	1

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Proposal

This is a full planning application for the proposed construction of a staff car park extension to support the existing operations at Pilgrims Pride.

The car park is proposed to the south east of the site, close to the A16 and seeks permission for an addition 136 spaces for cars, this extends from the existing car park on site and is a result of the demand for parking spaces from existing staff and to allow greater efficiency during shift change. The surfacing proposed is gravel and the fencing proposed would match existing (being 2.4m high steel wire finished in green). Lighting is also proposed to illuminate parking areas.

Site Description

The application site represents an area of land to the south of a Established Employment Area (SP003), owned by the operator an existing Factory, Pilgrims Pride.

The application site is abutted to the east by the A16, north by the Employment Area and the Coronation Channel is located to the west. To the south are arable fields, one of which has recently been granted planning permission to generate solar electricity to feed Pilgrims Pride. A local wildlife corridor follows the Coronation Channel and a proposed cycle path runs along its eastern bank. To the east of the site is the A16, there is an existing access to the north of these fields from the A16 and another to the south from Low Road.

The application site which is presently a field is located outside the development limit for Spalding & Pinchbeck and the site lies within Flood Zone 3a of the Environment Agency's Flood Maps.

History

H16-0969-15 - Proposed packaging store. Approved 09-02-16

H16-0020-15 - New covered 'airlock' entrance extension to existing production facility. Approved 17-02-15

H16-0039-12 - Proposed photovoltaic panels to south elevation and 2.8 metre high louvre screening. Approved 02-03-12

H16-0578-13 - Upgrading of ammonia cooling system including replacement of existing plant room to include new switch gear room and installation of external condenser units and new CO2 tank. 13-08-13

H16-0918-15 - Proposed 249.60kw PV system on roof comprising 960 x 260W PV modules. Approved 04-11-15

H16-0629-11 - Proposed waste storage tank. Approved 11-10-11

H16-0871-24 - Change of use of agricultural land and development for Solar array of up to 1.64 MWp and associated infrastructure including connection to Pilgrim's Pride Factory adjacent north. Approved 08-07-25

Consultation Responses

South Holland IDB

Surface Water

We understand that the applicant proposes to discharge surface water from the new car park into an existing surface water drainage system, as shown in drawing 'Proposed Block Plan' 0258/SC-02 (Rollins Group, 06/06/2025). We cannot see that a discharge rate has been provided for the impermeable area of the new car park entering this existing system. The Board recommend that any discharge is in line with the National standards for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) published in June 2025. Further to the National Standards for SuDS, the Board's policy is to restrict discharges to 2l/s/ha or annual average flood flow rate (QBar or QMed), whichever is higher.

With regards to the existing surface water drainage system, the Board has no knowledge of this privately maintained system, whether there is a connection to the wider drainage network nor at what discharge rate. With no evidence of a viable route for surface water to discharge to, we are concerned that the increase in contributing impermeable area discharging into the existing system may increase flood risk in the surrounding area, due to the lack of a feasible connection from the site to the Board's arterial system. In light of this, the Board object to this planning proposal and request further information is submitted which provides further details on this existing system, how it connects to the wider drainage network and at what discharge rate.

Section 23, Land Drainage Act 1991

I note the presence of a watercourse which is not maintained by the Board (a riparian watercourse) adjacent to the eastern, southern and western site boundaries. Whilst not currently proposed, should the applicant's proposals change to include works to alter the riparian watercourse, or if works are proposed to alter the watercourse at any time in the future, consent would be required under the Land Drainage Act 1991 (and Byelaw 4).

Environment Agency

The proposed development is located within an area which is at risk of flooding should a breach of the flood defences occur and could experience flood depths of greater than 1.6m. We have reviewed the submitted flood risk assessment dated June 2025, ref:

'ECL1555/ROLLINS', prepared by Ellingham Consulting Ltd and are satisfied that it is appropriate to the nature, scale and location of the proposed development.
We therefore have no objection this application.

