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Intended for
Lincolnshire County Council / Balfour Beatty

Document type
Planning Statement

Date
August 2023

NORTH HYKEHAM RELIEF ROAD
PLANNING STATEMENT

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PLANNING STATEMENT

Project name	**North Hykeham Relief Road**
Project no.	**1620013942**
Recipient	**Balfour Beatty & Lincolnshire County Council**
Document type	**Report**
Revision	**P03**
Date	**17/11/23**
Prepared by	**H.Roberts**
Checked by	**H.Roberts**
Approved by	**H.Roberts**
Document no.	**NHRR-TEP-GEN-HYKE-RP-TP-00001**
Suitability Status	**S4 - Suitable for Review & Authorisation**
Functional Breakdown	**General-Scheme-wide generic information**
Spatial Breakdown	**North Hykeham Relief Road**

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Revision	Date	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by	Description
P03	**17/11/23**	HR	HR	HR	Issed for Counsel
P02	20/10/23	LF	AV	AV	Issue for Counsel
P01	06/10/23	LC	IG	BW	First Issue

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CONTENTS

TABLE OF TABLES

TABLE OF FIGURES

APPENDICES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AADF	Annual Average Daily Flow
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CLJSPC	Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee
CLLP	Central Lincolnshire Local Plan
D2AP	Dual All-purpose Carriageway
DMRB	Design Manual for Roads and Bridges
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPUK	Environmental Protection UK
ES	Environmental Statement
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
HGVs	Heavy Goods Vehicle
IAQM	Institute of Air Quality Management
LCC	Lincolnshire County Council
LEB	Lincoln Eastern Bypass
LLCA	Local Landscape Character Area
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LTP	Local Transport Plan
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
NHRR	North Hykeham Relief Road
NKDC	North Kesteven District Council
NMU	Non-motorised User
OAR	Option Assessment Report
OBC	Outline Business Case
PIE	Public Information Event
PRoW	Public Right of Way
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SUE	Sustainable Urban Extension
SWQ	South West Quadrant

GLOSSARY

Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)	A plan to outline measures to control and minimise the risk of adverse effects from construction activities.
EIA Scoping Opinion	Requested in Regulation 15 (1) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations
In-combination Climate Change Impact (ICCI) assessment	Focuses on the potential for climate change to exacerbate the effects on receptors identified by other environmental disciplines.
Nitrogen dioxide (NO_2)	A gaseous air pollutant composed of nitrogen and oxygen. It is released into the atmosphere when fuels are burned (for example, petrol or diesel in a car engine, or natural gas in a domestic central heating boiler or power station).
PM_{10}	Dust and particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of less than 10µm. Typically generated during demolition and construction activities, and by road emissions.
$PM_{2.5}$	Particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of less than 2.5µm. Typically generated by road traffic emissions.
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is a conservation designation denoting a protected area in the UK, designated due to special interest in its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features. They are protected by law to conserve their wildlife or geology.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the construction of the North Hykeham Relief Road ('the Proposed Scheme').

1.1.2 The application is submitted in full with all matters included for determination.

1.1.3 The application is submitted on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) ('the Applicant') with the following description of development being applied for:

1.1.4 "*Construction of the North Hykeham Relief Road (NHRR) between the A46 Hykeham Roundabout and the A15 Sleaford Road Roundabout at the end of the Lincoln Eastern Bypass (LEB), with junctions at South Hykeham Road, Brant Road and Grantham Road. The NHRR will comprise of 8km of 120kph dual all-purpose carriageway (D2AP) with associated earthworks, drainage, landscaping, and highway features.*"

1.1.5 The application site lies in the administrative boundary of North Kesteven District Council (NKDC). The determining authority for this application is Lincolnshire County Council under Regulation 3 of The Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992.

1.1.6 Land is safeguarded for the North Hykeham Relief Road in the adopted Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (2023) under Policy S46. The land was safeguarded in the previous Central Lincolnshire Local Plan which was adopted in 2017. There are a number of deviations to the proposed route from that published in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan to reduce the potential environmental impacts. These are set out in Chapters 6 and 8 of this Planning Statement.

1.1.7 This Planning Statement provides a background to the Proposed Scheme, covering the application site and its surroundings and a summary of the policy context which has considered the potential effects of the Proposed Scheme.

1.1.8 The structure of the Planning Statement is as follows:

1.0 Introduction
2.0 Application Site and Surroundings
3.0 Proposed Scheme
4.0 Consultation
5.0 Planning Policy Context
6.0 Compliance with Planning Policy
7.0 Technical Assessment
8.0 Case for Development
Conclusion

1.2 Planning Application Documentation

1.2.1 The following documents and drawings have been produced in support of the planning application and should be read in conjunction with this Planning Statement.

Table 1-1: Application Documentation

Document/Drawing	Reference
Environmental Statement Chapter 1 Introduction	
Environmental Statement Chapter 2 Assessment Methodology and Significance Criteria	
Environmental Statement Chapter 3 Alternatives	

Environmental Statement Chapter 4 Project Description	
Environmental Statement Chapter 5 Demolition and Construction	
Environmental Statement Chapter 6 Air Quality	
Environmental Statement Chapter 7 Cultural Heritage	
Environmental Statement Chapter 8 Landscape and Visual	
Environmental Statement Chapter 9 Biodiversity	
Environmental Statement Chapter 10 Geology and Soils	
Environmental Statement Chapter 11 Material Assets and Waste	
Environmental Statement Chapter 12 Noise and Vibration	
Environmental Statement Chapter 13 Human Health	
Environmental Statement Chapter 14 Road Drainage and the Water Environment	
Environmental Statement Chapter 15 Climate	
Environmental Statement Chapter 16 Major Accidents and Disasters	
Environmental Statement Chapter 17 Cumulative Effects	
Environmental Statement Chapter 18 Residual Effects and Conclusions	
Figure 1-1: Location Plan	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00073
Figure 1-2: The Site	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00074
Figure 3-1: Constraints Plan	NHRR-RAM-EGN-HYKE-MP-LA-30001
Figure 3-2: Emerging Route Corridors	
Figure 3-3: Three Route Options that were the subject of the Public Consultation	
Figure 3-4: Emerging Preferred Route 2C	
Figure 5-1: Site Facilities	
Figure 6-1: Air Quality Study Area and Constraints	NHRR-RAM-EAQ-HYKE-FG-LA-60015
Figure 6-2: Air Quality Designated Habitats Receptor Locations	NHRR-RAM-EAQ-HYKE-FG-LA-60014
Figure 6-3: Dust Risk Assessment Boundaries	NHRR-RAM-EAQ-HYKE-FG-LA-60012
Figure 6-4: Air Quality Monitoring Locations	NHRR-RAM-EAQ-HYKE-FG-LA-60013
Figure 6-5: Modelled Air Quality Receptors	NHRR-RAM-EAQ-HYKE-FG-LA-60009
Figure 7-1: Site Location Plan	
Figure 7-2: Location of Designated Heritage Assets	
Figure 7-4: Site Location with Hillshade Terrain and Elevation	
Figure 7-5: Field Location Numbers and Link Numbers	
Figure 7-6: Historic Hedgerows with Proposed Route	
Figure 7-7: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Bare Earth	
Figure 7-8: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Screened	
Figure 7-9: Historic Landscape Character Areas	
Figure 7-10: Proposed Mitigation Areas	
Figure 7-11: Proposed Mitigation Areas showing Evaluation Results	
Figure 8-1: Environmental Designations	
Figure 8-2: Landscape Character Areas National and Regional	
Figure 8-3: Landscape Character Areas District and Local	

Figure 8-4: Topography	
Figure 8-5: Site Context	
Figure 8-6: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Heavy Goods Vehicle	
Figure 8-7: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Small Vans	
Figure 8-8: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Lighting Columns	
Figure 8-9: Viewpoint Location and Visual Receptor Plan	
Figure 8-10: Viewpoint 1 - Summer	
Figure 8-11: Viewpoint 1 - Winter	
Figure 8-12: Viewpoint 2 - Summer	
Figure 8-13: Viewpoint 2 - Winter	
Figure 8-14: Viewpoint 3 - Summer	
Figure 8-15: Viewpoint 3 - Winter	
Figure 8-16: Viewpoint 4 - Summer	
Figure 8-17: Viewpoint 4 - Winter	
Figure 8-18: Viewpoint 5 - Summer	
Figure 8-19: Viewpoint 5 - Winter	
Figure 8-20: Viewpoint 6 - Summer	
Figure 8-21: Viewpoint 6 - Winter	
Figure 8-22: Viewpoint 7 - Summer	
Figure 8-23: Viewpoint 7 - Winter	
Figure 8-24: Viewpoint 8 - Summer	
Figure 8-25: Viewpoint 8 - Winter	
Figure 8-26: Viewpoint 9 - Summer	
Figure 8-27: Viewpoint 9 - Winter	
Figure 8-28: Viewpoint 10 - Summer	
Figure 8-29: Viewpoint 10 - Winter	
Figure 8-30: Viewpoint 11 - Summer	
Figure 8-31: Viewpoint 11 - Winter	
Figure 8-32: Viewpoint 12 - Summer	
Figure 8-33: Viewpoint 12 - Winter	
Figure 8-34: Viewpoint 13 - Summer	
Figure 8-35: Viewpoint 13 - Winter	
Figure 8-36: Viewpoint 14 - Winter	
Figure 9-1: Bat Transect Autumn Survey Results Transect 1	
Figure 9-2: Bat Transect Autumn Survey Results Transect 2	
Figure 9-3: Bat Transect Autumn Survey Results Transect 3	
Figure 9-4: Bat Transect Autumn Survey Results Transect 4	
Figure 9-5: Bat Roost Suitability Tree Locations Plan	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30004
Figure 9-6: Non Statutory Local Designations	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30008
Figure 9-7: Desktop Records - Amphibians	
Figure 9-8: Desktop Records - Bats	
Figure 9-9: Desktop Records - Other Mammals	
Figure 9-10: Phase 1 Habitat Survey	
Figure 9-11: Badger Survey Results	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30011
Figure 9-12: Water Vole and Otter Results	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30001
Figure 9-13: Bat Static Locations	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30005
Figure 9-14: Amphibian Pond Locations	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30009
Figure 9-15: Breeding Bird Visit 1	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30018
Figure 9-16: Breeding Bird Visit 2	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30019
Figure 9-17: Breeding Bird Visit 3	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30020
Figure 9-18: Breeding Bird Visit 4	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30021

