

**Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills  
Executive Director, Environment & Economy**

Report to:	<b>Planning and Regulation Committee</b>
Date:	<b>3 October 2016</b>
Subject:	<b>County Council Development - (E)S86/1655/16</b>

**Summary:**

Planning permission is sought by Lincolnshire County Council to construct a dome shaped circular building for the storage of road salt, associated surface water drainage improvements and water storage at the Highways Depot, Hemingby Lane, Horncastle.

This application has been made in a bid to reduce the negative environmental and economic impacts of the existing open salt store at the Hemingby Lane Highways Depot by providing a weatherproof, watertight building, with associated drainage and water storage.

The key consideration when assessing this application is the possible impacts of the proposed building on amenity of the occupiers of the residential properties on the boundaries of the Highway Depot, in particular those to the south of the site.

**Recommendation:**

Following consideration of the relevant development plan policies and the comments received through consultation and publicity it is recommended that conditional planning permission be granted.

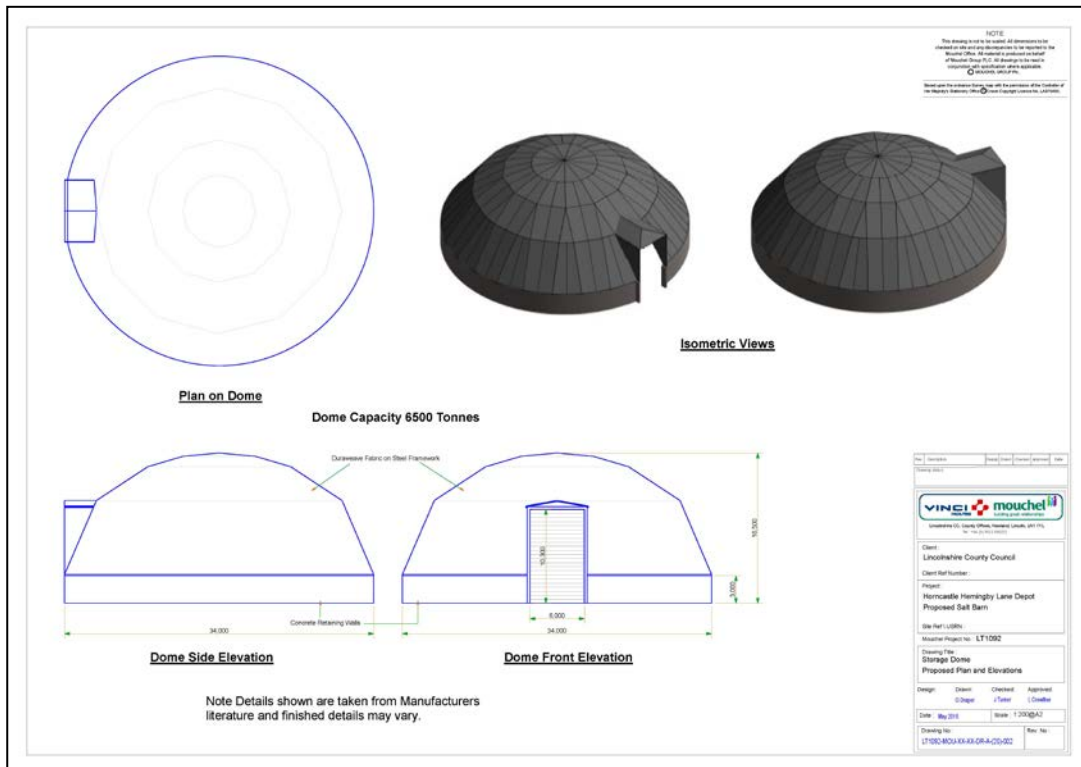
**Background**

1. This site in Horncastle has been a highway depot since the 1970's. It has been used since that time by the Councils DLO (Direct Labour Organisations) and subsequently contractors to store/maintain vehicles and store materials in connection with the Council provision of winter maintenance, highway maintenance and countryside services operations. Over the years there has been an increase in activity at the site, as a result of elements of the Councils services being contracted out. There is also an office building within the depot, for a period between 1999 to 2004, the office was unmanned however, it is now used as a "hub" for Council/contractors staff.

