

DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No: H23-1062-24 **Applicant:** Mr D Dlugosz

Proposal: Use of site for storage of campers and caravan trailers

Location: Valencia Cranesgate North Whaplode St Catherine

Terminal Date: 18th March 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
28 The Natural Environment
30 Pollution

National Guidance**National Planning Policy Framework December 2024**

Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development
Section 4 - Decision-Making
Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport
Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
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	1
RESIDENTS				

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CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Proposal

This is an application for a change of use of land for the siting of campers and caravan trailers. The application site relates to land to the rear of Valencia, located beyond the settlement boundary. Access and egress would be taken through the shared driveway, with this residential property. The applicant has shown how the field would be landscaped on the site plan and caravan parking positions along with CCTV locations.

This application has been subject to amended plans, these relate to information that has arose during the application process where it is now understood that the applicant does not owned the full width of the access (as shown on the original location plan). This reduced access width has resulted in the need to demonstrate acceptable tracking patterns for accessing and egressing vehicles.

A justification statement has been provided which expands on why this proposal is acceptable.

Site Description

The application site is located just outside of the settlement boundary of Whaplode St Catherine. Though the access is located within the settlement boundary. The application site is located within flood zone 2 in accordance with the EA Maps for planning.

The site would utilise the existing access that serves Valencia (though this is now understood to be much narrower), the drive way would allow for access to the field to the rear using the existing land associated with Valencia.

The application site is an existing open field, that extends all the way along the rear of dwellings fronting the eastern side of Cranesgate North.

History

H23-0957-23 - Use of site for storage of campers and caravan trailers. Refused 20.12.23

Consultation Responses

South Holland Drainage Board

I cannot see that the applicant has identified a drainage strategy for the site within their application. Additionally, it is unclear whether any new impermeable surfacing will be laid at the site as part of this proposal. Please could the applicant: confirm whether any additional impermeable surfacing will be added to the site and, provide a drainage strategy for the site

Highways & Suds Support

Additional Information Required - They have reduced the width of the access - they need to demonstrate the width and provide swept path drawings showing the largest size vehicle that will be entering/exiting the site.

Sequential iterations of an attempt at a swept path analysis have been provided by the applicant and highways still consider that this access has not been demonstrated to be suitable to absorb the development.

Environmental Protection

I would ask that the following is applied to this site as proposed in the justification statement (Ref:

4314-24) by G R Merchant Ltd architectural and planning consultants to protect the amenity of the area: Opening times 8am-6pm 7 days a week. Only one caravan to be collected or dropped off at one time. Stagger appointments to limit the number of drop offs and collections.

I would also ask that the following condition is applied: No Lighting (either temporary or permanent) shall be erected or utilised on site without the prior consent in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Representations

This application has been advertised in accordance with the regulations of the Development Management Procedure Order. It has been subjected to objections and representations, of which the material planning points can be summarised as:

- Highway Safety Impacts
- Congestion
- Character Impacts
- Noise & Disturbance
- Flood Risks

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 application site is located within the open countryside, the closest settlement is Whaplode St. Catherine. The site is also located within flood zone 2 in accordance with the Environment Agencies Mapping System.

The following issues are relevant to this assessment:

- Principle of Development
- Highway Safety
- Character and Appearance
- Amenity
- Flood Risk and Drainage

Principle of Development

Policy 1 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan sets out the overarching spatial strategy for the district. It states that "In the Countryside development will be permitted that is necessary to such a location and/or where it can be demonstrated that it meets the sustainable development needs of the area in terms of economic, community or environmental benefits." Within the policy justification it expands that "Agriculture and forestry are clearly uses which must function in the Countryside but other uses which may diversify from agriculture and forestry, e.g. recreation and tourism, can meet the broad sustainable objectives of the Local Plan. Similarly, other assets such as waterways and access to the coastal areas may offer opportunities to expand the opportunities the area can offer visitors"

The proposal is for external storage (of caravans and trailers), the applicant has provided a

justification statement in regards to the location of the development, this states:

There are no suitable sites within the Local Plan to be able to supply a caravan storage area. The ones within industrial areas are not suitable or viable for this business adventure. A long-standing caravan storage along High Road Whaplode is outside of the development boundary, however over the years have been screened by hedgerows. Which will be like this development.