Figure 9-19: Breeding Bird Visit 5	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30022
Figure 9-20: Breeding Bird Visit 6	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30023
Figure 9-21 Breeding Bird overview	
Figure 9-22 Bat Spring transect results	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30012
Figure 9-23 Bat Summer transect results	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30013
Figure 9-24 Tree roost nocturnal survey results	
Figure 9-25 Building roost nocturnal survey results	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30015
Figure 9-26 Bat transect hotspot analysis (25m)	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30016
Figure 9-27 Bat transect hotspot analysis (50m)	
Figure 9-28 Bat Impacts review	
Figure 9-29 Hobby Vantage Point Locations	
Figure 9-30 Marsh Harrier Vantage Point Locations	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30034
Figure 9-31 Barn Owl Vantage Point Locations	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30035
Figure 9-32 Breeding bird survey compartments	NHRR-TEP-VES-HYKE-MP-LE-30036
Figure 9-33 Winter bird survey base map and VP	
Figure 9-34 Important Hedgerows	
Figure 9-35 Desktop Records - Birds	
Figure 9-36 Desktop Records - Fish	
Figure 9-37 Desktop Records – Insect	
Figure 9-38 Desktop Records - Reptile	
Figure 9-39 Desktop Records – Plant	
Figure 10-1: Location of Potentially Contaminative Land Uses	
Figure 10-2: BGS Geological Mapping of North Hykeham Area	
Figure 10-3: 1:250,000 ALC with Route Marked Approximately	
Figure 10-4: 1:250,000 Likelihood of BMV Map with Route Marked Approximately.	
Figure 10-5: Soil Associations	
Figure 10-6: ALC Predictions	
Figure 11-1: Limestone and Sand and Gravel MSA that intersect the Proposed Scheme	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00072
Figure 12-1: Noise Sensitive Receptors and Survey Locations	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00033
Figure 12-2: Noise barrier plans	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00034
Figure 12-3: Noise contour plans – Do-minimum 2028 Road Traffic Noise Levels	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00035
Figure 12-4: Noise contour plans – Do-minimum 2043 Road Traffic Noise Levels	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00035
Figure 12-5: Noise contour plans – Do-something 2028 Road Traffic Noise Levels	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00037
Figure 12-6: Noise contour plans - Do-something 2043 Road Traffic Noise Levels	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00038
Figure 12-7: Noise difference contour – Short-term Change with Scheme	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00039
Figure 12-8: Noise difference contour – Long-term Change without Scheme	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00040
Figure 12-9: Noise difference contour – Long-term Change with Scheme	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00041
Figure 12-10: Location of likely significant effects	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00042
Figure 13-1: Residential Properties and Community Assets within a 500m Buffer Zone	
Figure 13.2: Commercial Properties and Community Assets within a 500m Buffer Zone.	
Figure 14-1: Fluvial Flood Zones and Flood Defences	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00022
Figure 14-2: Surface Water Flooding	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00023
Figure 14-3: Reservoir Flooding	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00024
Figure 14-4: Historical Flooding	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00025

Figure 14-5: Groundwater Flooding Vulnerability	
Figure 14-6: WFD Water Body Catchments	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00027
Figure 14-7: WFD Groundwater Bodies	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00028
Figure 14-8: Bedrock Aquifer Designations	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00029
Figure 14-9: Superficial Aquifer Designations	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00030
Figure 14-10: Groundwater Source Protection Zones	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00031
Figure 14-11: Abstraction Locations	NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-MP-VT-00070
Appendix 1-1: IEMA Quality Mark Commitments	
Appendix 1-2: Statement of Competency	
Appendix 2-1: Scoping Report	
Appendix 2-2: Scoping Opinion	
Appendix 6-1: Air Quality Glossary	
Appendix 6-2: Dust Risk Assessment Methodology	
Appendix 6-3: Model Input and Results Processing	
Appendix 6-4: Traffic Data and Road Network	
Appendix 6-5: Site Specific Monitoring Survey and Model Verification	
Appendix 6-6: Air Quality Modelling Results	
Appendix 7-1: Cultural Heritage References and Bibliography	
Appendix 7-2: Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment	
Appendix 7-3: Archaeology Fieldwork Reports	
Appendix 7-4: Proposed Archaeological Mitigation Area	
Appendix 8-1: Method for the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	
Appendix 8-2: Landscape and Visual Photomontages	
Appendix 9-1: Ecological Desktop Study	
Appendix 9-2: Habitat Survey	
Appendix 9-3: Great Crested Newt Survey	
Appendix 9-4: Bat Roost and Activity Survey	
Appendix 9-5: Badger Survey (CONFIDENTIAL)	
Appendix 9-6: Water Vole and Otter Survey	
Appendix 9-7: Breeding Bird Survey	
Appendix 9-8: Winter Bird Survey	
Technical Appendix 9-9: Hedgerow Assessment	
Appendix 9-10: Arboricultural Impact Assessment	
Appendix 9-11: Biodiversity Net Gain	
Appendix 10-1: Agricultural Land Classification Analysis	
Appendix 10-2: Ground Investigation Factual Report	
Appendix 10-3: Risk Assessment Methodologies	
Appendix 10-4: Screening Sheets	
Appendix 10-5: Agricultural Land Quality Assessment	
Appendix 12-1: Glossary of Acoustic Terminology	
Appendix 12-2: Legislation, Policy and Guidance	
Appendix 12-3: Baseline Noise Survey	
Appendix 12-4: Construction Noise Assumptions	
Appendix 14-1: Flood Risk Assessment	
Appendix 14-2: Water Quality Assessment	
Appendix 14-3: Hydromorphological Assessment	
Appendix 14-4: Water Framework Directive Assessment	
Appendix 14-5: Hydraulic Modelling Report	
Appendix 14-6: Scour Assessment	
Appendix 15-1: Construction Stage Carbon Baseline	
Appendix 17-1: Developments Considered in the Cumulative Effects Assessment	

Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation	
Drainage and Flood Risk Assessment	
Design and Access Statement	NHRR-TEP-GEN-HYKE-RP-TP-00002
Landscape Strategy	
Public Engagement Report	
Transport Assessment	
Traffic Model Data Collection Report (TA Appendix)	
Traffic Forecasting Report (TA Appendix)	
Local Model Data Collection Report (TA Appendix)	
Location Plan	
Planning General Arrangements 17 No. Drawings. Scale 1:1250	
Typical Cross Sections	
Footway/Cycleway Details - NMU Plans	
Surface Water Drainage Strategy/Outfalls and SUDs.	
Indicative Site Facilities Plans (6 No.) showing principles of Haul Roads, Compounds, stockpiles and material processing areas.	
Structure General Arrangement – Wath Lane Bridge – Plan at 1:150, Elevation at 1:150, Section at 1:50	
Structure General Arrangement – River Witham Bridge – Plan at 1:250, Sections at 1:125	
Structure General Arrangement – Station Road Bridge – Plan at 1:150, Elevation at 1:150, Section at 1:50	
Structure General Arrangement – Viking Way Bridge – Plan at 1:150, Elevation at 1:150, Section at 1:50	
Environmental Masterplan - Sheet 1 to 17	

2. APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 The Application Site

2.1.1 The application site covers an area of approximately 200ha from the A46 Hykeham Roundabout in the west which connects to the Western Relief Road to the A15 Sleaford Road Roundabout in the east which connects to the Lincoln Eastern Bypass (LEB) to complete the ring road.

2.1.2 The site predominantly comprises flat mixed agricultural land on two levels with a steep slope, known as the Lincoln Cliff/Lincoln Edge, in between. The River Witham runs through the site in a north-south direction.

2.1.3 There are several roads within the site including the A46 roundabout, South Hykeham Road, Brant Road, Somerton Gate Lane, Station Road, the A607 Grantham Road and A15 Sleaford Road.

2.1.4 The majority of the site is within Flood Zone 1 with areas associated with the River Witham in Flood Zones 2 and 3.

2.1.5 There are a number of Public Right of Way footpaths and bridleways within the site including SHyk/20/1, SHyk/9/2, SHyk/1/1, SHyk/2/2, SHyk/906/1, Wdgn/9/1, and Wdgn/3/2 (Viking Way).

2.1.6 The application site is not subject to any statutory designations in respect of ecology, landscape or the historic environment. The eastern extent of the application site, to the west of Waddington, is designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value under the adopted Local Plan.

2.1.7 There are two areas of Green Wedge within the site, to the east of South Hykeham and to the west of Waddington, which are designated as part of the adopted Local Plan. Green Wedges are designated to fulfil one or more of the following functions and policy aims:

- Prevention of the physical merging of settlements, preserving their separate identity, local character and historic character;
- Creation of a multi-functional 'green lung' to offer communities a direct and continuous link to the open countryside beyond the urban area;
- Provision of an accessible recreational resource, with both formal and informal opportunities, close to where people live, where public access is maximised without compromising the integrity of the Green Wedge;
- Conservation and enhancement of local wildlife and protection of links between wildlife sites to support wildlife corridors.

2.1.8 Six residential properties on Station Road fall within the boundary of the Proposed Scheme and will require demolition. Two further residential properties are also affected but will not require demolition. No other dwellings are located within the scheme footprint, although some small outbuildings are located to the east of Wath Lane. One property has been demolished.

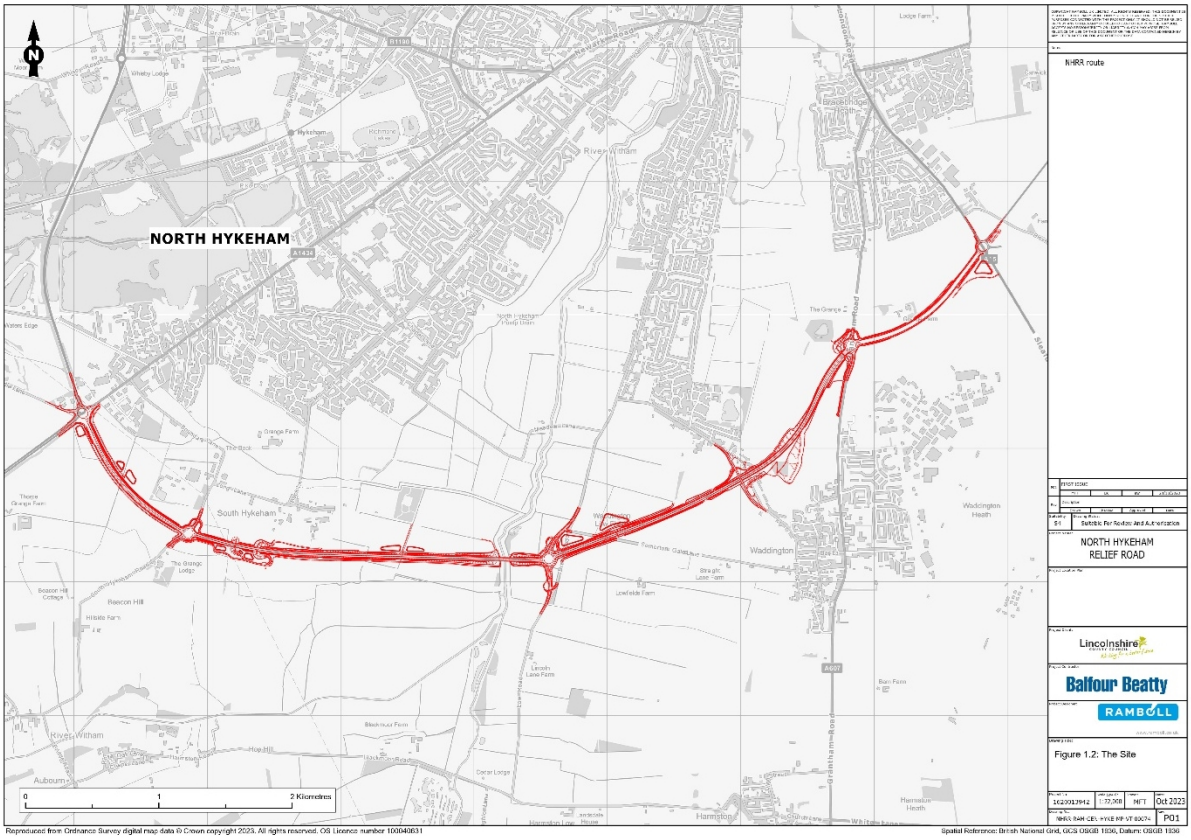

Figure 2-1: Scheme Location

2.2 Site Surroundings

2.2.1 To the north of the site are the settlements of North Hykeham, South Hykeham, Bracebridge Low Fields, Waddington Low Fields and Bracebridge Heath. Lincoln City Centre is approximately 7.6km to the north of the site. There are two sustainable urban extensions allocated for development to the north of the site at North Hykeham for approximately 2,000 dwellings (NK/NHYK/001) and at Canwick for approximately 6,000 dwellings (NK/CAN/003).

