

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA on 24 June 2026 commencing at 6.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Ian Fleetwood (Chairman)
Councillor Matthew Boles (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor John Barrett
Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Adam Duguid
Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings
Councillor Tom Smith
Councillor Jim Snee

In Attendance:

Sally Grindrod-Smith	Director Planning, Regeneration & Communities
Ian Elliott	Development Management Team Leader
Danielle Peck	Senior Development Management Officer
Richard Green	Development Management Officer
Owen Toop	Senior Development Management Officer
Martha Rees	Legal Advisor
Molly Spencer	Democratic & Civic Officer

Apologies: Councillor Sabastian Hague

Membership: Councillor Lesley Rollings was appointed substitute for Councillor Sabastian Hague

Also in Attendance: 28 Members of the public

Visiting Members: Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan
Councillor Trevor Young

8 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD

There was no public participation.

9 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 27 May 2026, be confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman declared a non-pecuniary interest in application WL/2026/00290 on behalf of all Members of the Planning Committee, as the applicant was a West Lindsey District

Councillor known to Members. It was also stated that the applicant would address the meeting before leaving the Chamber for the debate and determination of the application. This declaration was echoed by Councillor Duguid.

Councillor Boles declared a non-pecuniary interest in application WL/2026/00415, as they were a Member of Lincolnshire County Council. It was confirmed that the application would be considered with an open mind.

Councillor Rollings declared a non-pecuniary interest in application WL/2026/00415, as they were the Ward Member for Scotter and Blyton and were attending as a substitute Member.

11 UPDATE ON GOVERNMENT/LOCAL CHANGES IN PLANNING POLICY

It was reported that the Saxilby with Ingleby Neighbourhood Plan had successfully passed referendum in early May 2026. It was further advised that a report would be submitted to Full Council on 29 June 2026 recommending that the Neighbourhood Plan be made.

12 WL/2026/00415 - NURSERY VALE, MORTON, GAINSBOROUGH

The application was introduced and Members of the Committee were advised that the proposal sought permission for the change of use of a dwelling from Use Class C3 to a children's home within Use Class C2.

An additional representation had been received from a neighbouring property, which had been considered and was not considered to raise any new material planning matters beyond those set out in the Committee report.

The Officer advised that an update to the recommendation was proposed. Condition 3, as set out in the report, was to be replaced with two separate conditions controlling staffing arrangements and limiting the number of children to a maximum of three at any one time.

It was explained that the proposal would accommodate up to three children, with a minimum of two members of staff present overnight, alongside additional staffing arrangements as detailed within the submitted information.

The Committee was shown photographs of the site and surrounding area, noting that no external alterations were proposed and that on- street parking and a rear garden were available.

The site was identified within a Tier 5 settlement and was shown in the context of nearby services and facilities, including shops, a primary school, hospital and public transport links. The location of other similar facilities within the area was also indicated.

The Chairman outlined the procedure for public speaking.

Councillor Allison, speaking on behalf of Morton Parish Council, addressed the Committee and raised concerns regarding flood risk, stating that whilst the site was identified within Flood Zone 1, the wider area was subject to flooding and could become isolated. Reference was made to national and local planning policy, with the view expressed that insufficient weight had been given to the vulnerability of the proposed use.

Concerns were also raised regarding the concentration of similar developments within the area, the interpretation of Morton's relationship with Gainsborough, and the potential impact on the local community. The Parish Council requested that the application be refused.

The applicant addressed the Committee in support of the application. It was explained that the proposal sought to provide a small-scale children's home for up to three children, offering a stable and supportive home environment. Reference was made to the increasing number of children in care and the need for appropriate accommodation. Assurance was provided that the home would be professionally managed and regulated, with a focus on the wellbeing of both the children and the wider community.

The agent also addressed the Committee and outlined their professional experience within the public sector and children's services. It was stated that the proposed development would operate under strict regulatory oversight, and that no objections had been raised by Lincolnshire Police. The view was expressed that children benefited from living within established communities with access to local services and facilities. The Committee was asked to support the Officer recommendation and approve the application.

An objector addressed the Committee, concerns were raised regarding the impact of the proposal on the character of the area, noting that it would introduce a more intensive, managed use within a residential estate.

Further concerns related to the accuracy of information submitted with the application, the potential for increased traffic and activity associated with staff and visitors, and the likelihood of noise and disturbance arising from a 24-hour operation.

Issues were also raised regarding the suitability and sustainability of the location, including access to services and perceived safety considerations. Concern was expressed regarding the loss of a family dwelling and the potential for a concentration of similar uses within the area. The Committee was requested to refuse the application.

With no response from Officers, the Chairman opened the floor to Members of the Committee for debate.

