

<b>APPLICATION NO</b>	<b>2006/1154</b>
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Mr R K Ackroyd
<b>DEVELOPMENT</b>	Outline planning permission for living accommodation, a low level stable block, a small animal breeding centre and smallholding with land adapted to strip farming
<b>LOCATION</b>	Plot south of Belton Fields Lane, Westgate, Belton
<b>PARISH</b>	<b>BELTON</b>
<b>WARD</b>	Axholme Central
<b>SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>Refuse permission</b>
<b>REASONS FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE</b>	Agent request to address the committee
<b>POLICIES</b>	<p><b>Planning Policy Statement 1:</b> Delivering sustainable development.</p> <p><b>Planning Policy Statement 7:</b> Sustainable development in rural areas.</p> <p><b>Humberside Structure Plan:</b> Policy E3 (iv) states that in the open countryside new proposals for industry and commerce will not normally be permitted. Proposals to re-use existing buildings for small businesses may be permitted provided their impact on the countryside is acceptable.</p> <p><b>Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber:</b> No specific policies apply.</p> <p><b>North Lincolnshire Local Plan:</b> Policy ST3 (Development Limits) states that development outside development boundaries will be considered as being in the open countryside and will only be permitted if it is essential for the purposes of agriculture, forestry or to meet a special need associated with the countryside.</p> <p>Policy RD2 (Development in the Open Countryside) only allows proposals for development in the open countryside which are essential to the efficient operation of agriculture or forestry; employment-related development related to the open countryside, or other special countryside associated need, provided that the open countryside is the only appropriate location and development cannot be</p>

accommodated within defined development boundaries; the proposal accords with other specific requirements of this chapter of the local plan; it would not be detrimental to the character or appearance of the open countryside or nearby settlements in terms of siting, scale, massing, design or materials.

Policy LC14 identifies the Isle of Axholme as an area of Special Historic Landscape Interest and states that within this area, development will not be permitted which would destroy, damage or adversely affect the character, appearance or setting of the historic landscape, or any of its features.

Policy DS1 applies and sets out general primary requirements for all new developments in North Lincolnshire.

**Supplementary Planning Guidance - North Lincolnshire Landscape Assessment and Guidelines:** Identifies the site as being "Open Island Farmland".

**Supplementary Planning Guidance - North Lincolnshire Countryside Design Summary:** sets Out requirements for development in the countryside.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**Drainage Board:** Support the application.

## **PARISH COUNCIL**

'The parish council are opposed to this application. It is in open countryside, outside the local plan, a caravan is to be on site (see accounts forecasts) and would be contrary to policies DS1, RD2, and LC14 of the local plan. It would cause unacceptable harm to the historic landscape, which is of national and local importance, by introducing buildings and associated structures into an open area. These were the reasons you refused planning on 2005/1324 for the same project. There have been objections and a petition from villagers and enclosed is a copy of a letter regarding strip farming. The council also believe there could be a risk of animal rights protesters coming to the village.'

## **PUBLICITY**

Neighbouring properties have been notified and a site notice posted. Letters of objection and a petition have been received on the following grounds:

- 'His plans contravene every aspect of the open-field system that should be preserved in Belton. The land may not now be farmed in strips but it is still open-land and that is the important factor that must not be lost.'

- Access remains an unadopted single lane path, not suitable for commercial vehicles.
- Traffic joins the A160, a very busy road. This would be a particular problem when school is opening/closing and children walk past this junction.
- 'The historic landscape of the Isle of Axholme would be seriously damaged if this development proceeded, and the inclusion of "land adapted to strip farming" in this application is nothing but a cynical attempt to hoodwink the planners and local objectors.'
- The openness and flatness of the landscape is not suited for a commercial activity that would generate substantial noise.
- Danger that the floodgates will be open as there is no real case for this application being allowed but the precedent will have been established.
- 'Your reasons for the refusal decision must still apply as the present proposals are still contrary to policies DS1, RD2 and LC14 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.'
- Backland development outside the limit for the North Lincolnshire Local Plan.
- Would be intrusive and would encroach onto the open countryside, would detract from rural character of the area.
- Strip farming has worked for centuries without the need of domestic buildings on the land.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Outline planning permission is sought on a piece of land (2.833 hectares in size) to provide living accommodation and a small animal breeding centre, including a stable block. A previous application (2005/1324) was refused for similar reasons given at the end of this report.