2.2.2 Outline planning permission (ref 20/0057/OUT) was granted in April 2023 for up to 1,087 dwellings, up to 0.44ha Use Class C2 (residential institution), up to 2.6ha employment use development (including Use Classes E and a Mobility Hub) on land off Sleaford Road, adjacent to the application site. This forms allocation NK/BBH/003 and part of NK/CAN/003. The approved Parameters Plan BBH-519-ZZ-XX-DR A–0766 RevP12 shows that adjacent the proposed North Hykeham Relief Road (NHRR) and within the applicant's red line boundary there is a substantial buffer labelled on that drawing for the purpose of 'Noise and Visual Screening' and measuring 2.22 hectares. The approved scheme is considered within the Cumulative Assessment in the Environmental Statement.

2.2.3 To the west of the site are Thorpe on the Hill and the A46, beyond which is agricultural land and Whisby Nature Park.

2.2.4 To the south of the site is Waddington, Royal Air Force Station Waddington, agricultural land and rural settlements including Haddington, Aubourn and Harmston.

2.2.5 Arable fields and the LEB lie to the east of the site.

2.3 Planning History

2.3.1 Planning applications from the last 5 years within the site boundary are summarised in Table 2-1: Planning Application History.

Table 2-1: Planning Application History

Reference	Address	Description	Status
22/0899/FUL	Land Along Washingborough Road, Heighington Road, Lincoln Road and Bloxholm Road in Heighington, Washingborough, Branston and Bracebridge Heath	Land Along Washingborough Road, Heighington Road, Lincoln Road and Bloxholm Road in Heighington, Washingborough, Branston and Bracebridge Heath	Approved 14/02/2023
21/1225/FUL	Lincoln Little Chef Middle Lane Thorpe On The Hill Lincoln Lincolnshire LN6 9AJ	The demolition of existing structures and the erection of 1no. drive thru unit and circulation road and 1no. drive to unit	Approved 22/12/2021

3. PROPOSED SCHEME

3.1 The Proposed Scheme

3.1.1 The Proposed Scheme comprises approximately 8km of 120kph dual all-purpose 2 lane carriageway running to the south of the existing conurbations of North Hykeham and South Hykeham in an east-west direction between the A46 Hykeham Roundabout and the A15 Sleaford Road Roundabout at the west end of the Lincoln Eastern Bypass.

3.1.2 The development of the Proposed Scheme has been an iterative process where environmental considerations and mitigation measures have been integral parts of the design evolution. The Proposed Scheme has been designed with minimum environmental impacts and maximum environmental mitigation.

3.1.3 There are a number of deviations to the proposed route from that published in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan to reduce the potential environmental impacts. These are set out in Chapters 6 and 8 of this Planning Statement.

3.1.4 A summary of the Proposed Scheme is provided below. A full scheme description can be found in Chapter 4 of the Environmental Statement (ES).

3.1.5 The objectives of the Proposed Scheme are:

- to provide an additional east-west route for local and strategic traffic;
- to improve access between the strategic A46 and the eastern side of Lincoln including the LEB;
- Reduced rat running traffic through southern Lincoln and North Hykeham as a result of east-west traffic using appropriate routes;
- to provide a new link to unlock land allocated for the South Western Quadrant (SWQ);
- increased network capacity to accommodate housing growth;
- to improve route choice for east-west movements to reduce traffic and congestion on the existing orbital network and key routes through Lincoln;
- the completion of the orbital network around Lincoln; and
- to improve strategic and local route choice to improve network resilience.

3.1.6 The Proposed Scheme includes the following key features from west to east:

- A46 Hykeham Roundabout – an increase in size and number of circulatory lanes, additional arm required for the Proposed Scheme and signalisation of the roundabout, together with associated NMU facilities;
- South Hykeham Road Roundabout and associated crossing facility to the north of the roundabout;
- South Hykeham Road to Wath Lane NMU facility to the south of the Proposed Scheme;
- South Hykeham Bat Bridge;
- Wath Lane NMU crossing and accommodation bridge;
- River Witham Bridge;
- Brant Road Roundabout, associated crossing facility to the north of the roundabout and realignment of Somerton Gate Lane;
- Somerton Gate Lane Bat Culvert;
- Station Road Bridge;
- Realigned Viking Way Public Right of Way (PRoW);
- Grantham Road Roundabout and associated crossing facility to the north of the roundabout;
- Modification of the existing signalised junction at A607 Grantham Road and High Dyke to incorporate a pedestrian crossing facility;

- A15 Sleaford Roundabout, associated crossing facility to the north of the roundabout and additional arm; and
- Dualling of a 190m section of the Lincoln Eastern Bypass.

Figure 3-1: Scheme Layout

3.1.7 The Proposed Scheme includes diversion of the Exolum fuel pipeline and use of a materials processing area for a temporary period during construction (see section 3.3).

3.1.8 The Proposed Scheme passes mainly through flat mixed farmland on two levels. The lower area to the west will be crossed generally at grade or on low embankment rising to cross the River Witham on a combination of embankment and a bridge. Between Brant Road and Station Road the scheme will be constructed on embankment. Station Road will be re-aligned and cross the NHRR on a new bridge to ensure that connectivity is maintained, whilst allowing the NHRR to pass under Station Road in cutting. Beyond Station Road, the Proposed Scheme would transition into a major cutting to reach the top of an escarpment. Once the top of the escarpment is attained, the remainder of the scheme would cross the landscape generally at grade or on low embankments to tie in with the A15 Sleaford Road and the LEB.

3.1.9 The existing A46 North Hykeham four-arm roundabout will be significantly enlarged to facilitate the incorporation of a fifth arm for the Proposed Scheme and to ensure that the junction operates within capacity at both opening and design year. This requires significant improvements to be made to each approach and exit, as well as enlargement of the circulatory area and incorporation of additional lanes.

3.1.10 At the service station north of Middle Lane (known as Thorpe on the Hill services) the egress points will be left only exit.

3.1.11 The South Hykeham roundabout is a conventional 4-arm priority roundabout situated generally online but very slightly to the east of the existing highway. The shared use footway cycleway crosses South Hykeham Road to the north of the proposed roundabout via a Toucan signalised crossing. Agricultural access tracks continue in both easterly and westerly directions to the south of the roundabout.

3.1.12 A bridge structure will be provided between South Hykeham Roundabout and Wath Lane NMU and Accommodation Bridge, to provide a route over the Proposed Scheme for bats. Guidance planting in the form of hedgerows and trees will be provided to connect the existing landscape features north and south of the Proposed Scheme to the bridge. The width will be a up to a maximum of 8m and suitable to accommodate a double hedgerow and pedestrian maintenance access.

3.1.13 The route of Wath Lane as a private road and bridleway 872/1 will be diverted over a bridge passing over the Proposed Scheme, slightly to the west of the existing alignment of Wath Lane. Doing so ensures continuity of the public right of way and private means of access for vehicles to land south of the Proposed Scheme. The bridge will be sufficiently sized to accommodate a standard tractor and trailer.

3.1.14 The River Witham Bridge would be a three-span structure with concrete piers and weathered steel beams. The central and largest span would bridge over the River Witham whilst the two shorter spans either side would bridge over the adjacent dykes and the agricultural access track to the west and shared use footway cycleway to the east. The width will be approximately 28m, suitable to accommodate the NHRR dual carriageway and the footway/cycleway. It is also proposed to extend the existing bridleway 906/1 along the route of the agricultural access track, thereby creating a circular route for recreational use.

3.1.15 The proposed Brant Road roundabout is a conventional 4-arm priority roundabout to the west of the existing highway. The shared use footway cycleway crosses Brant Road to the north of the proposed roundabout via a Toucan signalised crossing.

3.1.16 The existing Somerton Gate Lane is dissected by the Proposed Scheme. Earlier plans showed Somerton Gate Lane as being stopped up, creating a no through road (dead end). However, feedback was received directly from the landowners and at the Public Information Exhibitions which demonstrated the need to keep access open at both ends of Somerton Gate Lane. A new section of carriageway, similar in nature to the existing Somerton Gate Lane will therefore be created parallel to and south of the Proposed Scheme to facilitate connection onto Brant Road via a simple priority junction. To the north, the access to the farm will be re-established, partially by using the existing Somerton Gate, and partially by creating a further section of parallel trackway which will double as a maintenance route to the second attenuation pond located north of the Proposed Scheme carriageway.

3.1.17 A box culvert structure will be provided at the intersection of the Proposed Scheme and the existing Somerton Gate Lane to accommodate bat flight lines that have been identified by providing a route across the Proposed Scheme. Guidance planting in the form of hedgerows and trees will be provided to connect the existing landscape features north and south of the Proposed Scheme to the culvert. The box culvert will be a pre-cast reinforced concrete structure with a minimum 4m wide x 3.5m high internal void.

3.1.18 The Proposed Scheme reflects the long-established design principles which provide for the re-aligned Station Road to pass over the NHRR on a bridge. The bridge would be slightly to the west of the existing Station Road at broadly the same level as the existing carriageway, albeit on a small embankment as the ground falls away from Station Road. The Proposed Scheme passes through Station Road and into the escarpment in a cutting. The Proposed Scheme requires the demolition of six dwellings located on Station Road.

3.1.19 A short section of footpath 3/2, signed as and commonly known as the Viking Way, needs to be

3.1.20 stopped up as it is intersected by the Proposed Scheme. The scale of the earthworks cutting at Lincoln Cliff/Lincoln Edge and the alignment of the existing footpath mean that providing a bridge to cross the Proposed Scheme and maintain the Viking Way on its current alignment in this area is not feasible. As such, the Proposed Scheme realigns the Viking Way along the top of the cutting to the south of Proposed Scheme to the A607 Grantham Road where it is proposed to situate the Viking Way footbridge which will also provide access across the Proposed Scheme for those using the NMU facilities on Grantham Road. An unmade route to the north-west of the Proposed Scheme along the top of the cutting slope will be provided in order to retain the section along the top of Lincoln Cliff/Lincoln Edge to the north of the Proposed Scheme, with additional sections created to provide onward connectivity from the southern end of the retained Viking Way to Station Road.

3.1.21 The New Grantham Road roundabout is a conventional 4-arm priority roundabout on the existing highway. The shared use footway cycleway would cross Grantham Road to the north of the proposed roundabout via a Toucan signalised crossing.

3.1.22 Modifications are proposed to the existing signalised junction at A607 Grantham Road/High Dyke to incorporate NMU crossing facilities that will allow the existing NMU facility adjacent to the southbound carriageway to be repositioned adjacent to the northbound carriageway and thereby access the Viking Way footbridge and the Proposed Scheme combined footway/cycleway.

3.1.23 The existing A15 Sleaford Road Roundabout will have an additional 5th arm added to the south-west on the circulatory area to providing for two-lane entry and exit to and from the Proposed Scheme. The shared use footway cycleway crosses Sleaford Road to the north-west of the proposed roundabout via a Toucan signalised crossing.

3.2 Landscaping Strategy

3.2.1 The landscape strategy for the Proposed Scheme has been agreed with LCC and aims to reflect the character of the surrounding landscape area and embed it into the surrounding landscape, whilst mitigating its impacts particularly in relation to the existing landscape, views, ecology and cultural heritage. This has been achieved by understanding the relevant national and local character areas, detailing the landscaping in distinct character zones to complement the existing wider landscape and providing features to ensure that important habitats and habitat features are not lost.

