DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No:	**H23-0649-25**	**Applicant:**	**VMM Properties**
Proposal:	Proposed Helipad		
Location:	Bleu Raye Farm Millgate Whaplode		
Terminal Date:	20th February 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
28	The Natural Environment
30	Pollution

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework December 2024

Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development
Section 4 - Decision-making
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

Representations:

	Object	Support	No Obj.	Comments
PARISH COUNCIL	0	0	0	0
WARD MEMBER	0	0	0	0
HIGHWAYS & SUDS SUPPORT	0	0	0	1
SOUTH HOLLAND INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	0	0	0	1
SHDC INTERNAL	0	0	0	2

OTHER STATUTORY BODIES	0	0	0	2
RESIDENTS	1	0	0	0

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Description of Proposal

The application seeks full planning permission for a helipad on land at Bleu Raye Farm. The helipad will feature turf rolled into a grasscrete paving system.

Site Description

The site comprises approximately 25sqm of land within a garden at Bleu Raye Farm, to the west of Millgate. The site is located within a rural area, approximately 1.7km to the north-west of Whaplode St Catherine.

The site is outside any defined settlement boundary, as identified by the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 and the accompanying policies map.

The site is located within Flood Zone 3, as identified by the Environment Agency's flood risk maps.

Relevant Planning History

Within the red line boundary:

H23-1162-21: (Full Application) Change of use of garage/games room into dwelling - refused 04 January 2022

Consultation Responses

Responses have been received from the below referenced consultees. The responses are summarised below, however, the responses can be viewed in their entirety on South Holland District Council's website.

Lincolnshire County Council - Historic Environment: The proposal is unlikely to have an impact on significant archaeological remains. Consequently, no further archaeological input is necessary for this application.

South Holland Internal Drainage Board:

Byelaw 3 (Surface Water): I cannot see that the applicant has identified a drainage strategy for the site within their application. We recommend a drainage strategy is provided for the site. If the applicant proposes to discharge surface water to a watercourse, consent would be required under Byelaw 3. 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 2/l/s/ha or annual average flood flow rate (QBar or QMed), whichever is higher. Please note that any consent granted for the discharge of surface water is likely to be subject to a Surface Water Development Contribution fee (SWDC) as outlined within our Development Control Charges and Fees.

Section 23, Land Drainage Act 1991: I note the presence of a Board Maintained watercourse (DRN197P5401 - F54 Picks New Road) within the northern site boundary. Whilst not currently proposed, should the applicant's proposals change to include works to alter the 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).

Byelaw 10: I am pleased to note from the drawing 'Site Layout' JDA/2023/885/SITE/A2.001 (John Dickie Associates, August 2025) that a 9 metre clear strip, adjacent to the Board maintained watercourse, has been incorporated into the site layout. Should the applicant's proposals change to include works within 9 metres of the aforementioned Board Maintained watercourse, or if works within 9 metres of the watercourse are proposed at any time in the future, consent would be required under Byelaw 10.

Lincolnshire County Council - Highways and SUDS: No objections. The proposal does not have an impact on the Public Highway.

Ecology Officer: Having reviewed this application we support the BNG exemption through the de minimis exemption.

Environmental Protection:

First Response (11 September 2025): I request a suitable and sufficient acoustic assessment to be completed prior approval and submitted to public protection for consideration.

Second Response (12 January 2026): The PDA noise impact assessment of 12.12.25 j005977-9268-RDC-01 indicated that 2 residential properties were above the LOAL criteria of the air navigation guidance 2017. Revised approach flight paths have been recommended to reduce the impact of these. We would therefore advise that these flight paths are used as recommended.

Fenland Aero Club: No response received.

Whaplode Parish Council: No response received.

Cllr A C Beal: No response received.

Cllr P A Redgate: No response received.

Public Representations

This application has been advertised in accordance with the Development Procedure Order and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. In this instance, 1 letter of representation has been received. The representation sets out the following:

-Having looked at the aerial map it is unclear due to the blurred circle, where the flight path actually impacts properties, including our own, with the flight path & fly height. It looks as thought the flight path is directly over our house. Without better clarity, I am unfortunately objecting due to concerns over noise, privacy and environmentally - including long established owl & bat habitats within the circled plan. I would also like to understand the proposed volume of flights as I do it believe this to be transparent. I am fully supportive of the successful planning application already made for fishing lodges, a helipad is of concern and I would welcome better clarity relating to my objections.

Key Planning Considerations

Development Plan

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended, requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The adopted South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036, adopted March 2019 (SELLP), is the development plan for the district, and is the basis for decision making in South Holland. The relevant development plan policies are detailed within the report above.

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

There are no adopted Neighbourhood Plans for the area within which the site is located.

The main issues and considerations in this case include the following:

-Principle of Development;
-Visual and Amenity Impact;
-Flood Risk; and
-Biodiversity Net Gain.

These matters are assessed in turn below.

Principle of Development

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

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

In this case, the site lies outside any defined settlement boundary and evidently lies within the countryside. Policy 1 states that development in the countryside will be permitted that is necessary to such a location/or where it can be demonstrated that it meets the sustainable development needs of the area in terms of its economic, community or environmental benefits.