A Member of the Committee queried whether existing similar facilities within Morton had given rise to any issues or complaints, and whether information was available regarding their

operation. It was noted that, whilst there was sympathy for residents, the Committee was required to determine the application on planning grounds. In response, the Lead Officer advised that no specific information was available at the meeting regarding the operation of existing facilities, and that such matters would ordinarily be considered by other regulatory bodies.

The Vice-Chairman raised concerns regarding the compliance of the proposal with Policy S23, particularly in light of the Tier 5 status of Morton and the accessibility of services and facilities. It was queried whether future occupants would have realistic access to education, healthcare and social opportunities. Further concerns were raised in respect of parking and the proposed staffing arrangements, with reference made to the alignment between the report and the wording of the relevant condition.

The Lead Officer advised that Policy S23 sought to direct residential care development away from isolated locations. It was acknowledged that Morton, as a Tier 5 settlement, was more rural in nature; however, it was considered to have access to services and facilities, including via public transport. Reference was made to a similar application previously considered by the Committee, where the location had been accepted in this context.

In relation to the proposed conditions, it was confirmed that Condition 3 would be replaced by revised conditions to reflect the staffing arrangements set out within the submitted Planning Statement, providing greater clarity and enforceability.

Members of the Committee reiterated that each application should be determined on its own merits, and continued concerns were expressed regarding the Tier 5 status of the settlement and access to services, particularly in relation to transport and opportunities for children.

The Legal Advisor reminded Members of the Committee that applications must be determined on their own merits. It was also noted that a previous decision of the Committee, in which Morton had been accepted as a sustainable location for a similar form of development, was capable of being considered as part of the overall planning balance.

A Member of the Committee expressed concern regarding the cumulative impact of similar developments within Morton and queried at what point further provision would represent an over concentration. Reference was made to the volume of objections received from residents, which were considered to reflect genuine planning concerns rather than general opposition in principle. It was suggested that such provision should be evidence based and strategically planned, with appropriate input from relevant bodies, and that limited information had been provided in this regard.

Concern was also raised regarding the potential for speculative development and whether the proposal reflected an identified local need, including the possibility that accommodation could be used by other authorities.

Further concerns were expressed regarding the character of the area, the level of activity associated with the proposed use, and the comparison with a typical dwelling. Reference was also made to parking constraints, the likelihood of additional vehicle movements, and reliance on limited public transport.

A Member of the Committee raised further concerns regarding highways impact, particularly in relation to parking pressures and the potential for increased congestion within the cul de sac.

In response, the Lead Officer advised that the application had been assessed in consultation with the Highways Authority. It was explained that the relevant test for refusal on highways grounds related to whether the development would result in a severe impact on the highway network. No objection had been raised by the Highways Authority, and the proposal had therefore been assessed in accordance with this advice, considering the anticipated vehicle movements and staffing arrangements.

It was further explained that the proposal represented a different use class to that of a standard dwelling and therefore required planning permission. The assessment had been undertaken on land use planning grounds only, with matters relating to operation and management controlled through separate regulatory regimes.

A Member of the Committee reiterated concerns regarding the localised impact on parking and residential amenity, and the implications for existing residents.

The Chairman noted that, in the absence of an objection from the Highways Authority, limited weight could be attributed to highways concerns in isolation, particularly in the context of any potential appeal. Issues were also raised regarding accessibility to services and facilities, including education, and the suitability of the location for future occupants.

A Member of the Committee acknowledged the points raised during the debate but noted that there appeared to be limited planning grounds on which to base a refusal. It was further noted that consistency with previous decisions of the Committee was an important consideration, and concern was expressed regarding the likelihood of a successful appeal should the application be refused without clear planning justification.

A Member of the Committee referred to national data relating to increases in the number of children in care and the growth in children's homes, noting concerns regarding the significant expansion of privately operated provision and associated costs. Strong concern was expressed regarding the wider policy context and the increasing role of private operators within the sector, which the Member stated was not supported.

It was acknowledged that, in planning terms, the application appeared to comply with

relevant policy and that there were limited grounds upon which to refuse permission. Concern was also raised that a refusal could be difficult to defend at appeal, potentially resulting in costs to the Council.

NOTE: Councillor David Dobbie abstained from voting on the following resolution.

Having been proposed and seconded, the Chairman took the vote. With equal votes for and against, the Chairman used his casting vote, and it was agreed that planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

Recommended Conditions:

Conditions stating the time by which the development must be commenced:

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

Reason: To conform with Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Conditions which apply or require matters to be agreed before the development commenced:

None.

Conditions which apply or are to be observed during the course of the development:

2. With the exception of the detailed matters referred to by the conditions of this consent, the development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents:

- Site Plan – Produced on 27th March 2026
- Site Location Plan – Produced on 27th March 2026
- Proposed Floor Plans – Spring Hill House – Uploaded on 3rd May 2026

The works shall be carried out in accordance with the details shown on the approved plans and in any other approved documents forming part of the application.