3.2.2 The planting strategy that has been designed to support the landscape strategy aims to increase biodiversity, ensure climate resilience and provide resistance to biosecurity threats including pests and disease by using a wide range of native species that are known to provide for pollinators and support maximum diversity of invertebrate and vertebrate fauna. Planting will also be provided to ensure that routes and corridors are provided for fauna, particularly bat species identified in the vicinity of the Proposed Scheme. Planting will be detailed to ensure that it is sufficiently mature to be functional upon the opening and first use of the Proposed Scheme.

3.2.3 In addition, the planting will provide a green boundary to the surrounding agricultural landscape, increase amenity value by providing shade and shelter and maintain wildlife corridors.

3.3 Demolition and Construction Works

3.3.1 A full description of the demolition and construction works can be found in Chapter 5 of the ES.

3.3.2 On-site works will commence with the following enabling works, which will be carried out on a phased basis:

- diversion of the Exolum fuel pipeline (by Exolum);
- preparation of a Construction Phase Health and Safety Plan;
- formation of site accesses;
- site clearance activities;
- construction of haul roads and plant crossings;
- installation of a temporary bridge crossing for the River Witham;
- establishment of a materials processing area (west of Grantham Road);
- Asbestos Demolition Surveys.

3.3.3 The existing fuel pipeline operated by Exolum and serving RAF Waddington, running in an east/west direction in the vicinity of the proposed NHRR route between the A46 in the west and the River Witham, will be diverted to the south of the proposed NHRR route over a 2km length between the A46 and the Environment Agency (EA) flood bund. These works are part of the Proposed Scheme but will be undertaken prior to commencement of the main works with the diverted pipe generally installed 1.2m from the finished ground level to the crown of the pipe. It will be installed by traditional open trench techniques with trenchless techniques (thrust bore or directional drilling) considered for the crossings of ditches, watercourses, South Hykeham Road and Wath Lane.

3.3.4 Site accesses, haul roads and construction compounds, including welfare facilities and offices for construction staff will be constructed on site, the location of which are shown in outline on the General Arrangement drawings.

3.3.5 Material processing will be required in order to crush and screen the limestone material won from the Lincoln Cliff/Lincoln Edge into material suitably graded for use as construction materials across the Proposed Scheme. The material processing area is situated at the top of the escarpment to the immediate west of Grantham Road and to the south-west of the Proposed Scheme. This process will include the use of crushers and screening plant, along with stockpiling as may be necessary, prior to use. Upon completion of the material processing works, the areas used will be cleared of all construction materials and will be reinstated to their original condition and returned to agriculture. Processing of the material in this way is fundamental to allowing the Proposed Scheme to be constructed whilst reducing import and export of materials.

3.3.6 Following possession of the site and commencement of site clearance activities, demolition works will proceed on a phased basis and will comprise the removal of the existing buildings to be demolished on Station Road together with any below ground structures and foundations.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping

4.1.1 A Scoping Request was submitted to LCC on 22nd September 2022. The Scoping Report set out a description of the proposed scheme and the alternatives that had been considered. This was followed by the key issues relating to each of the environmental topics assessment topics; a summary of the work undertaken to date; and the proposed methodology and approach for the assessment of potential effects in the Environmental Impact Assessment.

4.1.2 A Scoping Opinion was issued by LCC on 18th November 2022. The Scoping Opinion confirmed that the following technical assessments should be included within the Environmental Statement (ES):

- Air Quality
- Cultural Heritage
- Landscape and Visual Impacts
- Ecology and Nature Conservation
- Geology and Soils
- Material Assets and Waste
- Noise and Vibration
- Population and Human Health
- Road Drainage and Water Environment
- Climate
- Major Accidents and Disasters
- Agricultural Land and Soils

4.2 Public Consultation

4.2.1 Details of public consultation are set out in the Public Engagement Report and are summarised here. A first public consultation exercise was carried out in October 2005 as part of the process of selecting a preferred route for the project. At this time the project was known as the Lincoln Southern Bypass.

4.2.2 A second public consultation exercise was carried out in October 2006, continuing from Public Consultation One, as part of the process of selecting a preferred route for the project.

4.2.3 Following the identification of the preferred corridor in 2006, the adoption of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (CLLP) in 2017, and construction of Lincoln Eastern Bypass (LEB), Lincolnshire County Council were able to consider and progress proposals for NHRR.

4.2.4 In 2017, LCC commissioned the development of an Option Assessment Report (OAR) to be followed by an Outline Business Case (OBC). The work was supported by a programme of coordinated stakeholder and public engagement, information provision and associated publicity of the NHRR proposals which took place during summer 2018.

4.2.5 Following the appointment of Balfour Beatty in April 2022 to design and build the Proposed Scheme, a further series of three public information events were planned in the run up to the submission of the planning application:

4.2.6 Public Information Event (PIE) 1 (September 2022) was held to reintroduce the public and stakeholders to the scheme, to meet the new project team, and to re-affirm and confirm the scheme objectives.

4.2.7 PIE 2 (March 2023) was 'you said, we did'. It was held post-completion of the Value Engineering exercise and slightly before the planned design freeze, with a view to informing the public of the scheme development and to show how concerns have been considered, addressed and where appropriate mitigation has been incorporated into the scheme proposals.

4.2.8 PIE 3 (June 2023) was the last pre-application information event. At this stage, the proposals incorporated elements of environmental mitigation and change arising from the Environmental Impact Assessment, including landscape design and noise mitigation which had not been available at previous events.

4.2.9 Feedback was received in relation to topics including but not restricted to:

- Provision for non-motorised users
- Landscaping
- Noise mitigation
- Drainage
- A46 Roundabout
- Viking Way
- Biodiversity Net Gain

4.2.10 A full summary of the consultation method and feedback can be found in the Public Engagement Report (NHRR-RAM-GEN-HYKE-RP-ZH-00006).

4.3 Pre-application Advice

4.3.1 Pre-application advice has comprised exchanges and discussions on content and format of the planning application. This has guided the approach taken.

5. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicated otherwise.

5.1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') and Planning Practice Guidance are material considerations in the determination of this planning application.

5.2 Adopted Development Plan

5.2.1 The Development Plan for NKDC consists of the following relevant documentation:

- Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (adopted April 2023)

5.2.2 The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan was adopted by the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee (CLJSPC) in April 2023. Central Lincolnshire covers the combined area of the City of Lincoln, North Kesteven, and West Lindsey. The Local Plan contains planning policies and allocations for the growth and regeneration of Central Lincolnshire over the next 20 years.

5.3 Neighbourhoods Plans

5.3.1 The site is partly in the boundary of three Neighbourhood Plan Areas with adopted plans:

- Thorpe on the Hill (made March 2018)
- Hykeham (made September 2018)
- Bracebridge Heath (made April 2022)

5.3.2 The site is also partly in the Neighbourhood Areas for Waddington and Waddington West which are currently undertaking initial Neighbourhood Plan discussions.

5.3.3 Table 1 identifies the key policies from the Local Plan that the development will be assessed against. The policies below have been confirmed with LCC.

Table 5-1: Relevant Planning Policy

Policy	Description
Central Lincolnshire Local Plan	
S1	The Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy
S21	Flood Risk and Water Resources
S46	Safeguarded Land for Future Key Infrastructure
S47	Accessibility and Transport
S48	Walking and Cycling Infrastructure
S53	Design and Amenity
S54	Health and Wellbeing
S56	Development on Land Affected by Contamination
S57	The Historic Environment
S58	Protecting Lincoln, Gainsborough and Sleaford's Setting and Character
S59	Green and Blue Infrastructure Network
S60	Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity
S61	Biodiversity Opportunity and Delivering Measurable Net Gains
S62	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Areas of Great Landscape Value
S63	Green Wedges
S66	Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
S67	Best and most Versatile Agricultural Land

S68	Sustainable Urban Extensions
Thorpe on the Hill Neighbourhood Plan	
Policy 3	Biodiversity
Policy 4	Green Spaces and Green Infrastructure
Hykeham Neighbourhood Plan	
Policy HNP1	Design of New Development
Policy HNP5	Transport Plans
Policy HNP6	Pedestrians and Cyclists
Bracebridge Heath Neighbourhood Plan	
Policy 6	Protecting the Historic Environment
Policy 16	Locally important views
Policy 17	Protecting existing and establishing new non-vehicular routes for pedestrians and cyclists

5.4 Material Considerations

5.5 National Planning Policy Framework

5.5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') sets out the Government's definition of sustainable development and identifies how planning policies for England are expected to be applied. The Framework is a significant material consideration.

5.5.2 The Framework is purposefully positive, opportunity focused and pro-growth in seeking to facilitate development which will contribute to meeting the wider Government objectives.

5.5.3 Paragraph 7 of the Framework explains that *'the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development*' which can be summarised as "*meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*".

5.5.4 Paragraph 8 of the Framework states that "*achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):*

a) economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) *environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy*".

5.5.5 Within the Framework paragraph 11, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is set out, which states that for decision-taking, proposals that accord with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved, and where there are no relevant development plan policies or the policies are out-of-date (See Framework footnote 7), permission should be granted unless:

"*i. The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or*

ii. Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole".

5.5.6 Chapter 4 of the Framework is focused on decision-making. It states that "*local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way*" with decision-makers seeking to approve applications which are in line with sustainable development where possible.

5.5.7 Chapter 9 of the Framework considers sustainable transport. Paragraph 104 states "Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:

a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;
b) opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;
c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;
d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and
e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places."

5.6 Planning Practice Guidance

5.6.1 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place. It was launched in March 2014 and coincided with the cancelling of the majority of Government Circulars which had previously given guidance on many aspects of planning. It is important to note that the guidance is guidance and does not provide additional policy. Notwithstanding this, it does provide a useful resource on interpreting policy.

6. COMPLIANCE WITH PLANNING POLICY

6.1.1 Chapter 6 demonstrates how the Proposed Scheme complies with the policies listed in Table 1.

6.2 Principle of Development

6.2.1 Policy S1 (The Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy) states that the spatial strategy will focus on delivering sustainable growth for Central Lincolnshire that meets the needs for homes and jobs, regenerates places and communities, and supports necessary improvements to facilities, services and infrastructure.

6.2.2 The Proposed Scheme will contribute towards the sustainable growth of Lincolnshire by providing an additional east-west route for local and strategic traffic. It will provide a new link to unlock land allocated for the South Western Quadrant (SWQ) as well as increased network capacity to accommodate housing growth.

6.2.3 In accordance with Policy S46 (Safeguarded Land for Future Key Infrastructure), development proposals on or near to the preferred route of the North Hykeham Relief Road, as indicated on the Policies Map, which will prejudice the efficient and effective delivery of the project will be refused.

6.2.4 There are several deviations where the Scheme has been developed to follow the most optimal route to limit potential environmental impacts, however the Proposed Scheme broadly follows the route indicated on the Policies Map

6.2.5 Exceptions to this include the alignment of the road from the A46 North Hykeham Roundabout to the new South Hykeham Road roundabout to avoid an existing enterprise and anaerobic digestion plant which avoids the need to demolish an existing business. The River Witham Bridge has been moved north of the route indicated in the Local Plan to avoid the Environment Agency flood bund and the flood plain to the south. Doing so avoids interaction between the earthworks for the flood bund and the highway embankment which could otherwise cause significant engineering difficulties.

6.2.6 To the east of Station Road, the alignment of the Proposed Scheme has changed marginally through this section in order to overcome geotechnical difficulties encountered in the vicinity of the Lincoln Cliff/Lincoln Edge.