It is presumed that the helipad is for personal use; however, the submission does not confirm this. It would be considered appropriate to include a condition restricting the helipad to a personal use.

It is not considered that the proposed helipad would be necessary or that the helipad would provide particular economic, community or environmental benefits. The only benefits appear to be personal benefits for the applicant. Notwithstanding this, no operational development is proposed and as such, the proposals do not seek to build any structures within the site. As such, the proposal would not result in any permanent structures within the site. Whilst the character of the site might be altered to a degree by the occasional use of the site for helicopter flights, it is not considered that this would fundamentally alter or detrimentally impact the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, provided the development would have an acceptable impact on the amenity of nearby residents, it is considered that the principle of development could be acceptable.

Amenity Impact

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

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

The site is located at Bleu Raye Farm, which is within a rural area. The nearest settlement is Catherine St Whaplode which is approximately 1.7km to the south-east of the site.

The area where the helipad is proposed is very well screened by an existing tree belt and as such, the helipad area is not visible from public viewpoints. The site is located approximately 90m to the north of Home Farm and Blue Raye Farm. The surrounded area is sparsely populated and the other nearest dwellings are located approximately 270m to the south-east, 260m to the south-west and 260m to the north.

The local planning authority's environmental protection team requested a Noise Impact Assessment (NIA). An assessment was provided and the environmental protection team highlighted that the report indicated that 2 residential properties were above the LOAL criteria of the air navigation

guidance. Revised flight paths were recommended to reduce the impact of these.

As such, the NIA has been updated and revised flight paths are now proposed to reduce the impact on the nearest residential dwellings. The revised NIA concludes that as a result of the adjustments to the proposed flight-paths, the helipad is not predicted to result in sound levels at the nearest dwellings above the LOAL value. As such, the helipad is likely to have a low impact in relation to noise.

The submission does not specify operating hours for when flights might take place, nor does the submission set out how many flights are expected to take place. It is considered that it would be appropriate to limit the use of the site for private purposes only, restricting the number of round-trip landings to no more than 4 times per calendar month with landings to occur within the hours of 8am-6pm. This is considered necessary to ensure flights only take place within limited parts of the day and the number of flights to and from the site do not become excessive.

Therefore, the proposed development would accord with the Section 12 of the NPPF and Policies 2 and 3 of the Local Plan as it is considered that the proposals would have an acceptable impact on the amenity of nearby residents.

Biodiversity Net Gain

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

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

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

The effect of Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the "biodiversity gain condition".

The effect of this "biodiversity gain condition" is that development granted by this notice must not begin unless:
(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
(b) the planning authority has approved the plan, or
(c) the development is exempt from the biodiversity gain condition.

When taking the above into account, the development is considered to be exempt from the statutory BNG requirement as the proposed would fall under the de minimis exemption.

Flood Risk

Section 14 of the NPPF sets out guidance relating to how local authorities should assess and determine applications which are subject to flood risk concerns.

The site is within Flood Zone 3, as identified by the Environment Agency's flood risk maps.

It is considered that the proposal would comprise a 'less vulnerable' use as defined by Annex 3 of the NPPF. As such, it is not necessary for the development to pass the exception test in flood risk terms. Furthermore, as the proposal is for a change of use of the land and no operational development is proposed, it is also not necessary to apply the sequential test.

No operational development is proposed and as such, the impermeable area within the site would not increase. Therefore, the existing drainage strategy will remain unchanged as a result of the

proposals. In flood risk and drainage terms, the development satisfactorily accords with Policy 4 of the Local Plan and Section 14 of the NPPF.

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 proposed development is appropriate and would not materially harm the character or appearance of the locality, or the amenity of nearby residents. Overall, the proposed development accords with the Local Plan and the NPPF.

Additional Considerations

Public Sector Equality Duty

In making this decision the Authority must have regard to the public sector equality duty (PSED) under s.149 of the Equalities Act. This means that the Council must have due regard to the need (in discharging its functions) to:

A. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.

B. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This may include removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; taking steps to meet the special needs of those with a protected characteristic; encouraging participation in public life (or other areas where they are underrepresented) of people with a protected characteristic(s).

C. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The PSED must be considered as a relevant factor in making this decision but does not impose a duty to achieve the outcomes in s.149. It is only one factor that needs to be considered, and may be balanced against other relevant factors.

It is not considered that the recommendation in this case will have a disproportionately adverse impact on a protected characteristic.

Human Rights

In making a decision, the Authority should be aware of and take into account any implications that may arise from the Human Rights Act 1998. Under the Act, it is unlawful for a public authority such as South Holland District Council to act in a manner that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. The Authority is referred specifically to Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property).

It is not considered that the recommendation in this case interferes with local residents' right to respect for their private and family life, home and correspondence, except insofar as it is necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others (in this case, the rights of the applicant). The Council is also permitted to control the use of property in accordance with the general public interest and the recommendation is considered to be a proportionate response to the submitted application based on the considerations set out in this report.

Conclusion

Taking these factors into consideration, the proposed development accords with Policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 30 of the Local Plan, as well as Sections 11, 12 and 14 of the NPPF. There are no significant factors in this case that would outweigh the benefits of the proposal; therefore, the planning balance is in favour of the proposal.

Recommendation

Based on the assessment detailed above, it is recommended that the proposal should be approved under delegated authority.