**The key issues to be considered in the determination of this planning application are whether the proposals are acceptable in policy terms, whether any unacceptable harm to the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties would occur, and whether the impact of the development upon the historic landscape would be acceptable.**

The site is outside the development boundary for Belton and is within the open countryside. National and local planning policy does allow for new businesses in the open countryside if that is the only suitable location, and for living accommodation if it is proved to be functionally required by a business which is financially viable.

The husbandry of animals is generally accepted to meet the functional need test but whether 24-hour supervision is required for pet breeding is less certain.

The applicant has submitted a 3-year profit and loss projection that demonstrates that the business would clearly be profitable within that time period.

The breeding of animals, including dogs and parrots, would not normally be acceptable in a residential area and therefore a site in the countryside could be considered as one way of ensuring the amenities of the occupiers of residential properties are not adversely affected. In this instance it is considered that the site is a sufficient distance from neighbouring properties to prevent unacceptable disturbance from noise and smell.

The countryside around Belton is designated as part of the Isle of Axholme Historic Landscape Area (LC14) which merits special protection.

The surrounding landscape is not homogenous but is further designated into sub-categories with distinctive features and varying levels of importance locally and nationally.

The landscape within which the site lies is categorised as "Open Island Farmland" and can be considered as amongst the most important and environmentally valuable parts of the Isle of Axholme. The landscaping assessment and guidelines SPG states that:

"The medieval strip system farming areas common to the settlements on the elevated land of the Isle of Axholme are of cultural and heritage importance.

Their presence should be conserved and enhanced so as to retain open character by avoiding development and enclosure."

The North Lincolnshire Countryside Design Summary stresses the national importance of these areas of open fields and the need to protect them. The SPG gives design guidelines which emphasises the retention of

areas of open fields and avoiding blocking views across the open areas within the landscape.

The applicant, as part of this resubmission, has submitted a statement that the land will be put back into 'strip-farming'. It is hard to see how animal breeding would achieve this, in any event the fundamental issue is the unacceptable introduction of domestic and commercial buildings and associated paraphernalia into a very sensitive open landscape. The reasons for refusal of the previous application have not been overcome.

From an archaeological perspective, the application site lies within the Isle of Axholme Area of Special Historic Landscape Interest (Policy LC14). The essential nature of this landscape is open agricultural land, cultivated in long narrow unenclosed strips, with all farmhouses and agricultural buildings located within the villages. The land has been farmed on this system since medieval times, and the Isle is acknowledged as the best example of very few surviving landscapes of this type in the country.

The proposed development is not related to the historic landscape and would inevitably introduce features that would be detrimental to the landscape character, including residential property, agricultural buildings, access, fencing etc.

The applicant has failed to address the reasons the previous application was refused for. The application should therefore be refused as contrary to policy LC14.

It is considered, therefore, that whilst the applicant may have shown that the functional and financial viability tests can be met and that this type of business is best kept away from residential areas, the national and local significance of the landscape is of overriding importance and the proposals are therefore unacceptable and should be refused planning permission.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