6.2.7 The realignment of the Proposed Scheme, south of the route indicated in the Local Plan, as it ascends the Lincoln Cliff/Lincoln Edge results in the immediate approach to Grantham Road roundabout also being further south. This reduces the Proposed Scheme's impact on an area of Roman period archaeology that has been identified.

6.2.8 Under Policy S47 (Accessibility and Transport) development proposals which contribute towards an efficient and safe transport network that offers a range of transport choices for the movement of people and goods will be supported.

6.2.9 The Proposed Scheme offers a range of transport choices for vehicles and non-motorised users (NMU). It will contribute towards an efficient and safe transport network with multiple benefits including providing an additional east-west route for local and strategic traffic to reduce traffic and congestion; reducing 'rat running' traffic through southern Lincoln and North Hykeham; and improving strategic and local route choice to improve network resilience.

6.2.10 In accordance with Policy S54 (Health and Wellbeing), the potential for achieving positive mental and physical health outcomes will be taken into account when considering all development proposals.

6.2.11 A Health Impact Assessment has been submitted with the applications which shows XXXX.

6.2.12 The construction of the Proposed Scheme will seek to reduce as far as practicable impacts on noise, visual, lighting and air quality through the implementation of a construction and environmental management plan (CEMP).

6.2.13 The operation of the Proposed Scheme is likely to lead to significant permanent faster journey times, increased network resilience, improved traffic flow and improved accessibility to community land and assets including village halls and medical facilities.

6.2.14 Policy S63 (Green Wedges) states within the Green Wedges planning permission will not be granted for any form of development unless it can be demonstrated that the development is not contrary or detrimental to the functions and aims or it is essential for the proposed development to be located within the Green Wedge, and the benefits of which override the potential impact on the Green Wedge.

6.2.15 The Proposed Scheme passes through two areas of Green Wedge, the Witham Valley Green Wedge and the Waddington to Bracebridge Heath Green Wedge. This is consistent with the safeguarded route in the adopted Local Plan. Green Wedges have been identified to fulfil one or more functions including the prevention of the merging of settlements, creation of a multi-functional green lung, provision of an accessible recreation resource and conservation and enhancement of local wildlife.

6.2.16 The Proposed Scheme would not cause the merging of any settlements including North Hykeham, South Hykeham, Waddington and Bracebridge Heath. As part of the Proposed Scheme, the Viking Way will be re-routed with additional amenity footpaths created. The Proposed Scheme achieves a XX% Biodiversity Net Gain to enhancement local wildlife. The full benefits of the scheme are set out in Chapter 8.0.

6.2.17 Policy S68 (Sustainable Urban Extensions) states that the spatial strategy for Central Lincolnshire includes the allocation of sustainable urban extensions at Lincoln, Gainsborough and Sleaford. The Proposed Scheme will assist in unlocking land for the South West Quadrant which is allocated for approximately 2,000 homes and 5ha of employment land. The Proposed Scheme will not prejudice the delivery of this SUE.

6.3 Design and Access

6.3.1 Policy S48 (Walking and Cycling Infrastructure) states that development proposals should facilitate active travel by incorporating measures suitable for the scheme from the design stage. Plans and evidence accompanying applications will demonstrate how the ability to travel by foot or cycle will be actively encouraged.

6.3.2 Under Policy HNP5 (Transport Plans), development proposals with significant traffic impact should be accompanied by recent and relevant evidence which demonstrates that impacts on local highways can be effectively mitigated. Provision made to encourage travel on foot, cycle and public transport, will be supported.

6.3.3 Policy HNP6 (Pedestrians and Cyclists) states development proposals should aim to enhance cycling and walking networks where appropriate and viable.

6.3.4 Policy 17 (Protecting existing and establishing new non-vehicular routes for pedestrians and cyclists) states development proposals should incorporate safe and direct routes for pedestrians and cyclists into and where relevant, through the site. Connectivity with the wider network should be achieved wherever possible.

6.3.5 The Viking Way will be re-routed along the top of the cutting to the south of the proposed scheme to connect to the proposed bridge adjacent Grantham Road. Additional amenity footpaths will be created to the north of the proposed scheme, east of Station Road, to ensure that access along the top of the existing escarpment is maintained as far as possible, with a connection to Station Road.

6.3.6 A combined footway/cycleway will run the length of the scheme to link the existing NMU facilities at the A46, to those at the A15 that were constructed as part of the LEB. The combined footway/cycleway will run adjacent to the eastbound carriageway at a minimum setback of 4m from the edge of the running lane between the A46 and Station Road, crossing the Proposed Scheme via the new Station Road bridge before traversing the escarpment slope on a route remote from the carriageway. Immediately to the west of Grantham Road, the combined footway/cycleway will cross the Proposed Scheme from where it will run adjacent to the eastbound carriageway to the A15.

6.3.7 An accommodation bridge will be provided at Wath Lane to allow landowner access and enable continuity of the bridleway. Associated access tracks will also be designated as a Public Bridleway between Wath Lane and the River Witham to create a circular route and additional amenity facilities.

6.3.8 In accordance with Policy S53 (Design and Amenity), all development must achieve high quality sustainable design that contributes positively to local character, landscape and townscape, and supports diversity, equality and access for all. Policy HNP1 (Design of New Development) states development proposals which comply with policy in the development plan and demonstrate high standards of design and sustainable construction techniques will be supported.

6.3.9 The design of the Proposed Scheme has been prepared in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB). Technical assessments have been undertaken to inform the design and layout of the Proposed Scheme as well as the proposed landscape strategy. The Proposed Scheme provides access for all with provision for both motorised and non-motorised users with the provision of a footpath and cycleway along the length of the route.

6.3.10 Policy S59 (Green and Blue Infrastructure Network) states that the Central Lincolnshire Authorities will safeguard green and blue infrastructure in Central Lincolnshire from inappropriate development and work actively with partners to maintain and improve the quantity, quality, accessibility and management of the green infrastructure network. Policy 4 (Green Spaces and Green Infrastructure) states that the delivery of new, or improvements to, green infrastructure will be supported.

6.3.11 The landscape strategy for the Proposed Scheme has been agreed with LCC and aims to reflect the character of the surrounding landscape area and embed it into the surrounding landscape, whilst mitigating its impacts particularly in relation to the existing landscape, views, ecology and cultural heritage.

6.4 Environmental Assets

6.4.1 Policy S21 (Flood Risk and Water Resources) requires development proposals to demonstrate that they are informed by and take account of the best available information from all sources of flood risk and by site specific flood risk assessments where appropriate.

6.4.2 The Proposed Scheme is mostly in Flood Zone 1, which is land defined by the Environment Agency (EA) as having a low probability of flooding from rivers or the sea. The Proposed Scheme also crosses Flood Zones 2 and 3, both of which are associated with the River Witham. The River Witham is flanked by raised embankments that extend along the riverbanks several kilometres north and south of the site.

6.4.3 The Flood Risk Assessment prepared for the application concludes that any flood risk is appropriately managed over the lifetime of the Proposed Scheme, taking climate change into account and fittingly for the vulnerability of proposed users.

6.4.4 In accordance with Policy S56 (Development on Land Affected by Contamination), where development is proposed on a site which is known to be or has the potential to be affected by contamination, a preliminary risk assessment should be undertaken by the developer and submitted to the relevant Central Lincolnshire Authority as the first stage in assessing the risk of contamination.

6.4.5 The ground contamination data available to date from the ground investigation indicates that the Scheme is unlikely to encounter widespread or high concentrations of contamination in soils or groundwater which would impact receptors during construction or operation.

6.4.6 Policy S57 (The Historic Environment) requires development proposals to protect, conserve and seek opportunities to enhance the historic environment of Central Lincolnshire. Policy 6 (Protecting the Historic Environment) states development proposals likely to affect a heritage asset must be accompanied by a heritage statement.

6.4.7 There are 57 designated heritage assets within the 2km Study Area comprising 1 Scheduled Monument, 3 Conservation Areas and 53 Listed Buildings. Once the proposed mitigation and design measures are adopted the residual magnitude of effect is predicted to be negligible (adverse) resulting in a residual significance of effect that is negligible (adverse). This is not a significant effect and is equivalent to less than substantial harm. The Proposed Scheme has been designed to avoid and preserve archaeological remains where possible. However, following the implementation of mitigation measures, a record will be made of any archaeology affected by development and made available for public dissemination.

6.4.8 Policy S58 (Protecting Lincoln, Gainsborough and Sleaford's Setting and Character) states that developments should protect the dominance and approach views of Lincoln Cathedral, Lincoln Castle and uphill Lincoln on the skyline, protect Lincoln's built heritage and townscape character and respect Lincoln's unique character and setting with surrounding villages.

6.4.9 Views towards the Proposed Scheme from the Cathedral and City Centre Conservation Area would not be affected due to the presence of existing highway infrastructure and modern development in its wider setting. This would be appropriate context for views to the south of the conservation area and from the taller structures such as Lincoln Castle and Lincoln Cathedral, where high rise carpark and modern industrial development are visible. However, an important view of the Cathedral from Blackmoor Road and Low Road, which was identified during consultation with LCC, would be altered. As noted in the ES, this view could be altered to an extent that the appreciable quality of the cathedral would no longer be seen from the road as traffic movement and screening would obscure the cathedral. The screening would come into its full effect once the planting has matured. The view towards the Cathedral from Blackmoor Road has been assessed to not contribute to the significance of the asset as set out in Chapter 7 of the ES. It is considered that there would be a low magnitude of impact to this asset of high sensitivity that may result in low adverse.

6.4.10 Under Policy S60 (Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity) all development should protect, manage, enhance and extend the ecological network of habitats, species and sites of international, national and local importance.

6.4.11 Policy S61 (Biodiversity Opportunity and Delivering Measurable Net Gains) states that following application of the mitigation hierarchy, all development proposals should ensure opportunities are taken to retain, protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity features. All qualifying development proposals must deliver at least a 10% measurable biodiversity net gain attributable to the development.

6.4.12 Policy 3 (Biodiversity) states that development should minimise its impact on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible.

6.4.13 Temporary construction and ongoing operational effects were identified in ES, the majority of which are avoided through a combination of scheme design which avoids or reduces ecological effects and additional mitigation.

6.4.14 BNG to be detailed once assessment is complete.

6.4.15 In accordance with Policy S62 (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Areas of Great Landscape Value) a high level of protection will be afforded to Areas of Great Landscape Value reflecting their locally important high scenic quality, special landscape features and sensitivity.

6.4.16 Policy 16 (Locally Important Views) requires development proposals that will impact on a locally important view to be accompanied by a proportionate assessment of how the significance of the view has been taken into account and the steps necessary to address and minimise any adverse impact.

6.4.17 Chapter 8 of the ES assesses impacts on Landscape and Views. The significance of effect on landscape character during construction ranges between temporary slight adverse to temporary large adverse. During operation the significance of effect on landscape character ranges between slight adverse to large adverse. The Lincoln Cliff is designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value, the significance of effect on this area is moderate adverse.

6.4.18 After 15 years, it is anticipated that the planting proposed as part of the embedded mitigation would be established to provide a ‘green’ edge to the Proposed Scheme integrating it into its surroundings. In addition, the Proposed Scheme would have become an established feature of views.

6.4.19 Policy S66 (Trees, Woodland and Hedgerow) states development proposals should be prepared based on the overriding principle that the existing tree and woodland cover is maintained, improved and expanded; and opportunities for expanding woodland are actively considered, and implemented where practical and appropriate to do so.

