

## **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 19 August 2026 commencing at 6.30 pm.

**Present:**

|                                          |
|------------------------------------------|
| Councillor Ian Fleetwood (Chairman)      |
| Councillor Matthew Boles (Vice-Chairman) |
| Councillor Emma Bailey                   |
| Councillor Karen Carless                 |
| Councillor David Dobbie                  |
| Councillor Tom Smith                     |
| Councillor Jim Snee                      |

**In Attendance:**

|                      |                                               |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Sally Grindrod-Smith | Director Planning, Regeneration & Communities |
| Russell Clarkson     | Head of Planning                              |
| Martha Rees          | Legal Advisor                                 |
| Molly Spencer        | Democratic & Civic Officer                    |
| Ian Elliott          | Development Management Team Leader            |
| Danielle Peck        | Senior Development Management Officer         |

**Apologies:** Councillor Jacob Flear

**Membership:** Councillor Karen Carless was appointed substitute for Councillor Jacob Flear

**Also in Attendance:** 6 members of the public

### **26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD**

There was no public participation.

### **27 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 22 July 2026, be confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

### **28 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

On behalf of all Members of the Committee the Chairman declared a non-pecuniary interest in application WL/2026/00514, North Kelsey, advising that a relative of the applicant was a Councillor of the District Council.

Councillor Smith declared that, in respect of application WL/2026/00514, he had previously

received communication regarding the application, as declared at a previous meeting, and had received no further communication since that time.

Councillor Smith also declared that, as the former County Councillor for the area relating to application WL/2025/00667, he had received no communications regarding the application, had made no comment on the matter, and approached its consideration with an open mind.

Councillor Dobbie declared, in relation to application WL/2026/00292, that the application had previously been considered by Gainsborough Town Council. Councillor Dobbie advised that, whilst the Town Council had resolved to support the proposal, he would consider the application before the Planning Committee with an open mind and determine it on its planning merits.

## **29 UPDATE ON GOVERNMENT/LOCAL CHANGES IN PLANNING POLICY**

The Lead Officer advised the Committee that the Government had published a new National Planning Policy Framework earlier than anticipated and that the revised Framework took immediate effect. As a result, the new Framework was a material consideration of critical importance in the determination of planning applications, including those being considered at the meeting.

It was explained that planning decisions continued to be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicated otherwise. However, where Development Plan policies were materially inconsistent with the new national decision making policies, the revised National Planning Policy Framework indicated that such policies should be afforded very limited weight.

The Committee was advised that the revised Framework introduced a distinction between development within settlements and development outside settlements. A presumption in favour of development within settlements now applied, subject to specified criteria, whilst development outside settlements would be assessed against more limited circumstances where development may be considered acceptable.

The Lead Officer advised that an addendum had been circulated to Members ahead of the meeting to reflect the immediate implementation of the revised National Planning Policy Framework and to update references contained within the reports.

Following the update, the Chairman noted that the supplementary information had been published only the previous day, after circulation of the original agenda papers. The Chairman considered it important that all Members had sufficient opportunity to read and consider the additional information before determining the planning applications.

**NOTE:** The meeting adjourned at 6.37pm and reopened at 8.43pm.

**30 WL/2026/00514 - LAND REAR OF LANGMEAD, WEST STREET, NORTH KELSEY, MARKET RASEN**

The Committee considered an application seeking planning permission for the erection of one self-build detached dwelling together with associated works on land to the rear of Langmead, West Street, North Kelsey.

The Officer advised that, following the publication of the revised National Planning Policy Framework, it was recommended that the first reason for refusal be amended to include reference to Policy S5 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Members of the Committee were advised that the reason for refusal would therefore conclude that the principle of development in the proposed location would be contrary to Policies S1 and S4 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan and Policy S5 of the National Planning Policy Framework, specifically points 1 and 4.

The application was then presented to the Committee, including details of the site location, the proposed development, access arrangements, site photographs, and the relationship of the site to the developed footprint of North Kelsey.

Mr Lawrence, the applicant, addressed the Committee in support of the application. He advised that the proposal was for a self-build dwelling intended for occupation by his family. He stated that the site occupied a sustainable location close to the centre of North Kelsey and was within walking distance of local facilities, including the village school, village green, chapel and public house.

Mr Lawrence further stated that the site should be regarded as falling within the settlement boundary, noting that it was surrounded by residential development on three sides and that nearby properties extended further west than the proposed development. Reference was also made to the updated National Planning Policy Framework and to the absence of any substantial harm arising from the proposal.

In response, an Officer reminded Members that there were no defined settlement boundaries and that the proposal should be assessed against the relevant definitions of appropriate location and developed footprint contained within the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. Members were also advised that approval of the application could result in setting a precedent for further residential development within the wider paddock area.

