

<b>APPLICATION NO</b>	<b>PA/2011/0900</b>
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Mr L Moore
<b>DEVELOPMENT</b>	Planning permission to erect a polytunnel for the breeding of fish (agricultural use)
<b>LOCATION</b>	Land south of Butters Lodge, Soff Lane, Goxhill
<b>PARISH</b>	<b>THORNTON CURTIS</b>
<b>WARD</b>	Ferry
<b>SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>Grant permission subject to conditions</b>
<b>REASONS FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE</b>	Objection by Thornton Parish Council

## **POLICIES**

**Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development)** promotes the value of good design in the planning system; states that good design is indivisible from good planning (paragraph 33); good design ensures attractive, usable, durable, and adaptable places and is a key element of achieving sustainable development; proposals should be of high quality, inclusive in terms of function and impact, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development; design which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area should not be accepted (key principle iv, paragraph 13).

**Planning Policy Statement 4 (Planning for Prosperous Economies)** sets out the Government's objectives regarding sustainable economic growth. The Government's objectives for planning are to:

- build prosperous communities by improving the economic performance of cities, towns, regions, sub-regions and local areas, both urban and rural;
- reduce the gap in economic growth rates between regions, promoting regeneration and tackling deprivation;
- deliver more sustainable patterns of development, reduce the need to travel, especially by car and respond to climate change;
- promote the vitality and viability of town and other centres as important places for communities.

**Planning Policy Statement 7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas)** sets out the Government's policies on planning in rural areas, including country towns and villages and the wider, largely undeveloped, countryside up to the fringes of larger urban areas.

**North Lincolnshire Local Plan:** Policy RD2 (Development in the Open Countryside) states that development in the open countryside will be strictly controlled. Planning permission will only be granted for development which is:

- (i) essential to the efficient operation of agriculture or forestry;
- (ii) employment-related development appropriate to the open countryside;
- (iii) affordable housing to meet a proven local need;
- (iv) essential for the provision of outdoor sport, countryside recreation or local community facilities;
- (v) for the re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings;
- (vi) for diversification of an established agricultural business;
- (vii) for the replacement, alteration or extension of an existing dwelling;
- (viii) essential for the provision of an appropriate level of roadside services or the provision of utility services;

provided that:

- (a) the open countryside is the only appropriate location and the development cannot reasonably be accommodated within defined development boundaries;
- (b) the proposed development accords with the specific requirements set out in the relevant policies of this chapter and elsewhere in this local plan;
- (c) the development would not be detrimental to the character or appearance of the open countryside or a nearby settlement in terms of siting, scale, massing, design and the use of materials;
- (d) the development would not be detrimental to residential amenity or highway safety;
- (e) account is taken of whether the site is capable of being served by public transport;
- (f) the development is sited to make the best use of existing and new landscaping.

Policy LC7 (Landscape Protection) states that where development is permitted within rural settlements or within the open countryside, special attention will be given to the protection of the scenic quality and distinctive local character of the landscape. Development which does not respect the character of the local landscape will not be permitted.

Policy DS1 (General Requirements) also applies as amenity value and environmental quality of the area are key considerations.

**North Lincolnshire Core Strategy:** Policy CS1 (Spatial Strategy for North Lincolnshire) states that the spatial vision and future development requirements will be delivered through the spatial strategy for North Lincolnshire as outlined below:

- (a) delivering an urban renaissance in Scunthorpe and supporting its role as a major sub-regional town

- (b) supporting the market towns of Barton, Brigg, Crowle, Epworth, Kirton and Winterton as thriving places to live, work and visit, and as important service centres serving the needs of local communities across North Lincolnshire
- (c) supporting thriving rural communities and a vibrant countryside through the protection and enhancement of local services, creating opportunities for rural economic diversification and the promotion of tourism
- (d) supporting development of key strategic employment sites at the South Humber Bank, Humberside Airport and Sandtoft Airfield
- (e) supporting the protection and enhancement of North Lincolnshire's world class natural and built environment to ensure the continued attractiveness of the area as a place to live, work and visit.

All future growth, regardless of location, should contribute to sustainable development, in particular in respect of those criteria set out in policy CS2 as well as the other policies of the plan.

**Policy CS2 (Delivering More Sustainable Development)** states that in supporting the delivery of the spatial strategy set out in policy CS1, as well as determining how future development needs will be met in North Lincolnshire, a sequential approach will be adopted. Development should be focused on:

- (1) previously developed land and buildings within the Scunthorpe urban area, followed by other suitable infill opportunities within the town, then by appropriate greenfield urban extensions;
- (2) previously developed land and buildings within the defined development limits of North Lincolnshire's market towns, followed by other suitable infill opportunities then appropriate small-scale greenfield extensions to meet identified local needs;
- (3) small-scale developments within the defined development limits of rural settlements to meet identified local needs.