Highways & SuDs Support

No Objection - The proposal is for the construction of a staff car park to accommodate shift change parking, together with associated drainage, lighting, fencing and external works. It is an established employment site which will extend to land outside of the settlement boundary. The proposal will not result in an increase in vehicle movements as it is to cope with parking required when shifts change for the existing business. The proposal will not have an adverse effect on the public highway and the access road leading from Fulney Lane is private. As Lead Local Flood Authority, Lincolnshire County Council is required to provide a statutory planning consultation response with regard to drainage and surface water flood risk on all Major applications. This application is classified as a Minor Application and it is therefore the duty of the Local Planning Authority to consider the surface water flood risk and drainage proposals for this planning application.

Natural England

NO OBJECTION: Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.

Environmental Protection

No comments regarding environmental protection or land contamination.

Evaluation

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended, requires that the

Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In this case, the adopted South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036, adopted March 2019, forms the development plan for the District, and is the basis for decision making in South Holland. The relevant development plan policies are detailed within the report above.

The policies and provisions set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (updated December 2024) are also a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, alongside adopted Supplementary Planning Documents.

Furthermore, where a Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted, this alongside the adopted Local Plan, forms part of the Development Plan for the District, and must be considered when assessing development proposals. In this instance, no relevant neighbourhood plans have been adopted.

Planning Considerations

The key considerations for this assessment are as follows:

- Principle of Development
- Highway Safety
- Flood Risk & Drainage
- Character & Landscape
- Environmental Issues
- Ecology & BNG
- Land Contamination
- Planning Balance

Principle of Development

The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) sets out the settlement hierarchy in respect of delivering sustainable development that 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 housing need, whilst making more sustainable use of land and to minimise the loss of high-quality agricultural land by developing in sustainable locations and at appropriate densities.

Policy 1 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) sets out a spatial strategy for delivering sustainable development across South East Lincolnshire to 2036. Policy 1 (Spatial Strategy) expresses this sustainable framework 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 in respect of sustainable development 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.

The countryside is at the bottom of the settlement hierarchy and represents the least sustainable location in terms of sustainability.

The application site in this instance is located beyond any defined settlement boundaries and as such lies within the countryside. Within countryside locations development will be restricted to that which "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". The local plan policies details suitable types of development for such areas, such as 'Rural Exemption Sites', 'Replacement Dwellings', and 'Reuse of Buildings'; all of which require specific criteria to be met.

The Pilgrims Pride site is fully built out within the settlement boundaries, unable to extend northwards toward Fulney Lane. Given the proposal type, it would not be realistic nor feasible to require staff parking to be located away from the site. Therefore, on this basis, given the existing form of the industrial unit and associated infrastructure and that there is no possibility of making space for the ancillary car park within the settlement, then the proposal is necessary in this location, which considering its position abutting the existing car park, is likely the most preferential location for this development.

On this basis then, notwithstanding that the development is located within the open countryside, the proposal in this location is demonstrated as necessary and the proposal is therefore in accordance with SELLP Policy 1.

Established Employment Site

SELLP Policy 7 relates to Policy 7: Improving South East Lincolnshire's Employment Land Portfolio. In part the policy is concerned with Established Employment Sites (of which this site is), it also considers extension to existing employment sites, stating:

New employment development/businesses or the extension of an existing business outside the above allocated employment sites will be supported provided that the proposal involves the re-use of previously-developed land or the conversion/re-use of redundant buildings. Where it can be demonstrated that no suitable building capable of conversion/re-use is available or the re-use of previously-developed land is not available or is unsuitable, proposals on non allocated sites may be acceptable provided:

- a. the development does not conflict with neighbouring land uses;*
- b. there is no significant adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the area;*
- c. the design is responsive to the local context;*
- d. there will be no significant adverse impact on the local highway network;*
- e. there will be no significant adverse impact upon the viability of delivering any allocated employment site;*
- f. proposals maximising opportunities for modal shift away from the private car are demonstrated;*
- and*
- g. there is an identified need for the business location outside of identified employment areas on the Policies Map.*

The proposal represents an extension to the existing established employment site and therefore needs to meet the above criteria. The proposal would not conflict with any neighbouring land uses, the proposed bund and landscaping would mitigate character impacts (the site is already viewed against the back drop of the industrial building in any case. Highways are content that the development would not cause any undue impacts upon the existing highway network and given the scale and ancillary nature of the proposal the development would not undermine the viability of delivering any allocated employment site. Whilst the development is to support the motor car, the proposal is to allow for more efficiency during shift changes and would also support an existing need to provide more spaces, Highways have no concerns regarding sustainable transport elements.