Reason: To ensure the development proceeds in accordance with the approved plans and to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy S53 of the Central Lincolnshire Local.

3. The development must only be operated in strict accordance with the staffing structure, hours and attendance as set out on Pages 4 to 6 of the Planning Statement, Dated 4th April 2026

Reason: In order to maximise the sustainability of the development to accord with the

National Planning Policy Framework and local policies S23 and S53 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.

4. The use hereby permitted shall only provide care for a maximum of 3 children at any one time.

Reason: In order to maximise the sustainability of the development to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework and local policies S23 and S53 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.

13 WL/2026/00251 - THE OLD BLACKSMITHS, TEMPLEFIELD ROAD NORTHFIELD LANE, WILLOUGHTON

The Officer introduced the application, who advised that the proposal sought permission for the change of use of the former blacksmiths building to a café and shop.

The Committee was advised that, with no updates to the application, the proposal included limited external alterations, comprising new windows and doors and the addition of a timber pergola, with internal works to facilitate the café, shop and outdoor seating area.

It was noted that the application was before Committee as it represented a departure from Policy S49 due to the absence of on-site parking provision. The Officer further advised that the Highways Authority had initially raised concerns regarding access, however, these had been addressed through the provision of a pedestrian access to the north of the site and a refuge point on the opposite side of the road, to be secured through a highways works agreement and planning condition.

It was also noted that the building was identified as a non-designated heritage asset, and that the proposal would bring the building back into active use and support its long-term preservation.

The Chairman invited the applicant to address Members of the Committee. It was explained that the proposal sought to bring the building back into use as a small-scale café and village shop, providing a community facility and preserving a building of historic importance. Assurance was provided that the business would operate on a modest scale and would seek to complement village life whilst supporting local employment and community cohesion.

Councillor Howitt Cowan as Ward Member addressed the Committee in support of the application, highlighting the opportunity to restore a building of local historical value and provide a community asset. It was acknowledged that the absence of parking presented a challenge, however, it was considered that this should be weighed against the benefits of bringing the building back into use. The Committee was urged to support the application in line with the Officer recommendation.

Members of the Committee expressed overall support for the application, recognising the benefits of bringing a non-designated heritage asset back into active use and providing a community facility within the village. The proposal was welcomed as a positive investment, with support noted for small scale local enterprise and the enhancement of local amenities.

Clarification was sought in respect of highways matters, including the nature of the initial objection and the proposed pedestrian refuge, and of the level of archaeological recording to be secured by condition. It was confirmed that the highways concerns related to pedestrian safety and had been addressed, and that a proportionate level of archaeological recording was proposed.

Whilst the absence of on-site parking was acknowledged, Members considered that the impacts were acceptable in this context, noting the location and anticipated scale of the use.

With no further comments, the proposal to accept the Officer's recommendations was duly seconded and voted upon. It was therefore agreed that planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

Conditions stating the time by which the development must be commenced:

1.The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To conform with Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Conditions which apply or require matters to be agreed before the development commenced:

None.

Conditions which apply or are to be observed during the course of the development:

2.With the exception of the detailed matters referred to by the conditions of this consent, the development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings:

Drawing no. 001 Rev J, dated 04/06/2026.

The works shall be carried out in accordance with the details shown on the approved plans and in any other approved documents forming part of the application.

Reason: To ensure the development proceeds in accordance with the approved plans and to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in accordance with a Construction

Management Plan and Method Statement that shall first be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan and Statement shall indicate measures to mitigate the adverse impacts of vehicle activity and the means to manage the drainage of the site during the construction stage of the permitted development. It shall include;

- the on-site parking of all vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
- the on-site loading and unloading of all plant and materials;
- the on-site storage of all plant and materials used in constructing the development;
- wheel washing facilities;

Reason: In the interests of the safety and free passage of those using the adjacent public highway and to ensure that the permitted development is adequately drained without creating or increasing flood risk to land or property adjacent to, or downstream of, the permitted development during construction.

4. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the pedestrian footpath to the north of the building has been installed and completed.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, including the safety of pedestrian accessing the site, in accordance with Policy S47 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.

5. The conversion works hereby approved shall not take place until an Historic Building Record has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The recording should be to Level 2 as described in Historic England's- A Guide to Good Recording Practice.

Reason: To ensure the appropriate recording of the historic building in a manner proportionate to its importance in accordance with policy S57 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan and guidance within the NPPF.

6. Prior to the installation of any new or replacement windows and doors, drawings to a scale of 1:10, showing the following information shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only proceed in accordance with the approved details.

- Materials, including colour and finish;
- Method of glazing;
- Method of opening;

Reason: In the interests of protecting the appearance of the host NDHA and the character of the street scene to be in accordance with Policies S53 and S57 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.

