DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING
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Application No:	**H02-0575-25**	**Applicant:**	**Seagate Homes**
Proposal:	Demolition of existing buildings, construction of 9 dwellings including car parking, infrastructure and landscaping.		
Location:	Speechley'S Yard North Street Crowland		
Terminal Date:	27th March 2026		

Planning Policies

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan - Adopted: March 2019

01	Spatial Strategy
02	Development Management
03	Design of New Development
04	Approach to Flood Risk
10	Meeting Assessed Housing Requirements
11	Distribution of New Housing
17	Providing a Mix of Housing
24	The Retail Hierarchy
26	Primary Shopping Frontages
28	The Natural Environment
29	The Historic Environment
30	Pollution
36	Vehicle and Cycle Parking
APPENDIX 6	Parking Standards

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework December 2024

Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development
Section 4 - Decision-making
Section 5 - Delivering and sufficient supply of homes
Section 7 - Ensuring the vitality of town centres
Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport
Section 11 - Making effective use of land
Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
Section 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Representations:

	Object	Support	No Obj.	Comments

PARISH COUNCIL	0	0	0	1
WARD MEMBER	0	0	0	0
PLANNING LIAISON OFFICER - FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT	0	0	0	1
HIGHWAYS & SUDS SUPPORT	0	0	0	1
NORTH LEVEL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	0	0	0	1
SHDC INTERNAL	0	0	0	2
OTHER STATUTORY BODIES	0	0	0	5
RESIDENTS	8	1	0	4

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Proposal

Planning permission is sought to demolish the existing buildings within the site and to construct 9 semi-detached and terraced dwellings on the site. 8 of the dwellings are proposed to feature 2 bedrooms and the remaining dwelling is proposed to include 1 bedroom.

The vehicular access to the site is proposed along Speechley's Yard, from North Street which is located to the east of the site. The access is proposed as a private driveway. Existing parking spaces for neighbouring dwellings are also accessed from the private road of Speechley's Yard and the current proposal would continue to enable these spaces to be accessed. Refuse collection is to be carried out by a private contractor.

The layout reflects a courtyard arrangement with car parking to the front and side of the dwellings, with gardens to the rear. Some of the existing trees are to be retained and new trees are proposed to be planted. The dwellings are 2-storey in scale featuring red brickwork facades and natural slate roofs, with several properties incorporating dormer features.

Site Description

The application is situated in a back land location within the town centre of Crowland. The site is accessed from North Street via an access track running in between no.14 and 16 North Street. The site is currently occupied by several barns and a workshop building which are no longer in use. Residential properties bound the site to the north, south and east with established planting to the west.

The site is located within the Crowland Conservation Area and Flood Zone 1.

History

Within the north-eastern part of the site:

H02-1208-00: (Full Application) Change of use of part of existing house into additional accommodation for existing shop - approved 23 November 2000

Consultation

The responses received from consultees during the consultation period are summarised below. The responses can be viewed in their entirety on South Holland District Council's website.

Crowland Parish Council

First Response (30th July 2025): Crowland Parish Council acknowledges arrangement for refuse collection but where is the provision for bin storage.

Second Response (6th August 2025: We have provided an initial comment on this application, however, it has been brought to our attention that there may be bats using the building so it would seem appropriate to undertake a bat survey.

Highways and Lead Local Flood Authority: No objection. The proposal is for the demolition of existing buildings, construction of 9 dwellings including car parking, infrastructure and landscaping, which will utilise the existing access arrangements that serve the current use. Sufficient parking and turning facilities have been made within the site to allow vehicles to enter and leave in a forward gear. The proposed access is located within a 30mph carriageway and although narrow it will not be detrimental for the safe passage of vehicular movements.

Environmental Protection Officer: A standard land contamination condition is recommended.

Historic Environment Officer: The submitted desk-based assessment confirms the prehistoric and mediaeval archaeological potential of the site and acknowledges the impact of the proposed development. The proposed development will have a significant impact on any surviving archaeological remains resulting in a total or partial loss, if present. Recommends there is an archaeological condition for a mitigation strategy to effectively deal with the site. This will comprise a post demolition phased approach of archaeological investigation and mitigation work.

National Grid Electricity Distribution: There is a LV underground cable across the entrance to the site.