2. Over the past few years, several planning applications have been submitted, and granted, for similar salt barns throughout the County. The primary purpose behind these buildings, is environmental and economic, to prevent the seepage of salt into the ground and watercourses and also provide a weather-proof environment thus reducing the moisture content of the stored salt.

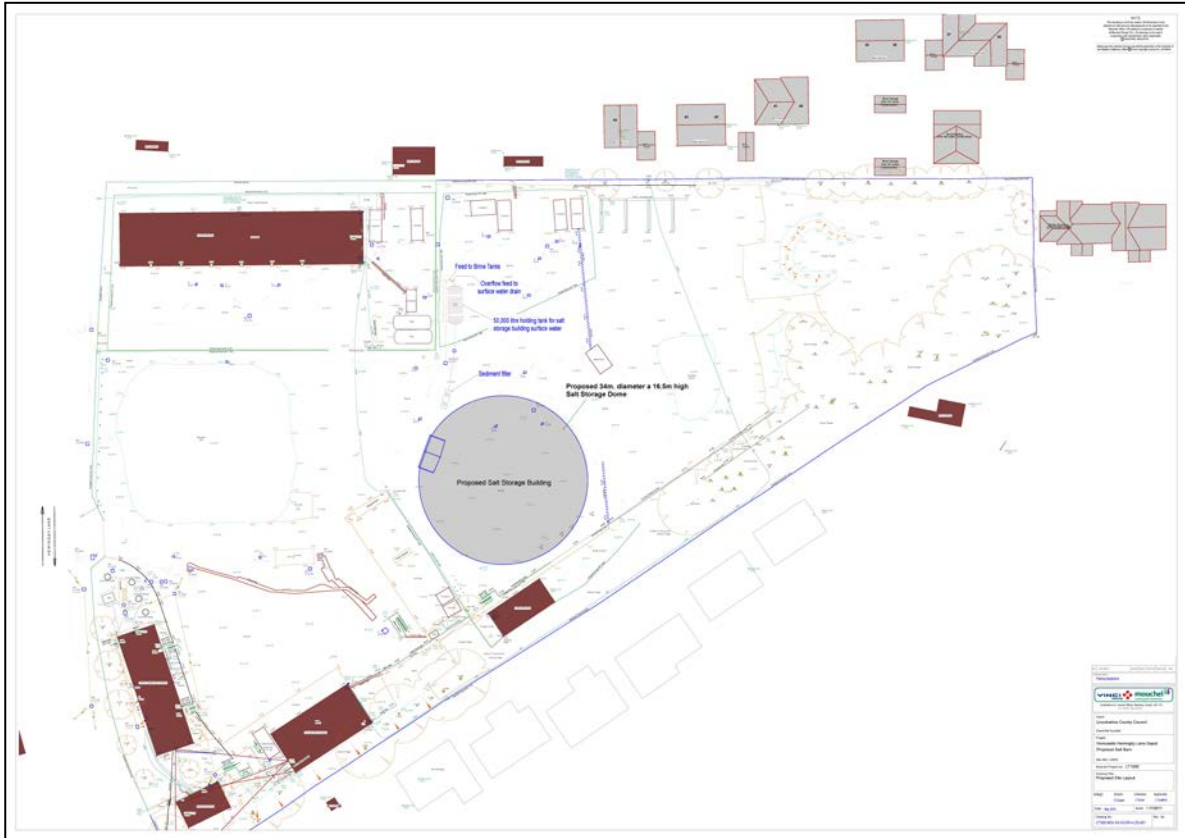
#### The Application

3. Planning permission is sought to erect a building for the storage of road salt along with associated surface water drainage improvements and water storage at Highways Depot, Hemingby Lane, Horncastle. The applicant has submitted the following information in support of this application.
4. This application would enable the construction of a weatherproof, watertight structure on a new concrete pad close to the existing salt store. At present salt is stored close to the entrance of the depot, up to a height of 6m and protected by tarpaulin. The proposed building would enable the storage of the amount of salt required for winter road maintenance, whilst addressing environmental issues regarding seepage of salt into the ground and water courses. The proposal would require some ground works including the levelling of the site and the relaying of the concrete base to the front of the proposed building to enable this area to drain to a below ground sediment filter. The proposal would also require the stationing of an above ground 50,000 litre capacity storage tank (3.2m high, 3m wide and 7.2m long), which would feed to the brine tanks already stationed within the depot. There would also be an overflow feed which would link to the existing surface water drain. The design of the building and associated drainage would enable this "grey" water to be reused for the production of the brine, required for the winter maintenance programme.
5. The proposed salt store would be 34m in diameter and 16.5m in height and initially it was proposed to cover the metal frame of the dome using a green, lightweight fabric which would be above a 3m high concrete retaining wall base. The applicant has, however, also stated that as an alternative to this design the dome structure could be constructed using a timber frame which would be clad using green coloured heavy duty felt tiles. The entrance to the barn would be located on the north western elevation facing towards the entry to the depot and highway beyond, and away from the nearest residential properties. The opening would be 6m wide and 10m high.



Storage Dome Proposed Plan and Elevations

6. The footprint and height of the barn is dictated by the need to store 6,500 tonnes of salt in order to maintain effective winter maintenance and because a minimum height of 10m is required in order to allow the tipping of lorries during delivery. The new building would therefore allow for deliveries and the movement of plant within the building and would provide a weather-proof environment thus reducing the moisture content of the stored salt and preventing its potential seepage into the ground and watercourses. The proposed storage barn, although larger, reflects the current buildings and storage facilities at the depot which consist of an existing workshop (approximately 9m wide x 18.5m long x 6.5m high) and a garage (approximately 10m wide x 49m long x 7m high).