7. Prior to their use in the development hereby approved, details, including specifications of

the following materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only proceed in accordance with the approved details.

- Roof tile to be used;
- Treatment of verges and barge boards;
- Any flues, vents or other external pipework;
- Treatment and/or finish of pergola.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the appearance of the host NDHA and the character of the street scene to be in accordance with Policies S53 and S57 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.

8. Any new or replacement guttering to be used in the development hereby permitted shall be black cast iron unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the appearance of the host NDHA and the character of the street scene to be in accordance with Policies S53 and S57 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.

9. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until a scheme for the disposal of foul and surface waters (including the results of soakaway/percolation tests) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure adequate drainage facilities are provided to serve the development in accordance with Policy S21 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2023.

Conditions which apply or relate to matters which are to be observed following completion of the development:

10. The opening hours of the development hereby approved shall be in strict accordance with the following opening hours, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Monday- Friday- 08:00- 18:00

Saturday- 08:00- 18:00

Sunday- 09:00- 17:00

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity in accordance with Policy S53 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.

14 WL/2026/00290 - HIGHFIELD CLIFF FARM, SHADOWS LANE GLENTAM, MARKET RASEN

The application was introduced by the Officer, who advised that the proposal sought to vary

an existing planning permission to remove an agricultural occupancy condition attached to the dwelling.

The Committee was shown the site location and surrounding context, noting that the site was located within the open countryside to the west of Glentham. The existing condition restricting occupancy was presented and explained. Photographs of the dwelling and access arrangements from the A631 were provided for context.

The applicant addressed the Committee in support of the application. It was explained that the dwelling had been constructed as a farmhouse associated with the wider agricultural holding and was not a typical agricultural workers' dwelling.

It was stated that changes within the agricultural sector had resulted in significantly reduced employment opportunities, meaning that the dwelling was no longer suitable for occupation by a person employed in agriculture as required by the condition. Reference was made to a marketing exercise undertaken over an extended period, which had not resulted in a suitable occupant being identified.

The applicant advised that the property was of a nature and scale that limited its suitability for agricultural occupancy, and that the continued restriction was no longer practical. It was further stated that the removal of the condition would not result in harm, noting the absence of local objection and the established presence of the dwelling.

The Committee was requested to support the removal of the agricultural occupancy condition.

NOTE: Councillor Adam Duguid exited the Council Chamber at 7.48pm.

With no comments to return from the Officer, the Chairman opened to Members of the Committee for debate.

Support was indicated by a Member of the Committee who considered that planning policy should respond to changes within the agricultural sector, noting that buildings no longer required for their original purpose should be capable of alternative use. It was considered that the applicant had demonstrated that the existing restriction was no longer practical, and approval of the application was proposed.

Other Members expressed sympathy with the circumstances outlined by the applicant, particularly in relation to changing agricultural practices. However, concern was raised regarding the need to identify appropriate planning justification to support the removal of the condition, with it noted that decisions must be based on policy.

Further concerns were raised regarding the absence of evidence of a suitable marketing exercise. Clarification was sought regarding the requirements for marketing a dwelling

subject to an agricultural occupancy condition, including duration, pricing and demonstration of lack of interest. The Officer advised that a period of marketing would typically be required, supported by evidence of reduced pricing and details of interest received, and confirmed that no such evidence had been submitted in this case.

Concern was also expressed regarding the potential precedent that could arise from the removal of such conditions. The Committee considered whether the application should be deferred to enable the applicant to provide supporting evidence of marketing activity, rather than determining the application in its current form. It was noted that any deferral would require agreement to an extension of time to avoid the risk of an appeal on grounds of non-determination.

With no further comments, upon being put to the vote, the proposal was carried and it was therefore **RESOLVED** that the application be **DEFERRED** to enable the submission of further information to evidence the marketing of the dwelling.

NOTE: Councillor Adam Duguid re-entered the Council Chamber at 8.01pm

15 DETERMINATION OF APPEALS

With no comments, questions or requirements for a vote the appeal decisions were **DULY NOTED**.

NOTE: The meeting entered closed session at 8.03pm

16 PLANNING ENFORCEMENT - FORMAL CASE UPDATE

Members of the Committee considered the Planning Enforcement update, with reference made to a case where an enforcement notice had been issued in December 2019, and a subsequent application had only recently been submitted. Concern was expressed regarding the length of time taken for the matter to progress, with a query raised as to how the situation had been allowed to extend over a period of approximately 6 years. It was confirmed that the appropriate Officer would follow this up with the relevant teams.

With no further comments or questions, the Planning Enforcement - Formal Case Update was **DULY NOTED**.

The meeting concluded at 8.08 pm.

Chairman