6.4.20 As part of a wider scoping boundary 215 individual trees (T1 - T215); 195 groups of trees (G1 - G195); and 127 hedges (H1 – H127) were originally surveyed. As the red line application boundary was refined, tree features recorded within influencing distance of the application site include 148 trees, 149 groups and 107 hedgerows. The tree population predominantly comprises field boundary hedgerows and tree groups, and emergent hedgerow and roadside trees. A small section of the site includes trees within private front gardens along Station Road.

6.4.21 As part of the Proposed Scheme approximately 4.5ha of canopy cover, recorded as 71 individual trees and 74 tree groups, and 6.5km of hedgerow would be removed to facilitate the proposals.

6.4.22 A scheme of new planting is proposed which includes provision for: 1,694 new trees (1,144 standard or above, 550 feathered); 9.74ha of new woodland planting; 2.44ha of woodland edge planting; and 19.5km of native hedgerow. The development would have the potential to result in a net gain of tree cover by the time new trees are mature.

6.4.23 Under Policy S67 (Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land), proposals should protect the best and most versatile agricultural land so as to protect opportunities for food production and the continuance of the agricultural economy.

6.4.24 The proposed scheme involves the loss of land considered to be all of Subgrade 3b of agricultural land which does not form Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land.

7. TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT

7.1.1 The ES addresses the following issues and the findings are summarised in this section.

- Chapter 6: Air Quality;
- Chapter 7: Cultural Heritage;
- Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual;
- Chapter 9: Biodiversity;
- Chapter 10: Geology and Soils;
- Chapter 11: Material Assets and Waste;
- Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration;
- Chapter 13: Population and Human Health;
- Chapter 14: Road Drainage and the Water Environment;
- Chapter 15: Climate;
- Chapter 16: Major Accidents and Disasters;

7.2 Air Quality

7.2.1 The air quality impacts associated with the Proposed Scheme are presented in Chapter 6 of the ES.

7.2.2 The assessment of operational effects followed the guidance set out by the Department of Transport in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) LA 105 Air Quality guidance. The significance of impacts has been assessed based on guidance published by the Environmental Protection UK (EPUK) and Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM).

7.2.3 The construction works have the potential to create dust and PM_{10}. These will be effectively controlled through the use of suitable mitigation measures implemented through the provision of a CEMP that will be agreed with LCC prior to the start of construction. With best practice mitigation measures being implemented, it is considered likely that potential impacts will be reduced to a negligible level and therefore no significant effects will be expected.

7.2.4 Concentrations of NO_2, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ have been predicted for a number of worst-case locations representing existing receptors close to the ARN. Predicted concentrations are below the relevant objectives at all of the existing receptor locations in 2028 with the Proposed Scheme in place.

7.2.5 During operation, there is no significant effect on the designated habitats within the study area.

7.2.6 The operational air quality effects of the Proposed Scheme are judged to be not significant for both human health and ecological receptors based the IAQM guidance.

7.2.7 Overall, it is concluded that there are no air quality constraints to the Proposed Scheme.

7.3 Cultural Heritage

7.3.1 Chapter 7 of the ES addresses the likely significant effects of the Proposed Scheme on the historic environment during the construction and operational phases.

7.3.2 There are 57 designated heritage assets within the 2km Study Area comprising 1 Scheduled Monument, 3 Conservation Areas and 53 Listed Buildings.

7.3.3 Based on the existing evidence, there appears to be a high potential for archaeological remains from the prehistoric period and Roman period. There is a low potential for early medieval and medieval remains. There is a high potential for post medieval archaeology to be encountered as the Proposed Scheme is in an area of post medieval agricultural activity.

7.3.4 The Proposed Scheme has been designed to avoid and preserve archaeological remains where possible. However, following the implementation of mitigation measures, a record will be made of any archaeology affected by development and made available for public dissemination.

7.3.5 Following the implementation mitigation measures, a record would be made of any archaeology affected by development. While a record is not as valuable as retaining the asset in situ, it would advance understanding of the significance of the asset before it is lost by retrieving finds and artefacts, recording their archaeological context and providing an archive that could be used for future archaeological research.

7.3.6 The residual magnitude of effect is predicted to be negligible (adverse) resulting in a residual significance of effect that is negligible (adverse). This is not a significant effect and is equivalent to less than substantial harm.

7.3.7 Once the proposed mitigation and design measures are adopted the residual effects for the demolition and construction phases would be:

- Long-term effect of low adverse to Harmston Conservation Area including key view from Blacksmith Lane.
- Long-term effect of moderate adverse to Waddington Conservation Area, including key view from Hill Top.
- Long-term effect of low adverse to views towards Lincoln Cathedral from Blackmoor Road and Low Road.
- Permanent effect of low adverse to the setting of the Church of St Michael, South Hykeham.

7.3.8 The residual magnitude of effect is predicted to be negligible (adverse) resulting in a residual significance of effect that is negligible (adverse). This is not a significant effect and is equivalent to less than substantial harm.

7.4 Landscape and Visual

7.4.1 A Landscape and Visual Assessment is presented in Chapter 8 of the ES. It considers the potential effects of the completed scheme on landscape character and visual amenity from surrounding properties, roads and Public Rights of Way.

7.4.2 The predominant landscape character along the Proposed Scheme is generally one of fairly open arable farmland with urban fringe influences such as housing development, RAF Waddington and business parks. However, a higher quality area is centred around the Lincoln Cliff which is designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value.

7.4.3 The route would pass through areas of fairly tranquil countryside, particularly in the Witham and Brent Vale and along the Lincoln Cliff.

7.4.4 Extensive mitigation planting (embedded mitigation) is proposed which would help to integrate the Proposed Scheme into the wider landscape.

7.4.5 The following Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCA) have been referred to:

- LLCA 1: Terrace Sandlands;
- LLCA2: Witham and Brant Vales;
- LLCA 3: Lincoln Cliff; and
- LLCA 4: Bracebridge Limestone Heath

Effects on Landscape Character

7.4.6 The overall sensitivity of the landscape potentially affected by the Proposed Scheme is moderate.

Construction Phase

7.4.7 During construction, the significance of effect on landscape character within LLCA 1 to LLCA 4 will range between slight and large adverse with the greatest level of effect to LLCA 3 where cutting works along the Lincoln Cliff/Lincoln Edge will be clearly visible.

7.4.8 Overall, proposed construction works will be incongruous with the character of the landscape, and will have an adverse impact on characteristic features, including open arable farmland, roadside trees and hedgerows. These effects will be temporary.

Operational Phase

7.4.9 During operation, (winter year 1), the significance of effect on landscape character will range between slight adverse (within LLCA 1 and LLCA 4), moderate adverse (within LLCA 2) and large adverse (within LLCA 4).

7.4.10 After 15 years, it is anticipated that the landscape structure proposed as part of the embedded mitigation, (illustrated on the Landscape Masterplan, drawings NHRR-TEP-ELS-HYKE-DR-LS-30001 to 30008) will be establishing to provide a 'green' edge to the Proposed Scheme integrating it into its surroundings. In addition, the Proposed Scheme will have become an established feature in the landscape.

7.4.11 The significance of effect on landscape will reduce after 15 years within LLCA 2 and 3 and will remain the same within LLCAs 1 and 4.

7.4.12 The residual significance of effect on landscape will be slight adverse within LLCAs 1, 2 and 3 and moderate adverse within LLCA 3 (Lincoln Cliff/Lincoln Edge).

Effects on Views

Construction Phase

7.5 During construction, visual effects range from slight to large adverse for public and private receptors. These effects are temporary. The greatest level of visual effects will be experienced by the closest receptors: primarily users of PRoW within and surrounding the Proposed Scheme and residential properties adjoining the Site along Station Road.

Operational Phase

7.5.1 Visual effects for public receptors on completion of the Proposed Scheme (during operation at Year 1) range between large adverse where there will be near open views of the Proposed Scheme, moderate adverse (some local roads and other PRoWs) and slight adverse for public receptors.

7.5.2 Visual effect for private visual receptors on completion of the Proposed Scheme (during operation at Year 1) ranges from slight adverse and large adverse. The greatest effects are experienced by residents in properties that immediately border the Proposed Scheme.

7.5.3 After 15 years residual visual effects for public receptors ranges from neutral to large adverse. In most instances tree planting will have become established to provide a greater degree of filtering and screening to the Proposed Scheme.

7.5.4 Visual effects for private visual receptors at year 15 will range from neutral to large adverse with the greatest effects to residents of properties along Station Road, immediately adjacent to the Proposed Scheme.

7.5.5 The visual assessment has considered and presented effects on views from private properties, consistent with DMRB advice.

7.5.6 In accordance with Paragraph 2.7 of DMRB LA 107 the likely significant effect on landscape and visual amenity will be moderate adverse.

7.5.7 Combining the above sections to consider the route as a whole, on balance the overall effects in terms of landscape impacts are moderately adverse as a result of the Scheme for the construction period and in year 1, reducing to slightly adverse by year 15 as the mitigation planting matures. For visual effects, the balance lies between largely and slightly adverse during construction and in year 1, reducing to slight or moderately adverse by year 15 as the planting scheme matures.

7.6 Biodiversity

7.6.1 Chapter 9 of the ES assesses the potential impacts that may arise as a result of the Proposed Scheme on ecological receptors.

7.6.2 The are no internationally designated sites within 10km of the Proposed Scheme.

7.6.3 There is one nationally designated site for nature conservation within 5km of the redline boundary, Swanholmes Lane Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Swanholmes Lake SSSI is located approximately 4.4km north and outside of the redline boundary.

7.6.4 There is one statutory wildlife site of local significance within 2km of the site. Whisby Nature Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is located 1.0km north-west and outside of the red line boundary.

7.6.5 There are sixteen non-statutory Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) within 2km of the application site.

7.6.6 Field surveys and data searches identified two statutory and four non-statutory designated sites and a range of protected and S41 species and Annex 2 (barbastelle) species in the landscape. The assessment identified several locally important features including woodland and hedgerow habitat, River Witham, badger population and bat population.

7.6.7 Temporary construction and ongoing operational effects were identified, the majority of which are avoided through a combination of scheme design which avoids or reduces ecological effects and additional mitigation.

7.6.8 Significant short to medium term residual impacts as a result of the Proposed Scheme are limited to the loss of woodland and this would reverse to beneficial effects in the long term (ten years or more post-construction) as replacement planting establishes.

7.7 Geology and Soils

7.7.1 The ground contamination data available to date from the ground investigation indicates that the Scheme is unlikely to encounter widespread or high concentrations of contamination in soils or groundwater which would impact receptors during construction or operation. There is a potential for unexpected, localised contamination impacts to be identified along the Scheme.

7.7.2 Any contaminated soils identified during construction as having the potential to cause significant effect to human health will either be removed during construction or mitigation measures put in place such as hard cover or clean cover soils to ensure that no pathway is present during the operational phase. Therefore, the potential for exposure to contaminants by future users is considered to be negligible.

7.7.3 Future maintenance workers may need to enter confined spaces in the ground or undertake excavations into the ground. As a result, they will be more likely to be affected by ground gas, vapours, contaminated soil and contaminated groundwater that might still be present during the operational stage. It is considered unlikely that such conditions will be present, and that if they are identified, appropriate site-specific risk assessments and method statements would control any potential exposure to maintenance workers. Therefore, the potential for exposure to contaminants or ground gases and vapour by future maintenance workers is considered to be low.

7.7.4 Activities that could affect agricultural land, soils and farm businesses at the construction stage will include:

- temporary movement and reinstatement of soils during construction; and
- loss of agricultural land.