7. The storage barn would be positioned within a central location to provide suitable manoeuvring space for plant and vehicles. The land where the barn is proposed to be erected is currently used for the storage of materials used in the repair and maintenance of public highways and these would be relocated to another position within the site. Existing access and exit routes within the depot would be maintained and no additional lighting is proposed within the site.



Proposed Site Layout

### Site and Surroundings

8. The proposed site is located close to the southern boundary of the highway depot with a substantial office building located in the south west corner of the Depot, close to the western and southern boundaries, marked by a 2m high chain link fence. Within the depot there are several large buildings, on the northern and southern boundaries, used for the storage/maintenance of highways vehicles. The depot is also used for the storage of a substantial amount of salt.



Depot Surroundings

9. The Depot itself is located to the north east of the centre of Horncastle in an area of mixed uses, the area is primarily residential but there are several industrial uses to the west of Hemingby Lane (including scrap yard and waste transfer/recycling facilities). The land immediately adjoining the depot on the northern boundary of the site has, since 2004, been incrementally granted planning permission for housing with much of the development along the northern boundary being granted permission and being built since 2013, with some development to the immediate east still on going.



Site Location Within Depot

10. It is proposed to construct the dome on the base of the depot (30.6m AOD) the boundaries of the nearest properties are located on the adjoining embankment, to the south of the site. These are on average 3.4m (34m AOD) higher than the base of the depot. As noted the first 3m of the base of the building would be constructed in concrete walling upon which a fixed steel frame (or wooden frame) would be covered in green fabric (or fabric tile) tapering to the top of the dome, 16.5m high. The building would be some 12.8m (42ft) above the level of the neighbouring gardens. The boundary of the nearest residential property is 14.5m from the base of the dome, the garden is 10.8m long, given a distance from base of dome to the property of 25.3m(83 feet). To the north the boundary of the nearest residential properties is located 43m from proposed dome.



Looking toward Southern Boundary

11. There is a tree belt along the southern boundary of the depot, which varies in depth from 4.7m to 12.4m. The density of the trees and shrubs as well as the heights also varies, resulting in differing levels of screening along this boundary of the depot to the gardens and houses to the south.

## Main Planning Considerations

### National Guidance

12. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and is a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. In assessing and determining development proposals, Local Planning Authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The main policies/statements set out in the NPPF which are relevant to this proposal are as follows (summarised):

Paragraph 14 – Sustainable development

Paragraph 17 – Core planning principles

Paragraph 59 – LPA should provide guidance on, amongst other things - scale, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally

Paragraph 120 – Protection of the natural environment and general amenity

Paragraph 123 – Quality of life and noise

Paragraphs 186 & 187 – Proactive, positive decision making

Paragraph 206 – Use of planning conditions

Paragraphs 215 & 216 – Status of Local Plans, policies and their consistency with the national policy.