Any development that takes place outside defined development limits will be restricted and only development essential to the functioning of the countryside will be allowed. A sequential approach will also be applied to ensure that development is, where possible, directed to areas that have the lowest possibility of flooding.

Policy CS3 (Development Limits) states that development outside defined development boundaries will be restricted to that which is essential to the functioning of the countryside. This will include uses such related to agriculture, forestry or other uses which require a countryside location or which will contribute to the sustainable development of the tourist industry.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**Environment Agency:** No objection.

**Network Rail:** Comments.

## **PARISH COUNCIL**

Thornton Parish Council objects on the following grounds; polytunnels 13ft high covering an area of almost 1 acre; the machinery proposed will generate noise which will affect many nearby properties; the site is set against the backdrop of Thornton Abbey Gatehouse – the plastic polytunnels and 2.4m high fencing will be visible for more than a mile and will be a severe blight on the rural vista; screen planting will take 12 to 15 years to mature, insufficient space has been allowed to support trees/hedge; there was no access from College Road until a gap in the hedge was made recently, this gap is at the apex of a bend and is not suitable, College Road is subject to severe flooding, surface water from surrounding farmland drains to this location before being carried away in local dykes, any construction at this location will affect drainage and is likely to cause even more flooding; from an environmental aspect this is the worst possible orientation, should be east-west to present greatest possible length to the sun and take advantage of solar heat gains and reduce load on machinery.

## **PUBLICITY**

Neighbouring properties have been consulted by letter and a site notice has been displayed. Letters of objection and support have been received:

### **Objections:**

The machinery proposed will generate noise which will affect many nearby properties; the site is set against the backdrop of Thornton Abbey Gatehouse – the plastic polytunnels and 2.4m high fencing will be visible for more than a mile and will be a severe blight on the rural vista; will look like a WW2 prison camp; screen planting will take 12 to 15 years to mature, insufficient space has been allowed to support trees/hedge; there was no access from College Road until a gap in the hedge was made recently, this gap is at the apex of a bend and is not suitable, College Road is subject to severe flooding, surface water from surrounding farmland drains to this location before being carried away in local dykes, any construction at this location will affect drainage and is likely to cause even more flooding; from an environmental aspect this is the worst possible orientation, should be east-west to present greatest possible length to the sun and take advantage of solar heat gains and reduce load on machinery.

### **Support:**

The site has a history of successful development bringing interest and jobs into the area, including fish-related development. The proposal is in accord with policy RD7 which says proposals for agriculture will be accepted in principle. PPG7 says the priority in agriculture is to promote diversification of the rural economy to provide wide and varied employment, this application meets this national priority. This development has been sited to make the best use of existing and new landscaping in line with DS1. Fencing will be necessary to prevent conflict with local otters. Diversification project will help the North Lincolnshire economy and is in line with policies. Should be approved.

## **ASSESSMENT**

This application seeks permission for the erection of polytunnels for the breeding of fish to supply restaurants. The proposals also include fencing for security and screen planting.

**The main issues to consider in determining the application are the impact upon the character and appearance of the open countryside, and on the amenity of neighbours, and road safety.**

The application seeks permission for a polytunnel, 100m x 32m x 3.9m high, to house 10 fish ponds for farming fish for the restaurant/wet fish trade. The polytunnel is required to keep the temperature high all year round to give a 12-month growth period for the fish.

Whilst the polytunnel is of a considerable size, at 3.9m high it would be possible to screen the site with the planting of a hedge and trees. The applicant has indicated they would be happy to plant the screening at 2-3m high and this would be likely to give substantial screening of the polytunnel within 3 years. This is a more than satisfactory arrangement, the 3 years for the screening to mature is a relatively short period of time and will mitigate the visual impact of the development while being likely to have beneficial outcomes in terms of biodiversity. The site is in a rural area where agricultural buildings, including polytunnels, are a contributory factor in the make-up of the character of the landscape and the proposals would not be detrimental to the open countryside.

The amenity of neighbours would not be harmed; the current proposals only include the polytunnels and fencing. Environmental Protection do not object and a condition can be imposed requiring the prior agreement of the local planning authority before any machinery is installed on site.

Highways do not object and the proposals do not compromise road safety.

The proposals are acceptable and planning permission should be granted.

**RECOMMENDATION      Grant permission subject to the following conditions:**

1.

The development must be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason

To comply with section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2.

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: PA/2011/0900/01 and SR/11/43.

Reason

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3.