7.7.5 An outline Soil Management Plan has been prepared that sets out the principles of handling soils during construction.

7.7.6 The Proposed Scheme involves the loss of land considered to be all of Subgrade 3b of agricultural land.

7.8 Materials Assets and Waste

7.8.1 Chapter 11 of the ES assesses the potential impacts on the use of material assets and the generation, disposal and recovery of waste arising from the construction and operation of the Proposed Scheme.

7.8.2 The approach taken to the delivery of materials to, and waste from, the site has adopted the proximity principle which requires that materials should be sourced, and waste should be disposed of, as close to the place of production as possible. This avoids long distance travel and the environmental effects this generates. It also avoids passing the environmental costs of waste management to communities which are not responsible for its generation by reducing the environmental costs of transporting waste.

7.8.3 Material assets required for the construction of road Proposed Schemes include both primary raw materials, such as aggregates and minerals, and secondary manufactured products. Many material assets will originate off-site and some, such as excavated soils and rock, will arise on site.

7.8.4 Construction of the Proposed Scheme will generate earthworks material, including cut (excavation of material removed from an area) and fill (placement of material into an area to make, for example, embankments). The intention is to re-use all of the site won material with the exception of a limited quantity of unsuitable materials. This will minimise import or primary raw materials.

7.8.5 The current design produces a near neutral balance of the cut and fill.

7.8.6 Significant effects are considered unlikely during the construction of the Proposed Scheme, in terms of, earthwork material assets, importation of materials and generation of waste from both the use of material assets and the disposal or recovery of waste.

7.8.7 Significant effects are considered unlikely during the operation of the Proposed Scheme, from both the use of material assets and the disposal or recovery of waste. As such, operational impacts have been scoped out of the assessment, on the basis that no likely significant effects will occur within the first year of operation.

7.9 Noise and Vibration

7.9.1 The potential noise and vibration impacts of the Proposed Scheme on noise sensitive receptors are presented in Chapter 12 of the ES.

7.9.2 The assessments have been carried out in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges and has included consideration of potential significant effects from construction noise, construction vibration, construction traffic and diversions, and operational traffic noise.

7.9.3 As part of the assessment a baseline noise survey was undertaken in December 2022 and February/March 2013 to gain an understanding of the existing noise climate within the vicinity of the Proposed Scheme. A majority of the noise measurement results correlate well with the predicted road traffic noise levels at the survey positions. Therefore, no adjustments have been made to the operational road traffic noise model.

7.9.4 The assessment of construction noise has identified the potential for significant effects due to some construction phases in some locations. Suitable means of reducing the potential for significant effects have been developed and shall be implemented, including the provision of temporary acoustic barriers (or early provision of permanent acoustic barriers) and liaison with the local planning authority for works outside of daytime working hours. However, significant residual effects due to construction noise are expected at the closest dwellings in South Hykeham and at Station Road. For this reason noise monitoring at representative locations is recommended to reduce the likelihood of significant effects occurring in practice.

7.9.5 The assessment of construction vibration has identified the potential for significant effects during compaction works at the closest receptor. However, the residual effects are not expected to be significant once the mitigation described within this chapter are implemented.

7.9.6 The assessment of construction traffic assessment has identified the potential for significant residual effects due to diversion works occur for night-time tie-in works, and where construction traffic uses Wath Lane to access the Proposed Scheme.

7.9.7 The assessment of operational noise indicates that there is predicted to be both significant adverse and significant beneficial noise effects associated with traffic changes following opening of the Proposed Scheme. These are summarised as follows:

- Significant beneficial residual effects due to redistributed traffic at 252 dwellings and 4 non-residential receptors, primarily located in Bracebridge Heath.
- Significant adverse residual effects due to redistributed traffic at 226 dwellings and 1 non-residential receptors, primarily located along the B-roads between the A15 at Waddington to the A158 at Horncastle Bracebridge Heath.
- Significant adverse residual effects due to road traffic noise from the Proposed Scheme itself (with embedded mitigation) at a total of 50 dwellings.

7.9.8 The embedded operational noise mitigation measures that have been included in this assessment are located within the red line boundary of the Proposed Scheme and comprise acoustic barriers and bunds, and the provision of a low noise surface material.

7.9.9 The assessment identifies proportionate and reasonable actions to avoid the majority of the expected significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise and vibration that result from the Proposed Scheme.

7.10 Population and Human Health

7.10.1 Chapter 13 of the ES presents the findings of the Population and Human Health assessment. The focus is on the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land, land take from private agricultural holdings, the effects of community severance, the disruption and change in Public Rights of Way and impact for users as well as the impact on established and strategic employment sites.

7.10.2 Residual effects of construction vibration are not expected to be significant, however impacts from piling; rock breaking and vibratory compaction can still cause annoyance and affect mental health.

7.10.3 Existing on-site and off-site human health receptors may experience impacts from dust soiling and increased particulate matter concentrations due to demolition and construction works. However, these impacts are considered short term, minor adverse, and not significant.

7.10.4 It is anticipated that there would be also a temporary increase in vehicle movements along the local road network during the construction phase. This will result in some temporary perceptible or discernible visual effects.

7.10.5 During the construction stage, temporary and permanent land acquisition is to be limited as far as practicable. This will help to not only reduce the loss of property and land, but also limit disruption to people's livelihoods. Where land is required temporarily it should be returned to its existing condition, as far as reasonably practicable. The location of any construction compounds will also consider agricultural practices to limit potential impacts.

7.10.6 During construction of the Proposed Scheme Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) and other construction vehicles would wherever possible avoid peak traffic times as well as school start and closure times.

7.10.7 The construction of the Proposed Scheme will seek to reduce as far as practicable impacts on noise, visual, lighting and air quality through the implementation of a CEMP.

7.10.8 The operation of the Proposed Scheme is likely to lead to significant permanent faster journey times, increased network resilience, improved traffic flow and improved accessibility to community land and assets including village halls and medical facilities.

7.11 Road Drainage and the Water Environment

7.11.1 Chapter 14 of the ES summarises existing conditions in terms of road drainage and the water environment and assesses potential effects of the Proposed Scheme on the water environment.

7.11.2 The Proposed Scheme crosses the River Witham, a main river, broadly at the middle of the Proposed Scheme, with the river flowing in a south-north direction. No other main rivers are crossed by the Proposed Scheme. However the River Brant, a main river, joins the River Witham approximately 300m south (upstream) of the Proposed Scheme.

7.11.3 Several drainage watercourses are present throughout the agricultural floodplain and are also crossed by the Proposed Scheme. These flow to the River Witham.

7.11.4 The Proposed Scheme is situated mostly within Flood Zone 1. This is defined by the EA as having a low probability of flooding from rivers or the sea. The Proposed Scheme also crosses flood zones 2 and 3 both associated with the River Witham.

7.11.5 A large flood water storage area (Witham Washland) is situated south-west of the sluice gate adjacent the west bank of the River Witham. Flood water is retained in the storage area by a purpose-built bund/embankment. The Proposed Scheme's southern red line boundary is in close proximity to the retaining embankment.

7.11.6 The EA surface water flood maps show variable surface water flood risk within the study area and red line boundary. Areas of 'low', 'medium' and 'high' surface water flood risk are present, concentrated primarily around drains and low-lying areas.

7.11.7 To manage the identified potential significant effects during the construction phase, a CEMP will be implemented to ensure that good site practice is followed at all times. This will include standard pollution mitigation measures compliant with EA Guidance, such as oil interceptors and silt traps, along with a temporary drainage system to manage overland flows.

7.11.8 Adequate storage for surface water runoff from the Proposed Scheme, including allowances for the predicted effects of climate change over the lifetime of the Proposed Scheme, is included within the proposed drainage strategy. This will ensure that surface water flood risk both within the application site and to downstream receptors does not increase following development.

7.12 Climate

7.12.1 Chapter 15 of the ES assess the potential effects associated with climate change in relation to the Proposed Scheme.

7.12.2 The scheme would result in Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions due to construction materials and activities during the construction stage, maintenance during the operation stage and vehicles using the road during the operation stage.

7.12.3 Based on the assessment presented in this ES, no significant effects in relation to GHG emissions are predicted during the construction and operation stages. The assessment indicates that the expected change in GHG emissions is very small in comparison with the national carbon budgets. The assessment of scheme impacts is considered to be not significant based on evidence that in isolation the scheme would not have a material impact on the ability of the UK government to meet its carbon reduction targets.

7.12.4 The vulnerability of the Proposed Scheme to climate change assessment during the construction stage indicates that all impacts are likely to be 'not significant' as they would be addressed though the design decisions, best construction practices and working procedures.

7.12.5 The climate change resilience assessment during the operational stage indicates that a number of potential risks have been identified and assessed; however, all impacts are likely to be 'not significant' due to mitigation measures embedded in the design of the Proposed Scheme, assumed monitoring and maintaining practices, which would be implemented to ensure resilience of the Scheme to the projected climate hazards.

7.12.6 The In-combination climate change impacts assessment has not identified any new or different significant in combination effects as a result of the Proposed Scheme's effects combining with future climate conditions.

7.13 Major Accidents and Disasters

7.13.1 Chapter 16 of the ES provides consideration and assessment of expected significant adverse effects of the Proposed Scheme on the environment deriving from the vulnerability of the development to risks of relevant major accidents and/or disasters.

7.13.2 The potential major accidents and/or disasters (hereafter referred to as major events) to which the Proposed Scheme may be vulnerable during demolition, construction and operational phases are:

7.13.3 Natural hazards:

- Geophysical;
- Hydrological; and
- Climatological and meteorological.

7.13.4 Technological or manmade hazards:

- Industrial and urban accidents;
- Transport accidents;
- Pollution accidents;
- Utility failures;
- Engineering accidents and failures;
- Human error/management failure;
- Design error;
- Sabotage/arson;
- Terrorism; and
- Explosion (chemical, nuclear or other).

7.13.5 Risk management options and embedded mitigation measures will align with the mitigation hierarchy: Eliminate, Reduce, Isolate, Control, Exploit.

7.13.6 The assessment has concluded that, with compliance with relevant legislation and regulation, and appropriate application of the proposed design, management processes, and mitigation measures that would be introduced to avoid and/or reduce the vulnerability of the Proposed Scheme to major accidents and/or disasters, it is considered that the risks of any such major event occurring will be managed to be as low as reasonably practical. As a result, it is considered that there will not be any likely significant environmental effects arising from the vulnerability of the Proposed Scheme to major accidents and/or disasters.

8. CASE FOR DEVELOPMENT

8.1 Existing Transport Challenges

8.1.1 The Strategic and Major Road Network in Lincoln comprises:

- The A46 Western Relief Road/Northern Relief Road
- The A15 which provides a north-south route through Lincoln
- The Lincoln Eastern Bypass
- The A57 which approaches Lincoln from the north-west
- The A1434 which provides a route into the city form the south west, passing through residential areas.

8.1.2 Other major routes which provide links to the city centre and surrounding towns and villages. To the south of Lincoln, the road network predominately comprises local and rural roads connecting villages to the major routes.

8.1.3 The capacity of the road network in Lincoln is limited, impacting on the performance of the local and wider network. The majority of the strategic and major road network is formed of single carriageway road with limited sections of dual carriageway on the A46 Western Relief Road and in the centre Lincoln.

8.1.4 Route choice is limited for north-south traffic. Whilst the Lincoln Eastern Bypass has improved the north-south connectivity, there is still a lack of east-west connections in the south of Lincoln. The River Witham and Fossdyke Navigation bisect the city north-south and east-west providing a significant physical constraint with limited crossing points. Significant volumes of traffic are often forced to travel through the centre of Lincoln, including HGVs, which has negative impacts on the existing communities and historic core of the city.