### Local Plan Context

13. East Lindsey Local Plan Alteration 1999 (Saved Policies September 2007) – the following policies are of relevance:

Policy A4 (Protection of General Amenities) states that development which unacceptably harms the general amenities of people living or working nearby will not be permitted.

Policy A5 (Quality and Design of Development) states that development which, by its design, improves the quality of the environment will be permitted provided it does not conflict with other policies of the plan.

Otherwise, development will be permitted only where:-

- a) Its design - including its layout, density, scale, appearance or choice of materials - does not detract from the distinctive character of the locality;
- b) It retains or incorporates features or characteristics which are important to the quality of the local environment including important medium and long distance views;

- c) It is integrated within a landscaping scheme appropriate to its setting.

East Lindsey Core Strategy (ELCS) (February 2016) – this document forms part of the emerging East Lindsey Local Plan which has been out to public consultation and this consultation period has only recently ended. In line with paragraph 216 of the NPPF, given its stage of preparation, only limited weight may be given to this document in the determination of this application, however the following policies are of relevance:

Strategic Policy 1A (SP1A) (Sustainable Development) states that the Council will support sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF, it will work proactively with applicants to find solutions to enable the approval of development which improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning applications that accord with Local Policies will be approved without delay, where there are no relevant or current policies permission will be granted unless material considerations indicate otherwise – where any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF, which indicate that development should be restricted.

Strategic Policy 6 (SP6) (Design) states that the Council will support well designed sustainable development which maintains and enhances the character of the town by: supporting the use of brownfield land; the use of quality materials; ensuring layout scale, massing, height and density of development reflects the character of the surrounding area; providing appropriate on site landscaping to integrate the development into its wider surroundings; ensuring designs minimise glare and light spillage to prevent harm to the rural or dark sky character of a settlement or landscape, respecting local historic environment and does not harm nearby residential amenity or unacceptably reduce highway safety; supporting development that includes measures to reduce, reuse, recycle finite resources; and ensure development around water sources would contain measures to prevent pollution from entering the water source.

#### Results of Consultation and Publicity

14. (a) Local County Council Member, Councillor W Aron – consulted but had not responded by the time this report was prepared.
- (b) Horncastle Town Council – support the application.
- (c) Environment Agency (EA) – no comments.
- (d) Highway & Lead Local Flood Authority (Lincolnshire County Council) – no objections.

15. The application has been publicised by three site notices posted at/near the site and 24 letters of notification were sent to the nearest neighbouring residents living along the boundary of the depot. Three letters have been received in response to this consultation with two objecting on the following grounds (comments summarised):

The building would:

- be an eyesore;
- reduce light into the adjacent bungalows;
- reduce the value and inhibit re-sale of the properties;
- be 16.5 m (55 feet) high and built a short distance from the end of our garden, extending 31 feet above our garden;
- be better located where the salt is already stored, to the front of the depot, and should be reduced in height.

16. The third letter does not object to the proposal on planning grounds but states that the construction of the salt barn is not essential and money should instead be spent to control the trees that are running along the southern boundary of the depot and which are stated as causing damage to the nearby properties. The money should therefore be spent on the needs of council tax payers.

#### District Council's Recommendations

17. East Lindsey District Council raised no objections to the proposal.

#### Conclusion

18. Policy A4 of the East Lindsey Local Plan states that development will not be permitted where it results in unacceptable harm to the general amenity of people living or working nearby. Similarly Policy A5 supports development which does not detract from the distinctive character of the locality by reason of its design - including its layout, density, scale, appearance or choice of materials.
19. Objections have been received which raise concerns about the impact of the barn in terms of potential overshadowing/loss of light and the more general negative impact the building would have visually. These objections are noted however, the applicant has undertaken and submitted an assessment of the possible impacts of the barn in terms of loss of daylight to the habitable rooms of the properties along the southern boundary of the depot. This assessment demonstrates that the barn would not have an unacceptable impact on these properties and therefore the loss of light and overshadowing is not likely and therefore would not justify the refusal of this application.
20. Notwithstanding the above, it is accepted that the construction of a building 16.5m high and 34m in diameter would have an impact on views from properties which immediately abut the depot, however, there are several