During the debate, the Chairman commented that the site visit had been beneficial in understanding the relationship of the site to the wider village and noted its proximity to the village school and other local facilities. The Member expressed the view that the proposed dwelling would be closely related to the existing built form of the village.

A Committee Member expressed the view that, unlike other developments referenced during the debate, the proposal would not represent a continuation of existing frontage development and would instead introduce development behind existing properties. The Member therefore indicated support for the Officer recommendation.

Another Member of the Committee advised that, whilst understanding the points raised in support of the application, concerns remained regarding the scale and siting of the proposal and its impact on the character of the village. Reference was also made to the weight to be afforded to the revised National Planning Policy Framework.

With three votes cast in favour of the proposal and two abstentions, it was agreed that planning permission be **REFUSED** in line with the Officer recommendation.

### **31 WL/2025/00667 - LAND OFF STALLINGBOROUGH ROAD, KEELBY**

The Committee gave consideration to an application seeking planning permission for the installation and operation of a solar farm on land off Stallingborough Road, Keelby.

The Lead Officer explained that the proposal formed part of a cross-boundary application extending into North East Lincolnshire. Members were advised that the Committee's determination related only to the section of the site within West Lindsey, comprising approximately 31.85 hectares of the overall development area. It was noted that North East Lincolnshire Council had granted planning permission for the adjoining part of the development in April 2026.

The Lead Officer presented the application, outlining the proposed layout, landscaping, agricultural land classification, visual impact assessment and proximity to neighbouring properties. Members were advised that the majority of the site comprised Grade 3B agricultural land and was therefore not classified as best and most versatile agricultural land.

The Committee heard that additional perimeter landscaping and woodland planting were proposed in order to mitigate visual impacts and that the planting would mature over time to provide increased screening of the development.

In presenting the recommendation, the Lead Officer advised that both local and national planning policy contained support for renewable energy development and that substantial weight should be given to the benefits arising from renewable energy generation. Members were further advised that the principle of need for such development should not be questioned.

The Lead Officer also advised that, following discussions with the applicant, additional archaeological conditions relating to archaeological investigation and mitigation should be added to any planning permission granted.

Mr Burt, speaking as the landowner, addressed the Committee in support of the application. He explained that the land formed part of a long-established family farming business and advised that income generated from the solar development would support the ongoing viability of the farm and its workforce. He stated that the land proposed for the development was not amongst the most productive agricultural land within the holding and noted the potential for continued agricultural use through sheep grazing. Reference was also made to the proposed landscaping, biodiversity enhancements and the temporary nature of the development.

Mr Bowen, as applicant, addressed the Committee. He advised that the development would generate renewable energy equivalent to that required by a significant number of homes and noted that planning permission had already been granted for the adjoining section of the site within North East Lincolnshire. He explained that feedback received during consultation had informed amendments to the scheme, including additional planting, permissive paths and environmental enhancements. Reference was made to the proposed biodiversity net gain, continued agricultural use of the site, community benefit funding and the Officer recommendation for approval.

Councillor Bierley, speaking as Ward Member, welcomed the progress of the application and expressed the view that a number of concerns raised during the planning process had been mitigated or resolved through engagement between the applicant, landowner and consultees. He welcomed the recognition given to the importance of the local aquifer and chalk stream, the proposed boundary planting and woodland reinstatement, and the biodiversity net gain proposed as part of the development. Reference was also made to the predominantly Grade 3B agricultural classification of the site, the potential for continued agricultural use through sheep grazing, and the protection of existing farming employment together with employment opportunities arising during the construction and decommissioning phases.

Councillor Bierley referred to the proximity of the development to existing and allocated residential sites within Keelby and expressed concern regarding the potential impact of the development on those areas. He also observed that the proposed 40-year operational period appeared lengthy. Reference was made to the cross boundary nature of the proposal, the cumulative impact of solar developments within North East Lincolnshire, the location of the battery energy storage infrastructure and site access within the adjoining authority area, and the proposed five year commencement period in light of strategic electricity transmission reinforcement works required before electricity could be exported from the site.

During the debate, clarification was sought regarding the implications of the revised National Planning Policy Framework and the weight to be afforded to renewable energy developments. The Officer advised that Policy S14 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan remained consistent with national policy and that substantial weight should be given to the benefits arising from renewable energy generation.

Clarification was also sought regarding fire safety considerations. The Officer advised that the relevant fire and rescue authorities had been consulted and that no objections had been raised.

A Member of the Committee sought clarification regarding community benefits associated with the proposal, the Council's interest in the site, planning application fees, decommissioning arrangements and the future management of the site. In response, the Officer advised that community benefit arrangements could not form part of the planning balance and would be addressed separately. Clarification was also provided in relation to the planning application process, the temporary nature of the development and the requirement for an approved decommissioning strategy.