8.1.5 The resilience of the network is affected by the limited route choice, physical constraints and capacity of the network. Incidents on the major road network often results in traffic being rerouted through residential areas which are unsuitable for the additional volumes of traffic. This is exacerbated by seasonal traffic travelling east-west to the Lincolnshire Coast.

8.1.6 There is significant existing demand on the key strategic and major routes, and traffic is forced to use a limited number of routes to pass through and around Lincoln. In 2016 the Annual Average Daily Flow (AADF) ranged from approximately 26,000 to over 42,000 and within the peak hours 1,800 to 2,900 on the A46. On the A15, AADF on the single carriageway sections to the south of Lincoln ranged from approximately 8,500 to over 12,400. Whilst on the A1434 AADF ranged from approximately 16,000 to over 18,000.

8.1.7 Key sections of the orbital network are operating either at capacity or would be expected to reach capacity in the short to medium term, limiting Lincoln's ability to grow and develop.

8.1.8 The A46 has a national speed limit and the data shows that average speeds in the peak periods are approximately 30mph. The most significant junction delays occur at the Hykeham Roundabout. The average speeds on the A1434 for northbound traffic (towards Lincoln) are 8mph slower than free flow conditions during the AM peak hour and 7mph slower for southbound traffic during the PM peak.

8.1.9 Significant congestion on routes where traffic is inbound to the city centre during the AM peak, such as the northern section of the A15 is also evidenced where southbound average speeds are nearly 12mph slower than the off-peak average.

8.1.10 Analysis undertaken by WSP in 2017 shows that on average on the local Major Road Network and urban A roads, 4% and 3% of traffic can be expected to be classified as HGVs respectively. However, in the vicinity of the NHRR the proportion of HGVs on Newark Road and Sleaford Road is 5-10%. Both of these routes pass through residential areas including North Hykeham, Bracebridge and Bracebridge Heath.

8.1.11 The congestion from high levels of traffic on key routes results in traffic rat running on minor routes through residential areas. This leads to negative impacts on local residents and issues of noise and air pollution. Rat running has been identified at:

- A1434 Newark Road/A15 Sleaford Road;
- South Hykeham/Waddington; and
- Aubourn/Harmston

8.1.12 The Proposed Scheme will provide an additional east-west route to increase capacity and resilience on the strategic and local road network which will improve journey times, reduce congestion around Lincoln City Centre and reduce rat-running on minor roads.

8.1.13 A Transport Assessment has been undertaken by WSP. Each of the proposed new junctions as part of the Proposed Scheme have been modelled in detail using industry standard software. They are all shown to operate within capacity up to the horizon design year of 2043. The capacity assessments indicate that each arm on the proposed junctions operate within practical capacity (< 90%), and result in minimal queueing and delay in the 2043 AM and PM scenarios.

8.1.14 Traffic impacts from the scheme on the wider road network show that the Proposed Scheme will relieve the A46 Western Relief Road of traffic, with large volumes of traffic using the Proposed Scheme for east-west movements across Lincoln.

8.1.15 A highway safety assessment has been carried out which seeks to identify any significant highway safety issues based on the latest five year collisions history and comment upon the impact (if any) that the Proposed Scheme will have upon them. Critical locations or 'clusters' have been identified. A number of clusters have been identified in the vicinity of the Proposed Scheme, and a portion of those have included collisions involving cyclists or pedestrians, and the proportion of collisions that are serious or fatal in severity, suggest that increasing traffic numbers may contribute to a decline in safety in the south of Lincoln. The Proposed Scheme will help to relieve traffic on already congested links on the existing highway network, helping to mitigate the number of collisions currently occurring in the south of Lincoln.

8.2 Planning Policy Support

8.2.1 The Local Plan safeguards land for the delivery of the NHRR. The Local Plan states at paragraph 8.1.2 that *"The authorities see this as part of the solution to the city's transportation challenges and the proposal is identified as a primary infrastructure intervention in the Lincoln Transport Strategy".*

8.2.2 The Proposed Scheme will assist in unlocking land for future development which supports the sustainable growth of Lincoln. This includes the South West Quadrant which lies adjacent to the Proposed Scheme and is allocated for approximately 2,000 dwellings and 5ha of employment space.

8.2.3 The Lincoln Transport Strategy has been developed by Lincolnshire County Council, City of Lincoln Council, North Kesteven District Council and West Lindsey District Council. It aims to provide a clear vision for the future of transport across the Lincoln area up to 2036.

8.2.4 It sets out to enhance the transport network, improve choice and inclusive accessibility, and support the continued growth of the city and surrounding area.

8.2.5 Key objectives of the Lincoln Transport Strategy include:

- To reduce traffic in the urban area
- To support and help grow Lincoln's economy by improving access to employment, education, resources and markets
- To provide an efficient strategic road and rail network for long-distance connections to other major centres and international gateways
- To manage and support new housing and employment sites

8.2.6 The Strategy sets out the primary infrastructure interventions which includes the NHRR. The strategy states "*The dual carriageway will link the A46 Pennell's Roundabout to the A15 at the new Lincoln Eastern Bypass roundabout, providing an east-west route for local and strategic traffic. It will help to reduce rat-running, improve resilience and route choice, reduce traffic and congestion on the existing network and unlock land allocated for the South*".

8.2.7 The Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) 5 details the short- medium- and longer-term time horizons up to 2026, 2034 and 2050 respectively for transport and highways for the whole county.

8.2.8 The Lincolnshire LTP5 sets out a number of themes and supporting objectives that the Proposed Scheme will contribute towards including:

8.2.9 Theme 1 – Supporting economic growth

a. Improve connectivity throughout Lincolnshire and to the East Midlands, the rest of the UK and beyond.
b. Ensure a resilient and reliable transport system for the movement of people, goods and services.
c. Support the vitality and viability of our town centres and rural communities.
d. Improve connectivity to jobs and employment opportunities.
e. Provide a transport system that supports the priority sectors identified in the Local Industrial Strategy.

8.3 Accordance with the Framework

8.3.1 The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan was adopted in 2023 and was found to be sound and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

8.3.2 The Local Plan sets out a preferred route for the North Hykeham Relief Road, whilst the alignment of the Proposed Scheme broadly follows that set out in the Local Plan, there are small deviations which are set out below.

8.3.3 The alignment of the Proposed Scheme from the A46 Hykeham Roundabout to the South Hykeham Road roundabout, including the proposed roundabout on South Hykeham Road, has been moved south of the route indicated in the Local Plan to avoid an existing enterprise park and in particular an anaerobic digestion plant that has been constructed since the publication of the route. Doing so avoids the need to demolish the built development and any associated relocation of the business that is in-situ. This is in accordance with the Framework that states at Paragraph 81 "*Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity*".

8.3.4 The Framework identifies that "*The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change*". New development should be planned for in ways that avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change.

8.3.5 The alignment of the Proposed Scheme from the South Hykeham Road roundabout to the River Witham bridge, has been realigned to the south immediately south of South Hykeham to avoid conflict with existing National Grid energy infrastructure (pylon) and realigned to the north to the east of South Hykeham in order to avoid conflict with the Environment Agency's Witham Washlands Flood Bund (raised embankment). Doing so avoids interaction between the earthworks for the flood bund and the highway embankment which could otherwise cause significant engineering difficulties.

8.3.6 As with the alignment changes between A46 Hykeham Roundabout and South Hykeham Road Roundabout, the changes made avoid the need to demolish/modify existing infrastructure and built environment.

8.3.7 The alignment of the Proposed Scheme between Brant Road and Station Road has been affected by alignment changes in the Lincoln Cliff/Lincoln Edge area immediately to the east of Station Road. This has resulted in the alignment between Brant Road and Station Road moving to the north.

8.3.8 The existing Somerton Gate Lane is dissected by the NHRR. Earlier plans showed Somerton Gate Lane as being severed by the NHRR and therefore stopped up, creating a no through road/dead end. Discussions with landowners, analysis of access requirements and a review of the suitability of the existing junction of Somerton Gate Lane and Hill Top for use by large vehicles and emergency access has resulted in the current proposal to re-align the west end of Somerton Gate Lane and provide connection back to the re-aligned Brant Road, keeping Somerton Gate Lane open.

8.3.9 At Station Road, the Proposed Scheme reflects the long-established design principles which provide for the realigned Station Road to pass over the NHRR on a bridge. The bridge will be located slightly to the west of the existing Station Road at broadly the same level as the existing carriageway, albeit on a small embankment as the ground falls away from Station Road.

8.3.10 The alignment of the Proposed Scheme through the Lincoln Cliff/Lincoln Edge has changed marginally from the route indicated in the Local Plan, moving to the south and intersecting the escarpment in a more direct fashion rather than skirting the escarpment face whilst ascending to the plateau level at Grantham Road. This was necessary to overcome geotechnical concerns at the escarpment, specifically, the ground investigation which has identified a number of existing slips and the possibility of the presence of deep-seated slips which could not reasonably be overcome on the previous alignment without significant additional engineering and cost. This has resulted in the road being in cutting both to the north and south as it ascends the escarpment, having acoustic and visual benefits to the conurbations to the north and the south.

8.3.11 Sustainable development is at the heart of the Framework. The deviation from the preferred route in the Local Plan will have environmental benefits by reducing the amount of materials that would need to be imported.

8.3.12 Paragraph 100 states that "*Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users*".

8.3.13 A short section of footpath 3/2, known as the Viking Way, needs to be stopped up at its intersection with the Proposed Scheme. The scale of the earthworks cutting at the escarpment, the geotechnical findings, and the proximity to the proposed bridge at Grantham Road mean that a bridge in this location is not feasible. The alternatives have evolved throughout the design process to a point where feedback from public engagement and a desire to increase amenity has resulted in proposals to maintain connectivity and create additional Public Rights of Way by including in the Proposed Scheme, an unmade route to the south-east of the NHRR along the top of the cutting slope, maintaining the existing feel and aesthetic of the Viking Way, connection of the shared use footway cycleway to Station Road and an unmade route to the north-west of the NHRR along the top of the cutting slope, providing onward connectivity from the southern end of the retained Viking Way to Station Road.

8.3.14 The realignment of the Proposed Scheme, south of the route indicated in the Local Plan, as it ascends the Lincoln Cliff/Lincoln Edge results in the immediate approach to Grantham Road roundabout also being further south. This reduces the Proposed Scheme impact on an area of Roman period archaeology that has been identified to the west of Grantham Road, north of Waddington, where Geophysical Survey and subsequent Trial Trenching undertaken for the Proposed Scheme has revealed a Roman structure interpreted as a possible Romano-British villa as well as other Roman period finds including pottery.

8.3.15 The Framework highlights that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the construction of the North Hykeham Relief Road including bridges, junctions, embankments, cuttings and landscape works.

9.1.2 The application is supported by a General Arrangement Plan which shows the alignment of the North Hykeham Relief Road.

9.1.3 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that decisions on planning applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan for North Kesteven District Council and this has been demonstrated through policy analysis which supports the proposals.

9.1.4 The North Hykeham Relief Road will link the Eastern Bypass with the existing A46 Western Bypass, creating a complete ring road which is one of the key solutions to addressing Lincoln's transportation challenges.

9.1.5 The technical assessments and reports which support the application identify any potential impacts of the Proposed Scheme on the site and the surrounding area. These reports concluded that the Proposed Scheme would not give rise to any notable adverse impacts.

APPENDIX 1
[APPENDIX TITLE]

[Text]