Whilst SELLP Policy 1 does allow for development that require a countryside location to be approved. the justification statement doesn't not expand far enough to explain why industrial areas are not 'suitable' or 'viable', and no evidence is provided to show that such site have been searched. Whilst caravanning maybe an ancillary arm to countryside recreation, more justification is likely to be required. On this basis the report will assess whether it has been demonstrated that this development meets the sustainable development needs of the area in terms of economic, community or environmental benefits.

Highway Safety

Policy 2 details that proposals requiring planning permission for development will be permitted provided that sustainable development considerations are met, specifically in relation to access and vehicle generation.

Policy 3 details that development proposals will demonstrate how accessibility by a choice of travel modes including the provision of public transport, public rights of way and cycle ways will be secured, where they are relevant to the proposal.

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.

During the application process amended plans have been received which shows a much reduced assess width. This came to light through the public consultation process. Whilst a similar development has been assessed before on this site, it was assessed on the basis that the access mouth was much wider and subsequently highways did not object.

Under this application Highways have requested additional information from the applicant to demonstrate that this access can absorb the development. Many iterations have been received; however, regarding the most recent swept path analysis, highways still considered that this access has not been considered acceptable to allow for such a development.

At this stage then it is clear, given the reduced access widths there are currently 3 issues, they are:
The swept path shows that vehicles will overrun the highway verge in order to be able to turn into the site

The access width includes the radius from the north whereas the swept path details vehicles entering from the south, this is misleading, the access width is therefore disputed.

They are still showing two-way traffic when this cannot be achieved - Highways had previously said that a booking in/out system will be conditioned so that two way traffic was not required.

At this stage then it is considered that insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that a safe access/egress to the development can be achieved. The proposal is therefore contrary to SELLP Policies 2 and 3 as well as section 9 of the NPPF.

Design, Character and Appearance

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 proposal 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' is also relevant. It requires development to comprise good design; identifying issues that should be considered when preparing schemes so that development sits comfortably with, and adds positively to its immediate area.

The applicant seeks to utilise the entire field for storage purposes. The storage is likely to be of low scale, given the flat topography. The applicant has provided a landscaping strategy it is considered that the effects of the development would be localised.

There would be an impingement upon the visual amenity of residents on this side of Cranesgate North however, who would be subject to the field being populated by storage vehicles. This is likely to be out of keeping and inappropriate to the area, thus contrary to the aims of SELLP Policy 3.

Amenities and Environmental Considerations

Policy 2 and 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.

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

Given the comments from Environmental Protection it is clear that if approved, subject to conditions which would control hours of operation, lighting and install an appointment only business model that this proposal is likely to be acceptable in amenity terms,

On this basis then and subject to the aforementioned mitigation the proposal is likely to be acceptable with regards to SELLP Policies 2 and 30.

Flood Risk & Drainage

Policy 4 sets out South Hollands approach to Flood Risk. The application site for the most part is located within FZ 2 in accordance with EA Planning Maps. The SFRA Hazard maps show that the application site is in a low risk area for flooding.

Section 14 of the NPPF (December 2024) sets out the national policy basis for making assessments in relation to flood risk. The proposal would not increase the vulnerability classification on the site. Land and buildings used for agriculture and forestry are classified as 'less vulnerable' whilst 'car parks' (it is considered the proposal would effectively be the same classification) are also considered less vulnerable by the vulnerability classification table, contained within Planning Practice Guidance.

In terms of flood risk then the proposal is considered acceptable. In terms of drainage the applicant has stated that surface water will be disposed of via soakaway, given that built form is not proposed then this is considered acceptable. It is considered that on the basis of flood risk that the proposal would accord with policy 4 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan as well as section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December, 2023)

Other Matters

The applicant has stated that this development is exempt from BNG under the di minimis exemption.

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.

In this instance the applicant has not sufficiently justified that the proposed development requires a countryside location or that it meets with the broader sustainable policies of the plan. The proposal is therefore contrary to policy 1 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan. Furthermore, there is insufficient evidence that demonstrated that this access/egress is suitable to support such a development.

Lastly it is considered that given the location, and size of the site that the impact upon the visual amenity of neighbouring residents is likely to be unacceptable. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.

On this basis it is considered that the negative impact of the development would far outweigh any positive economic elements that relate to the formulation of a caravan storage facility in this location.

Conclusion

Taking into consideration these factors, the proposal is considered to be contrary with Policies 1, 2 & 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (SELLP), 2019; in addition to the identified sections contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024). The application is recommended for refusal.

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.