Another Committee Member sought clarification regarding decommissioning arrangements and the restoration of the site following the operational life of the development. The Officer

explained that a decommissioning scheme would be required and would be subject to approval by the relevant planning authority.

A Member of the Committee raised a question regarding the replacement and disposal of solar panels during the operational life of the development. In response, the Officer advised that a condition relating to the future management and replacement of equipment could be incorporated if Members considered this necessary.

With no further comments, the proposal to approve the application, subject to the conditions contained within the updated report together with additional conditions relating to archaeological investigation and mitigation and a decommissioning strategy including a programme of removal and restoration works, was duly seconded and voted upon. It was therefore agreed that planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

**Recommended Conditions:**

1. The development hereby permitted must be begun before the expiration of five 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**

2. No development shall take place until a written Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan (HMMP) in accordance with The Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment carried out by Clarkson & Woods Ecological Consultants (February 2026) is to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The HMMP shall relate to all 'significant' biodiversity gains on site and must be produced in accordance with sections listed below:
  - 2.1. a non-technical summary;
  - 2.2. the roles and responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering/monitoring the HMMP;
  - 2.3. the details of funding, resources and mechanisms for long term delivery of the HMMP.
  - 2.4. the planned habitat creation and enhancement works for the initial completion period and date by which the initial works will be completed;
  - 2.5. the management measures to maintain habitat for a period of 30 years from the end of initial habitat creation.
  - 2.6. the monitoring/reporting methodology and frequency in respect of the retained, created and/or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the local planning authority on years 1,5,10,15,20,25,30. All reports must be submitted no later than September 1<sup>st</sup> on each reporting year (reports must be completed by a suitably qualified ecologist)

2.7.the mechanisms of adaptive management and remedial measures to account for changes in the work schedule to achieve required targets.

Reason: To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Policy S61 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2023-2043.

3. No development shall take place until a written Ecological Mitigation & Enhancement Plan (EMEP) in accordance with is submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The EMEP shall include: -

- A plan showing habitat protection zones
- Details of any precautionary method statements for protected species
- Details of a sensitive lighting strategy
- Details, specification location of measures to provide access for movement of wildlife across and around the site to include wildlife access points at frequent intervals in all fencing
- Details, specification and location of the following species enhancements incorporated across the site:
  - A range and variety of post/tree mounted bird boxes
  - A range and variety of post/tree mounted bat boxes

The EMEP shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved plan. All features shall be installed during construction and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interest of nature conservation and to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework and local policy S60 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2023.

4. Notwithstanding the detail contained within the application, prior to their installation on site, details of the proposed materials, size, colours and finishes of the solar panels, frames, fencing, buildings and equipment on the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and maintained as such for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development upon completion in the absence of precise details accompanying the application, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and local policy S5, S14 and S53 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2023-2043.

5. No development shall take place until a detailed Landscape and Ecology Strategy Plan and Landscape Planting Phasing Plan based on the Indicative Landscape and Ecology Strategy Plan ref. AW0274 - PL - 02 Rev C and the Landscape Phasing Plan ref. ref. AW0274 - PL – 03 has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The agreed landscaping scheme and phasing/timescales shall be implemented on the site in accordance with the approved Landscape and Ecology Strategy Plan and Landscape Planting Phasing Plan.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development and proposed landscaping plan upon completion in the absence of precise details accompanying the application, in accordance with the National Planning Policy framework and local policy S5, S14 and S53 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2023-2043.

5.1. No new development (including enabling works), or demolition works, shall take place until an Archaeological Mitigation Strategy for the protection of archaeological remains is submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The Archaeological Mitigation Strategy will include provision for further appropriate archaeological Written Schemes of Investigation as required to meet the strategy. These written schemes of investigation shall include the following:

- I. An assessment of significance and proposed mitigation strategy (i.e. preservation by record, preservation in situ or a mix of these elements).
- II. A methodology and timetable of site investigation and recording
- III. Provision for site analysis
- IV. Provision for publication and dissemination of analysis and records
- V. Provision for archive deposition
- VI. Nomination of a competent person/organisation to undertake the work
- VII. Provision for publication, dissemination and engagement proposals. This should detail how the needs of relevant audiences will be met, including how the results may be usable for subsequent research.

The scheme of archaeological investigation must only be undertaken in accordance with the approved details. The applicant will notify the Local Planning Authority of the intention to commence at least fourteen days before the start of archaeological work in order to facilitate adequate monitoring arrangements.

