Sibley, Sally

From: Hill, Grace <Grace.Hill@e-lindsey.gov.uk>
Sent: 09 April 2026 14:55
To: Niland, Mark
Cc: _planningadvice
Subject: H20-0933-24 ecology comments

Hi Mark,

Please see our comments below regarding this application.
H20-0933-24 - POPLAR FARM OLD FENDYKE SUTTON ST JAMES SPALDING PE12 0HE
Construction of new glass house to grow flowers for existing horticultural facility.

Summary: There has been insufficient evidence provided to determine this application, and we require confirmation of the method the applicant wishes to achieve 10% net gain on site as well as the documentation needed to support this decision.

Documents reviewed:

- BNG Statutory Metric
- BNG assessment

Comments
Ecological Considerations:

- We believe that the habitats on site have the potential to support ground nesting birds. It is an offence under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981(WCA 1981) to intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is use or being built. Therefore, we request a condition requiring that: *Works should not be carried out in the main nesting season (March 1st – August 31st). If not possible then a suitably qualified ecologist must perform a breeding bird survey of the site prior to any works beginning onsite. Any active nests discovered during inspections will be protected with a suitable exclusion buffer (of appropriate size to the species) to prevent disturbance and monitored until the nest is no longer active / all chicks have fledged, when the ecologist will provide a sign off for clearance work to continue*.

BNG Comments and Notes to applicant

- Unfortunately, we have identified issues with consistencies between the metric and the BNG Assessment. These inconsistencies make it unclear whether BNG is proposed to be delivered onsite or offsite for this application. Further details are set out below.

- The BNG metric indicates that all habitat creation/enhancement will be delivered onsite by enhancing *moderate-condition Modified Grassland* to *moderate-condition Other Neutral Grassland*. However, this change would result in a net loss of –77.66% habitat area units. It is also unclear from the habitat maps where such enhancement could occur, as the entire site appears to be lost to the proposed development.
- In contrast, the BNG Assessment states that a 10.05% net gain would be achieved through offsite enhancement on land within the applicant's blue line boundary. Under this approach, all onsite habitat (modified grassland and unsealed surface) would be lost to development (sealed surface), and the offsite area (non-cereal crop) would be enhanced to *good-condition Other Neutral Grassland (ONG)* to deliver the required 10% net gain.
- This offsite-led approach appears to be the most feasible option for achieving the required 10% net gain. The offsite habitat enhancement will need to be secured through a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan and a S106 agreement, in line with the authority's statutory duty to ensure that significant BNG is delivered.

- We will require confirmation of which BNG proposal is intended to be used to achieve mandatory net gain for this site. Following this, updated documents must be submitted demonstrating the chosen method for achieving 10% BNG. These documents are required pre-determination due to the significant discrepancies between the baseline habitat assessments presented in the current metric and the BNG Assessment.

Specific BNG condition request

- We will require a Biodiversity Gain Plan and HMMP to be provided pre-commencement for this site. We will also require a S106 to be in place if the applicant chooses to secure 10% net gain through enhancing offsite habitat within a blue line boundary.

Conclusion: There has been insufficient evidence provided to determine this application, and we require confirmation of the method the applicant wishes to achieve 10% net gain on site as well as the documentation needed to support this decision.

Please get in touch if you have any further questions,

Kind Regards,
Grace Hill
Bsc(Hons) | MRes
BNG Ecologist
South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership
T: Mobile Number: 07885 651550
E: Grace.Hill@e-lindsey.gov.uk
www.e-lindsey.gov.uk | www.sholland.gov.uk | www.boston.gov.uk | www.selcp.co.uk



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