North Level District Drainage Board: No objection in principle to the development.

Environment Agency: Do not wish to make any comment.

Conservation Officer: The Crowland Conservation Area already features backland development and so the principle of the development is not contrary to the existing built form of the settlement. Moreover, the existing buildings due to be demolished would appear to be mid-C20th in nature and of no particular value to the setting. The proposed designs are relatively attractive and modest in scale, utilising a decent standard of architectural details that will allow the development to fit within the local vernacular, provided that any approval would be subject to the application of sensibly-worded conditions which require detail of accoutrements and fenestration to be submitted to, confirmed with and approved by

the Local Planning Authority to ensure that the standard of materials remains commensurate with the highly sensitive conservation area setting. However, I have noted that the applicant intends to utilise some non-vernacular materials, particularly in the roofing material for which the applicant proposes concrete mock slates. Per Policy 29b(4) of the SELLP, I would suggest that materials such as concrete mock slates are not appropriate to the vernacular in terms of material. I would therefore request that the applicant be required to amend the proposed roofing material to a natural slate alternative. It should be noted that this would appear to be the material that was required and installed for the directly adjacent, and notably similar development on Benedictine Square. If the applicant is unable to commit to this amendment at this time, then I would suggest that this could be ensured by means of a condition requesting full details of external materials prior to commencement, that notes the need for natural materials within a central, conservation area

setting.

In view of the above, if the application is to be approved, I would similarly recommend that conditions requiring that the detail of windows, doors, rooflights, domestic accoutrements and landscaping should be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA should be applied. Moreover, to reinforce the need for appropriate treatment with materials, I would also suggest the imposition of SHDC standard conditions MD14 & MD42 should be applied to ensure that windows are white painted timber and rainwater goods are black painted metal. Finally, with the imposition of the condition for details of roof lights, a note should be added that an expectation would be that these would be of a conservation style. All of these conditions are considered reasonable measures to enforce under the authority of Policy 29 of the SELLP.

SHDC Ecology Officer

First Response (08 September 2025): The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal identified the potential for bat roosts within several buildings on the site. However, no further investigative work has been undertaken, therefore, we argue that there has been insufficient evidence provided to adequately assess the effects of the proposed development on local bat populations. A series of emergence/re-entry surveys should be undertaken during the active bat season following best practices with results submitted to the authority pre-determination. We support all mitigation and enhancement recommendations provided by the ecologist in the PEA. The biodiversity assessment and metric calculations appear rigorous, and we can have confidence in their conclusions. In this case the metric indicates that 10% mandatory net gain can be achieved on-site with a predicted overall gain of 11.21% in Habitat units (0.04 unit gain) and 672% gain in hedgerow units (0.08 unit gain).

Second Response (17 September 2025): Arbtech performed 3 rigorous dusk/evening surveys (24/6, 9/7, 25/7), and we can have confidence in their conclusions. In this case, the surveyors found relatively high levels of bat foraging and commuting activity (3 species) in the immediate vicinity of the buildings, including occasional entry into building B4, however, no roost emergences were observed during the surveys to confirm the presence of active roosts. The site also has some features to support winter-hibernation roosts, though the probability of this was considered negligible due to the high light levels and lack of insulating layers in the buildings. Therefore, I believe that the authority now has sufficient evidence to conclude that the proposal will not have significant impacts on local populations of protected species provided that the recommended precautionary measures and post-development mitigation measures are conditioned and implemented. I specifically note that the report recommends that the applicants submit a Bat Mitigation Plan to describe precautionary methods and mitigation measures prior to work commencing. In addition, they recommend that all buildings are subject to a soft demolition and further state that if works are started prior to May 2026, then prior to demolition, another visual inspection using a torch and endoscope will be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist to inspect all buildings on site. And if works are started after May 2026, an updated inspection and dusk emergence survey will be carried out in June or July prior to work commencing to check for any changes in roost status. However, due to the likelihood of bats on-site, I believe that the authority should further condition that a watching brief be in place during demolition to ensure that all protected species legislation is adhered to. Here, in addition to Arbtech's recommendations above, I recommend that: a) a qualified ecologist holding a "low Impact" CL21 bat mitigation license will meet with the staff and give a 'tool box talk' to cover the watching brief, the legislation protecting bats, and what to do should a bat be found on site; and b) Buildings 2, 3, and 4, will undergo soft demolition under the supervision and instruction of the licenced ecologist. The soft demolition will focus on roosting potential areas such as holes, gaps, and cracks in brickwork and wooden beams. Any potential roost areas will be dismantled by hand if possible, and checked under the supervision of the licenced bat ecologist.