Reason: To ensure the preparation and implementation of an appropriate scheme of archaeological mitigation in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

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

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

- Site Location Plan ref. 01 Rev A
- Site Layout Plan ref. ref 02 Rev A
- Solar Panel Mounting Structure Detail ref. 04
- Power Conversion Unit ref. 06
- Deer Fence and Gate Details ref. 08
- CCTV ref. 10
- Indicative Landscape and Ecology Strategy Plan ref. AW0274 -PL -02 Rev C - Proposed Landscape Phasing Plan ref. AW0274 -PL -03

The works must 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 local policy S5, S14 and S53 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2023-2043.

7. The development hereby approved shall be temporary, and shall cease use within 40 years from the date of the first exportation of electricity from the site ('the date of first export'). The applicant, or their successor in title, shall, within 1 month of first export, notify the local planning authority in writing of the date of the date of first export.

Reason: To confirm the proposed 40-year temporary period of the permission for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 7.1.A report of the archaeologist's findings following the scheme of archaeological investigation required by condition 5A shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the Historic Environment Record Officer at Lincolnshire County Council within 6 months of the works hereby given consent being commenced unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The condition shall not be discharged until the archive of all archaeological work undertaken hitherto has been deposited with the County Museum Service, or another public depository willing to receive it, and until any relevant analysis, publication and dissemination agreed in relation to condition 1 has been undertaken.

Reason: In order to ensure that satisfactory arrangements are made for the investigation, retrieval and recording of any archaeological remains on the site, as well as the publication and dissemination of the results. This condition is imposed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

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

8. Within a period of 39 years and 6 months following the date of first export of electricity from the site, and no less than six months before the temporary use is ceased, a scheme for the decommissioning of the solar farm and its ancillary equipment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include details of:
  - how the land is to be restored and shall include a programme for the completion of the decommissioning and restoration works, including a date by which the decommissioning and restoration works will have been completed in their entirety;
  - how it shall make provision for the removal from the land of the solar panels and associated above-ground works approved under this permission;
  - the management and timing of any works;
  - a traffic management plan to address likely traffic issues during the decommissioning period, and
  - an environmental management plan to include details to be taken during the decommissioning period to protect wildlife and habitats.

Thereafter, the decommissioning of the solar farm shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details and timings.

Reason: To ensure the decommissioning phase is completed with limited disturbance to the local area and the site is restored to its former appearance and use to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework, local policies S5, S14, S47, S53 and S56 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2023-2043.

9. Notice in writing shall be given to the Council within 15 working days of the Initial habitat creation and enhancement works as set out in the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) being completed.

Reason: To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Policy S61 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2023-2043.

10. The Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) submitted and approved as part of condition 2 must be strictly adhered to and implemented in full for a minimum of 30 years following the initial completion period approved pursuant to condition 9.

Reason: To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Policy S61 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2023-2043.

11. Within a period of no less than 12 months following the first date of export, an operational environmental management plan shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. This shall include a strategy for the management and maintenance of replacement solar photo-voltaic panels during the operation of the scheme. The scheme will detail the expected failure / replacement rate of the panels and will include a waste management strategy for their removal. The development shall thereafter operate in accordance with the agreed scheme.

Reason: To ensure the scheme is managed in a sustainable manner and in the interests of the environment, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **31a WL/2026/00292 - 33 MARKET STREET, GAINSBOROUGH**

The Committee gave consideration to an application seeking planning permission for the conversion of existing office accommodation to one residential apartment at 33 Market Street, Gainsborough.

The Officer advised that, as the proposal represented a departure from the Development Plan, the application would require advertisement as a departure for a period of 21 days. It was therefore recommended that, subject to the Committee's decision, authority be delegated to Officers to issue the decision following completion of the required statutory publicity process.

The application was presented to the Committee, including details of the proposed conversion of the existing office accommodation to residential use, associated internal alterations and replacement windows to the rear of the building.

During the discussion, the Vice-Chairman sought clarification regarding representations relating to ownership and access rights affecting part of the site. The Officer referred Members to the information contained within the report and advised that the applicant's agent had confirmed that the occupiers of the adjoining property retained rights of access to an existing toilet area at the rear of the building.

With no further comments, the proposal to grant planning permission, subject to the conditions set out in the report, and to delegate authority to Officers to issue the decision following public notice of the application as a departure from the Development Plan, was duly seconded and voted upon. It was therefore agreed that planning permission be **GRANTED**, with authority delegated to Officers to issue the decision following completion of the required publicity process. Planning permission was 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 drawing PA -101 -A -B -GA -PP Rev B dated 06/07/26. 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.

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

None.

### **32 DETERMINATION OF APPEALS**

There were no determination of appeals to note.

The meeting concluded at 7.45 pm.

Chairman