mitigating factors which would help to reduce these impacts to an acceptable level. For example, views from the properties to the north of the depot would be reduced as the salt barn would be set against a background of mature trees along the southern boundary and be located some 43m from the boundary of the nearest property along this side of the site. For the properties to the south, the impacts would be reduced as there is a tree belt along the southern boundary of the depot and the distance between the proposed dome and the gardens/properties ranges between 14.5m from the boundary of the nearest property to 25.3m from the property itself. Additionally, in all cases the tapering effect of the design of the dome and the proposed colour would also reduce its visual prominence and when considered in the context of the existing depot, overall it is considered to be of an appropriate scale and location.

21. With regard the third letter received, it is noted that this does not raise concerns/objections about the possible impacts of the barn itself but rather complains that money should be spent on maintenance of the trees along the southern boundary of the site. The trees along this boundary are maintained in accordance with guidance provided by the County Council's Natural Environment Team who has advised that other than ongoing maintenance no further works are required. Therefore the concerns/objections raised are not considered material to the acceptability of this development.
22. Finally, it is noted that no objections have been received from any of the statutory consultees and whilst the objections from some local residents are noted the proposed barn offers several benefits to the existing storage arrangements which are considered to outweigh the objections received.

These benefits include:

- reducing pollution caused by salt leaking into ground/water courses;
  - reducing the moisture content of the stored salt;
  - reducing the negative visual impact of the open storage;
  - concentrating the salt in a covered space with a dedicated entrance/exit which would reduce vehicle movements within the depot that would otherwise take place around an open salt store.
23. On balance, it is therefore considered that the overall impact of the proposal on the amenity of the surrounding residential properties and on the appearance and character of the wider area is not so significant or adverse that planning permission should be refused. Therefore it is concluded that the development would not conflict with objectives or relevant cited policies contained within the NPPF or Policies A4 and A5 of the East Lindsey Local Plan Alteration 1999.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The development must be begun no later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission. Written notification of the date of commencement of development shall be sent to the County Planning Authority within seven days of commencement.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved documents and drawings (all date stamped received 23 May 2016) except where modified by the conditions attached to this planning permission or details subsequently approved pursuant to those conditions. The approved documents and drawings are as follows:
  - Planning Application Form, Supporting Design Statement, (all date stamped received 13 July 2016)
  - Drawing No. LT1092-MOU-XX-XX-DR-001 - Proposed Site Layout
  - Drawing No. LT1092-MOU-XX-XX-DR-002 - Proposed Salt Storage Building Plan and Elevations
  - Drawing No. LT1092-MOU-XX-XX-DR-003 – Daylight and Sunlight Assessment.
3. No development shall take place until details relating to the colour and specification of the roof covering for the salt storage building hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out and implemented in accordance with the approved details.

### Reasons

1. To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
2. To define the permission and to ensure the development is implemented in all respects in accordance with the approved details.
3. In the interests of protecting the visual amenity of the area.

