



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 August 2025

by Graham Wraight BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N2535/W/25/3365701

Lodge Farm, Kirton Road, Scotter, Gainsborough DN21 3JA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Shane Thompson against the decision of West Lindsey District Council.
- The application Ref is WL/2024/00713.
- The development proposed is demolish existing dwellinghouse & erect replacement dwellinghouse.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The decision notice includes two reasons for refusal. However, the matter of biodiversity net gain is also a main issue in my determination of this appeal, for reasons that will become apparent. The main issues are therefore:
 - (i) The effect of the proposed demolition of the dwelling in heritage terms;
 - (ii) Whether the proposed development meets with the development plan requirements relating to embodied carbon; and
 - (iii) Whether the proposed development would make provision for biodiversity net gain.

Reasons

Heritage

3. The main parties disagree as to whether Lodge Farm should be considered to be a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA). I note that the site appears on the local Historic Environment Record and I would not dispute the rational that at the time it was added to that record it would have been reasonable to consider it as an NDHA. However, it is material to my consideration of the appeal proposal that a two-storey extension to the dwelling has been approved and it appears, from the references made by the parties, to be extant and capable of implementation, albeit noting that the appellant's position is that it is not viable or practical to extend the dwelling in such a way. Nonetheless, it at the very least demonstrates a development that the Council considers to be acceptable in its impact on the appeal building, and it could well be the case that viability and practicality matters are revisited in the future allowing it to proceed.

4. That previously approved development would radically alter the appeal dwelling and erode to a significant extent its character and appearance as a traditional, small-scale farmhouse. Indeed, its front elevation and its general form and design would no longer appear as a traditional farmhouse at all. There is the further matter of the large detached garage with holiday let accommodation above which has recently been constructed on the site. That too is a building which bears little resemblance to the type of building that might be expected to be found on a traditional farmstead. Adding in the additional consideration that two of the other buildings which previously formed part of the original farmstead are no longer present, if the previous planning permission were to be implemented in full the wider site would have little semblance of a farmstead, which is what gave it its significance.
5. On that basis, I do not consider there to be a sustainable argument that the demolition of the appeal dwelling should be resisted to retain the farmstead character and appearance of the site. Comparatively, there would not be a materially greater impact on the significance of the NDHA as a result of the appeal proposal as compared to what has been approved. The significance of the site as a whole has also been considerably reduced by the presence of the new building and the removal of others. Consequently, I conclude that the proposal would accord with the aims of Policies S5 Part B and S57 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2023 (LP), where collectively they seek to protect buildings of architectural and historic merit, and with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework where it refers to the historic environment.

Carbon

6. Policy S11 of the LP requires consideration to be given to embodied carbon alongside in-use carbon savings. The energy statement provided by the appellant does not consider the former, although it does outline the in-use carbon savings that would be made and those are substantial. Nonetheless, whilst noting the appellant's concerns as to the accuracy of predicting embodied carbon at this stage in a development proposal, to comply with the requirements of the development plan it would be necessary to provide more information on this matter than has been forthcoming with the appeal submission. Although there is additional provision in the policy relating to buildings in a state of disrepair, there is no substantive evidence to show that this is the case with respect to the appeal property. Therefore, the proposal in its current form fails to demonstrate that it would comply with Policies S5 Part B and S11 of the LP.

Biodiversity net gain

7. Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain (BNG) set out in Schedule 7A (Biodiversity Gain in England) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), 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. 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. The planning application form states that the proposal would be exempt from providing a BNG as it would be a self & custom build dwelling.
8. However, it would be necessary for a completed planning obligation to be in place to secure the dwelling that is proposed as a self/custom build dwelling. Otherwise,

there would be no certainty that the proposal would ultimately be delivered as such and thus no certainty that the BNG exemption would be secured. Although the need for a planning obligation to address the matter of self/custom build and BNG was clearly flagged up in the Council's Officer Report, no planning obligation has been provided with the appeal.

9. Furthermore, no pre-development biodiversity value has been provided in order to establish a baseline position. In the absence of the proposal being secured as self/custom build, this means that it has not been demonstrated that the mandatory 10% BNG could be achieved if the development proceeded otherwise than as a self/custom build or that the statutory biodiversity gain condition is capable of being successfully discharged. This is a consideration which weighs significantly against the proposed development.

Planning Balance & Conclusion

10. Whilst I have not found harm in heritage terms, I have found that it has not been demonstrated that there would be a full compliance with Policy S11 of the LP with regard to embodied carbon. Consequently, there would be a failure to accord with the development plan, taken as a whole. Furthermore, it has not been demonstrated that the statutory BNG requirement could be met, and that is a matter which carries significant weight against the proposal. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

Graham Wraight

INSPECTOR