Before any development commences on site, a scheme for screening with native species hedging and trees, to be planted at a minimum height of 2m, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include a timetable for planting and details of maintenance and replacement of any plants which die within 5 years of planting. The scheme shall be fully implemented as approved.

Reason

To protect the visual amenity of the area and to comply with policies DS1 and RD2 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

4.

No machinery or equipment, other than hand powered tools, shall be used on the site at any time without the written agreement of the local planning authority.

Reason

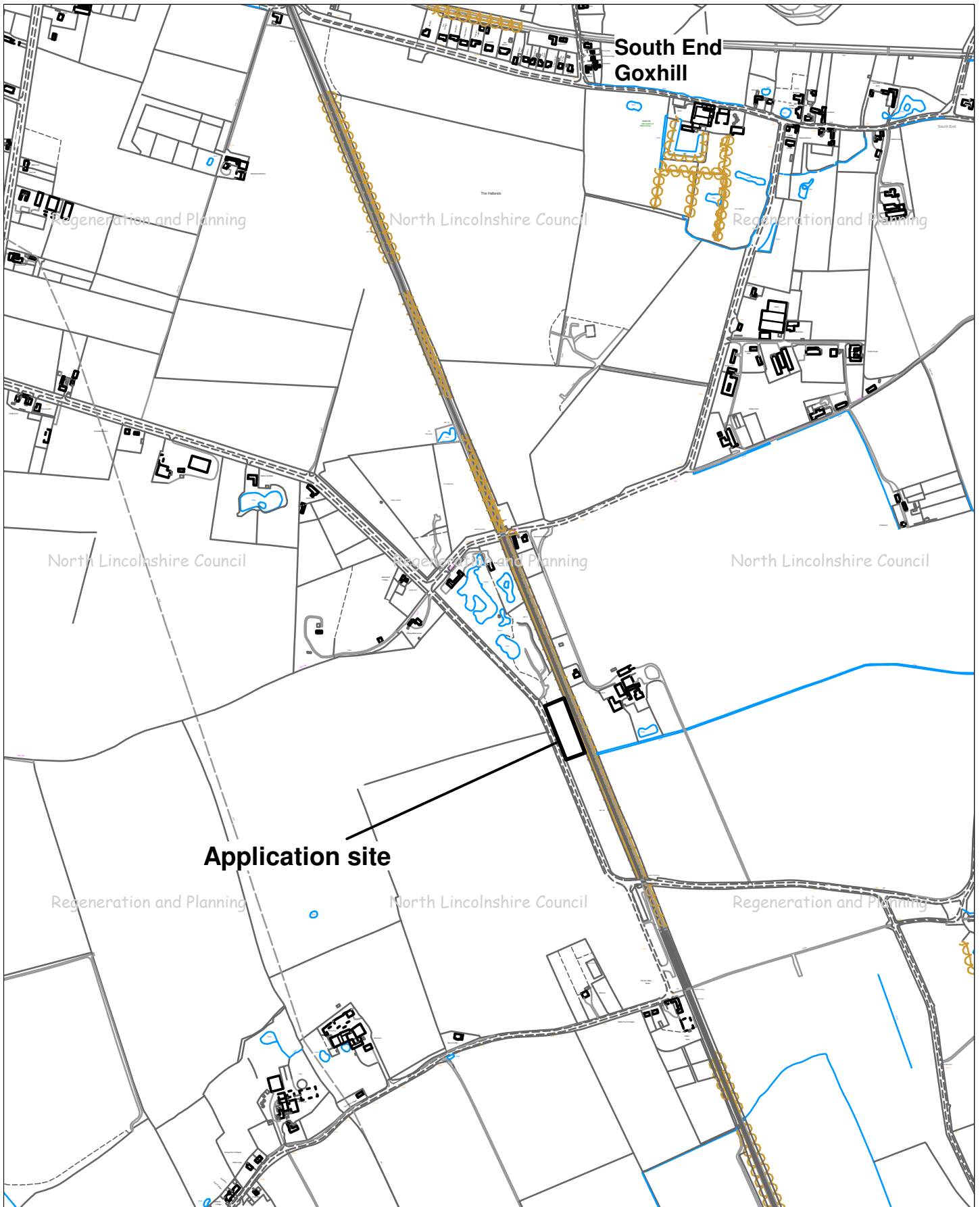
To minimise the impact of the development on adjacent properties in accordance with policy DS1 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

5.

The site shall only be used for the farming of fish for retail/restaurant purposes and for no other purpose. The site shall not be used for breeding fish for stocking recreational/commercial fishing ponds.

Reason

The development has been assessed and considered as an agricultural enterprise, and to allow the local planning authority to retain control over the future use of the site and to comply with policies RD2 and DS1 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.



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**Regeneration and Planning**

Head,

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