### **Appendix**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report

Appendix A	Committee Plan
------------	----------------

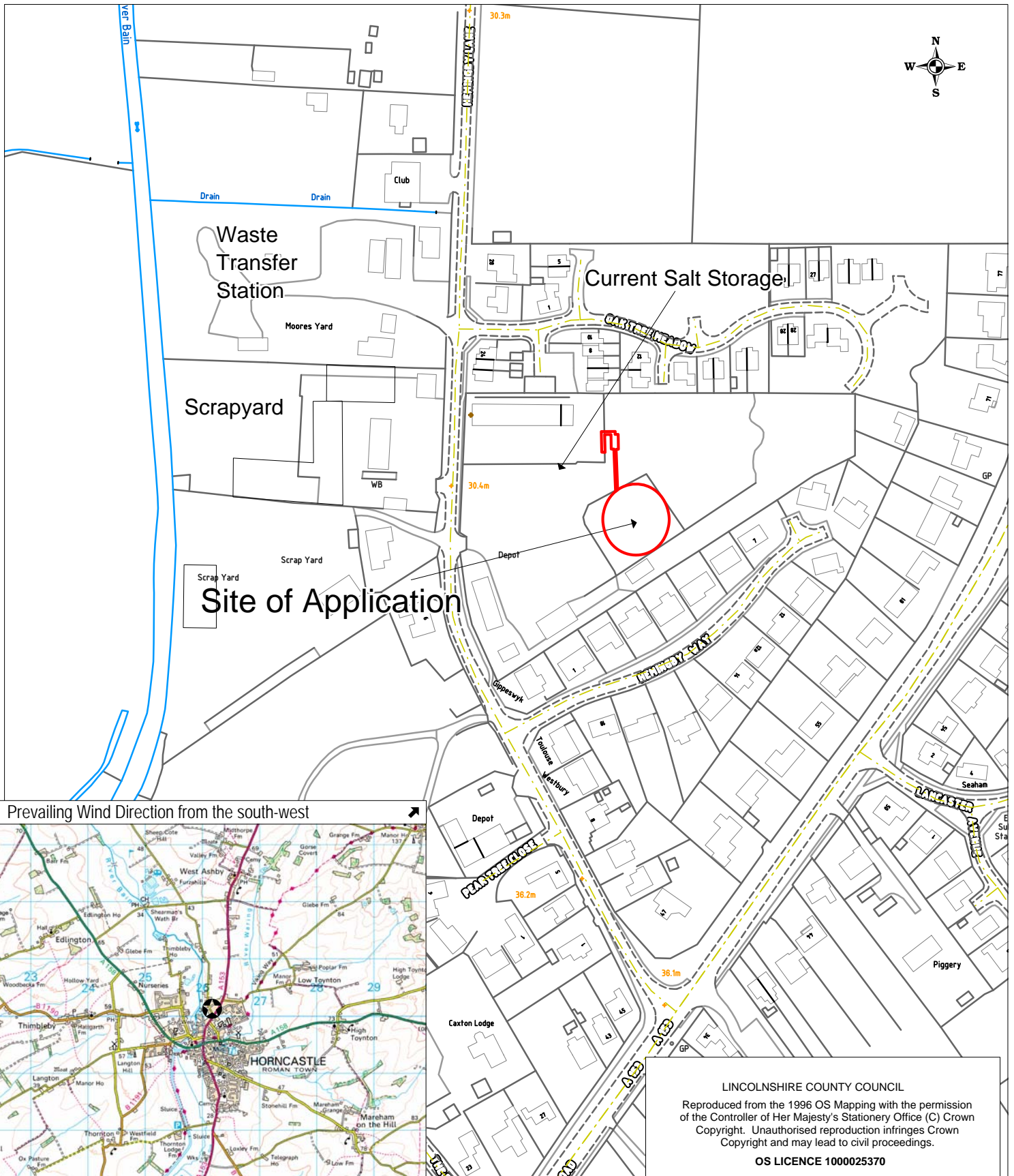
## Background Papers

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Planning Application File (E)S86/1655/16	Lincolnshire County Council, Planning, Witham Park House, Waterside South, Lincoln
National Planning Policy Framework (2012)	The Government's website <a href="http://www.gov.uk">www.gov.uk</a>
East Lindsey Local Plan Alteration 1999 (Saved Policies 2007)	East Lindsey District Council website <a href="http://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk">www.e-lindsey.gov.uk</a>
East Lindsey Core Strategy (ELCS) (2016)	

This report was written by Anne Cant, who can be contacted on 01522 782070 or [dev\\_pcg@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:dev_pcg@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL Appendix A  
 PLANNING AND REGULATION COMMITTEE 3 OCTOBER 2016



**Location:**

Highways Depot  
 Hemingby Lane  
 Horncastle

**Description:**

To construct a dome shaped circular building for the storage of road salt, associated surface water drainage improvements and water storage

**Application No:** (E)S86/1655/16

**Scale:** 1:2500