Summary of Principle

It is therefore considered that given the proposal is for ancillary infrastructure associated with an existing industrial use (within an Established Employment Zone) and that no realistic alternative exists other than this site to located to additional staff parking that the proposal requires this countryside location. On this basis the proposal is considered to accord with SELLP Policy 1. Moreover, given the nature and location of the proposal and its relationship to existing neighbouring land uses it is considered that the proposal would also be in accordance with SELLP Policy 7.

Highway Safety

SELLP 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.

SELLP 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.

SELLP Policy 36 is concerned with Vehicle and Cycle Parking it states that "All new development, including change of use, should provide vehicle and cycle parking, in accordance with the minimum Parking Standards adopted by the Local Planning Authorities (in Appendix 6).

Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) specifically relates to

'Promoting sustainable transport'. It 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 would be severe.

The proposal is for the construction of a staff car park to accommodate shift change parking, together with associated drainage, lighting, fencing and external works. The applicant states that the proposal will not result in an increase in vehicle movements as it is to cope with parking required when shifts change for the existing business.

The Highway Authority have assessed this application and considered that the proposal is acceptable and will not have an adverse effect on the public highway and the access road leading from Fulney Lane is private. The applicant also proposes a soil bund, this presumably, as well as improving the character, would mitigate any lighting spill onto the A16, this topic is not brought up by the Highway Authority as an area of concern.

On this basis given that the existing access/egress onto Fulney Lane will not be altered and that the parking provision would solve an existing problem regarding staff parking, the proposal is considered acceptable in Highway terms.

It is therefore considered that the proposal would accord with SELLP Policies 2, 3 and 36 as well as section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024.

Flood Risk & Drainage

SELLP Policy 4 sets out the districts approach to flood risk, it states 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, where:

The application is supported with a site-specific flood risk assessment, covering risk from all sources of flooding including the impacts of climate change

The application site is located within flood zone 3 in accordance with EA flood maps. The South East Lincolnshire SFRA shows that the site itself may be in a 'Danger for most' location, though the wider site is located within a 'Danger for All' in accordance with the predicted Hazard Depth maps for 2115.

At present the land is class as agriculture, within Annexe 3 of the NPPF the flood risk vulnerability table is displayed. Land and buildings used for agriculture and forestry are considered to be 'less vulnerable' whilst Car Parks are also within the 'less vulnerable' category. Therefore, given there is no change to the vulnerability of the site (in flood risk terms) the principle of flood risk is considered acceptable.

Drainage

Given the nature of the proposal there is no requirement for the disposal of foul treat water. In terms of Surface water the plans show that Surface water Drainage of the car park is to be a perforated land drain with geotextile membrane. This Surface water capture will be gravity fed at 1:100 and direct to a new pump chamber, to then pump into the existing gravity fed drainage system.

The LLFA have not made comments on the adequacy of the drainage strategy given the scale of the application. However, the IDB have raised an objection, stating:

With no evidence of a viable route for surface water to discharge to, we are concerned that the increase in contributing impermeable area discharging into the existing system may increase flood risk in the surrounding area, due to the lack of a feasible connection from the site to the Board's arterial system. In light of this, the Board object to this planning proposal and request further information is submitted which provides further details on this existing system, how it connects to the wider drainage network and at what discharge rate.

Given the limited information made present regarding the existing surface water drainage strategy, and the IDB objection it is considered that a condition requiring a more detailed drainage strategy is justified, and will be duly attached.

On this basis, with the aforementioned mitigation attached it is considered that the proposal would accord with SELLP Policy 4.

Character & Landscape

Policy 2 of the SELLP states 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.

Policy 2 point 1 states that proposals should meet with sustainable development considerations specifically in relation to 'size, scale, layout, density and impact on the amenity, trees, character and appearance of the area and the relationship to existing development and land uses'.