Anglian Water

First Response (09 July 2025): Object, there is a 3-inch main which is crossing the development site and is affected by the proposed development. Object to the intended connection to the public foul drainage network. The site is located within the catchment of the Crowland Water Recycling Centre which currently lacks the capacity to accommodate the additional flows that would be generated by the proposed development. Object to surface water disposal. The preferred methos of surface water disposal would be to a sustainable drainage system SUDs with connection to the sewer as a last resort. The Drainage Statement and Strategy is unacceptable due to the Surface Water Hierarchy not being fully explored.

Second Response (30 July 2025): This application amendments are not relevant to Anglian Water - we have no further comments to make since our last response (PLN-0229175 dated 9th July 2025). Please note Anglian Water will only comment on matters relating to drainage/surface water connections to our network.

Third Response (25 March 2026): We have updated our methodology in relation to capacity at the Water Recycling Centre (WRC) and this change will go live on the 1st of April 2026. Crowland WRC will now be showing as having available capacity to accommodate the nine dwellings proposed by this development H02-0575-25 and we can update our formal comments on this planning application on the 1st of April to reflect this change. Comms to all Local Planning Authorities regarding the new methodology and updates on all our WRC catchments will be received by the end of this week.

Cllr B Alcock: No response received.

Cllr J R Astill: No response received.

Cllr A Harrison: No response received.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust: No response received.

Lincolnshire Bat Group: No response received.

SHDC Tree Officer: No response received.

SHDC Waste Team: No response received.

Peterborough and Spalding Gliding Club: No response received.

LCC Minerals and Waste]: No response received.

Public Representation

This application has been advertised in accordance with the Development Procedure Order and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. In this instance representations from 10 households have been received, 9 objecting to the proposal and 1 in support.

The main planning issues raised objecting to the proposal are:

- The land labelled as parking for 16,18, 20 and 22 is owned by a third party.
- There are bats in the buildings, a bat survey needs to be carried out. If bats are discovered after planning permission has been granted the developer must apply for a licence before undertaking any work which may disturb the bats.
- The access road is only wide enough for single lane traffic.
- There is a window proposed in the side of Plot 5 and Plot 6 that will overlook the neighbour.
- There are buildings on either side of the access to North Street, these could impact on the vision of pedestrians using the footpath.
- 9 homes is overdevelopment, the land could have been kept for wildlife and a green space.

The main planning issues raised in support of the proposal are:

- The plans are a positive improvement, the proposed biodiversity net gain and tree planting is good.
- Would like to see swift boxes and bee bricks incorporated into the buildings.
- The site has had multiple uses and the land may need decontaminating.
- Request working hours restricted to protect the amenity of neighbours.

Within one of the representations, the matter of land ownership was queried. The response set out that part of the site is within a garden and not within the applicant's ownership. This has been queried with the applicant and they have confirmed that the red line boundary did cover land that was not within their ownership. This covered an area of land on the northern edge of the site.

This could have invalidated the application as the application form indicated that the site is within the ownership of the applicant and no other party. The applicant submitted an amendment location

plan within which the red line boundary was amended to exclude the land that is not within their ownership. This land was not necessary for the development and was only included due to an error. As such, the amended red line boundary has been accepted and a period of re-consultation took place from 03 November to 24 November. 1 additional representation was received during this period which sets out concerns that the area designated as car parking spaces for plot 7 are within a private driveway belonging to another party. The applicant has set out that the red line boundary is now correct and that they own all the land within the boundary. As such, the parking spaces for plot 7 appear to be within land that is owned by the applicant.

Planning Considerations

Development Plan

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended, requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The adopted South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036, adopted March 2019 (SELLP), is the development plan for the district, and is the basis for decision making in South Holland. The relevant development plan policies are detailed within the report above.