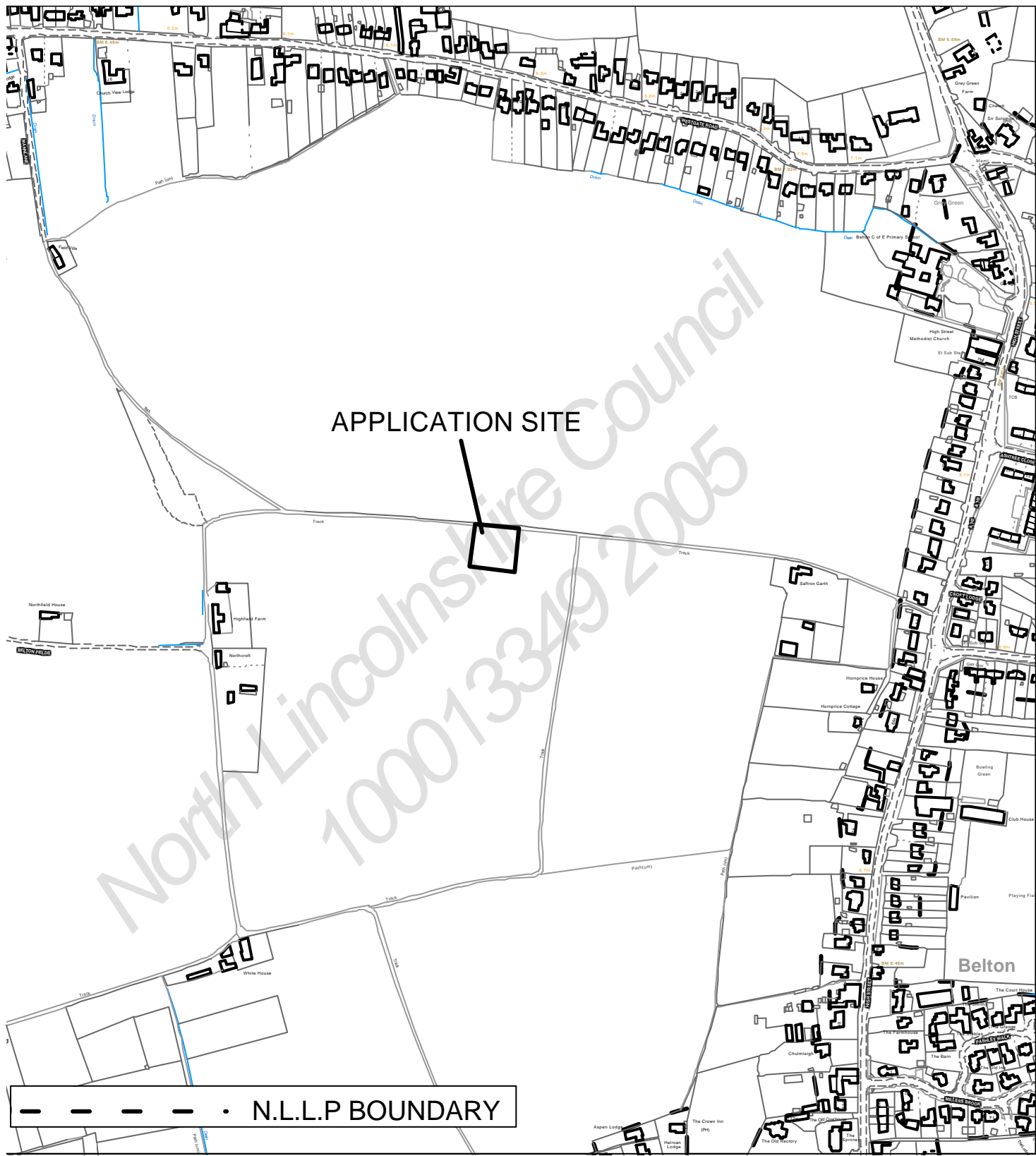
### **Refuse permission for the following reasons:**

1.

If allowed, the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the historic landscape of the Isle of Axholme which is of national and local importance due to the introduction of buildings and associated structures into an open area of fields with a history of medieval strip farming. The proposed development is not related to the historic landscape and would be detrimental to the landscape's character.

2.

The proposals are therefore contrary to policies DS1, RD2 and LC14 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan and to Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes 'Landscape Assessment and Guidelines' and 'Countryside Design Summary'.



APPLICATION SITE

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TITLE : 2006/1154  
 SCALE : 1:5000



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 Planning and Regeneration Service  
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