Policy 3 sets out the 'Design of new development' in part it states 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".

The scale of proposal is naturally low and therefore wider character impacts are unlikely to follow. That said the applicant is proposing a landscape bund that would screen car park from the A16. Given the site is already viewed against the backdrop of the industrial units in the area, the bund, would make a notable improvement, softening the visits to the site along the A16. At night time/darker hours this would prove beneficial in terms of diluting the lighting impact from the car park. Furthermore the use of green palisade fencing and timber knew rails are appropriate additional infrastructure to include within the site.

On this basis, and with a condition that would require the landscaping bund to be installed prior to the first use, it is considered that the proposal would accord with SELLP Policies 2 and 3.

Environmental Issues

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

SELLP Policy 30 is concerned with pollution and places impacts in relation to noise, disturbance and air quality as important considerations when considering proposals for planning.

The proposal is for the extension of an existing car park at Pilgrims Pride, there are no nearby land uses that would likely be unduly affected by the development. The proposal is to relieve the existing pressures from staff vehicular movements during a shift change and therefore this is likely to take some pressure from Fulney Lane to the benefit of nearby business and residential properties using that road.

In terms of polluting activities, the noise impact, given its located to the south of the factory is considered to be acceptable, Environmental Protection have not raised any concerns. The scheme of lighting is showing and again due to its impact the proposal is considered to be acceptable. This is further mitigated by the soil bund proposed.

On this basis it is considered that the proposal is considered acceptable and would accord with SELLP Policies 2 and 30.

Ecology & BNG

SELLP Policy 28 is concerned with the Natural Environment points 2 and 3 are relevant to this assessment, point 2 is concerned with Nationally or locally designated sites and protected or priority habitats and species and point 3 with addressing gaps in the ecological network.

Protected Species

The applicant has submitted a preliminary ecological appraisal (17th June 2025) by Arbtech. The PEA does not identify the need for further survey work but does make recommendations, such as a low level lighting scheme for bats and the installation of boxes across the site. This too is similar for other protected species such as birds, amphibians and reptiles. A condition linking any development to PEA is considered to mitigate all of these imp*Bio Diversity Net Gain*

The applicant has provided a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and metric tool. This shows that there will be a loss of habitat units on site (- 1.86 habitat units). These are not designed into the development at present and a total of 2.69 habitat units will be required to offset the development and meet the 10% gain.

The BNG Assessment recommends that alternative landscape could be explored to introduce more BNG gain within the site, or off-site credits should be purchased. On this basis then the Biodiversity Net Gain Plan and HMMP condition will be attached. The applicant has two methods of meeting the uplift, firstly through designing in more BNG or secondly, purchasing off site credits.

Given the attachment of condition its is considered that the proposed development would meet with SELLP Policy 28.

Land Contamination

SELLP Policy 30 is concerned with pollution, it states that development proposals will not be permitted where, taking account of any proposed mitigation measures, they would lead to unacceptable adverse impacts upon land quality and condition;.

The applicant has provided both a phase 1 desk top study as well as a phase 2 ground investigation report.

Given the scale of the proposal and that the end use would result in a car park, an informative will be attached that should any unforeseen contamination be found during construction the developer shall cease work and report to the local planning authority.

On this basis the proposal would meet with SELLP Policy 30 as regards land contamination.

Planning Balance

As detailed above, 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 application site is located outside of the defined settlement boundary however has demonstrated that this location is necessary and there is unlikely to be any more suitable locations for this development. On this basis the proposal is considered to align with the policy requirements set out within SELLP Policies 1 & 7.

Conditions are required as regards drainage and linking conditions to the preliminary ecological appraisal and landscaping scheme are also appropriate. It is unclear at this stage regarding BNG uplift whether the applicant can alter the landscaping to achieve an on site gain or whether this will be secured through the purchase of off-site credits. Conditions requiring a Biodiversity Net Gain Plan and HMMP will be attached.

On this basis, then a balanced assessment has been made that recommends approval of this planning application

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 the above considerations into account, the proposal is considered to accord with policies 1,2, 3, 4, 7, 28, 30 & 36 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019), along with the identified sections contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024).