The policies and provisions set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024 (NPPF) are also a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, alongside adopted Supplementary Planning Documents.

There are no adopted Neighbourhood Plans for the area within which the site is located.

The main issues and considerations in this case include the following:

- Principle of Development;
- Visual and Heritage Impact;
- Impact on Amenity;
- Highway Safety and Parking;
- Drainage Considerations;
- Archaeology;
- Impact on Protected Species; and
- Biodiversity Net Gain.

These matters are assessed in turn below.

Principle of Development and Sustainability

Policy 1 of the Local Plan sets out the settlement hierarchy in respect of delivering sustainable development, which meets the social and economic needs of the area whilst protecting and enhancing the environment; in order to provide enough choice of land for housing to satisfy local need, whilst making more sustainable use of land, and to minimise the loss of high-quality agricultural plots by developing in sustainable locations and at appropriate densities.

Policy 1 expresses this sustainable hierarchy of settlements, ranking the settlements deemed to be most sustainable in descending order. The most sustainable locations for development are situated within the 'Sub-Regional Centres', followed by 'Main Service Centres'. Lower down the hierarchy are areas of limited development opportunity including Minor Service Centres, with areas of development constraint comprising 'Other Service Centres and Settlements'. The countryside is at the bottom of the settlement hierarchy and represents the least sustainable location.

The site is within the defined settlement of Crowland which is a Main Service Centre. Policy 1 sets out that within Minor Service Centres, development will be permitted that supports their role as a service centre for the settlement itself, helps sustain existing facilities or helps meet the service needs of other local communities. Therefore, the proposed development is acceptable in principle. This is subject to the proposals being acceptable in terms of other relevant criteria, as assessed below.

Part of the eastern area of the site is within Crowland Town Centre policy area and within a primary shopping frontage area. However, this part of the site contains the site access and as such, the

proposed dwellings would not be located within this area. As such, the proposed dwellings should not undermine the purpose of the town centre or primary shopping frontage area.

Visual and Heritage Impact

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that new development should function well and add to the overall quality of the area (including beyond the short term) and should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

Policy 2 of the Local Plan outlines sustainable development considerations for development proposals, providing a framework for an operational policy to be used in assessing the sustainable development attributes of all development proposals.

Policy 3 accords with the provisions of Section 12 of the NPPF, in that it requires development to comprise good design; identifying issues that should be considered when preparing schemes so that development sits comfortably with, and adds positively to, its historically-designated or undesignated townscape or landscape surroundings.

The site is within Crowland Conservation Area and as such, it is necessary to consider the impact of the proposals on the Conservation Area as this is a designated heritage asset.

For example, Section 16 of the NPPF sets out the importance of assessing the impact of proposals on the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets, to ensure that proposals preserve and enhance these assets. For example, Paragraph 212 of the NPPF sets out the following:

"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance".

Paragraph 213 of the NPPF further sets out the following:

"Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification".

Policy 29 of the Local Plan (Section A, Part 3) sets out that proposals within, affecting the setting of a Conservation Area should preserve (and enhance or reinforce, as appropriate) features that contribute positively to the area's character, appearance and setting.

The proposal seeks to demolish the existing agricultural buildings within the site and to erect 9 dwellings. The existing buildings are generally dilapidated in appearance with little architectural merit and as such, there is no objection to their demolition. Crowland Conservation Area features back land development and the principle of the proposal would, therefore, reflect the existing residential grain of this part of the settlement.

The proposed layout includes re-surfacing the existing access track with block paving and extending this further into the site. Plots 8 and 9 and proposed to be located to the south of the access road and would be semi-detached. Similarly, plots 6 and 7 are also proposed to be semi-detached and would be located to the north of the access road. Plots 1 to 5 are located towards the rear of the site, with frontage car parking and rear gardens.

There is no strict uniformity in terms of the plot layouts of the dwellings that surround the site. Whilst the proposed plot layouts within the application site are smaller than some of the nearest dwellings, the proposed plots would not result in an overly cramped appearance.

The dwellings are relatively modest in terms of their scale, utilising architectural features which reflect the local vernacular. Plots 8 and 9 feature a gable end roof form whereas the other dwellings feature a jerkinhead roof form. Plots 8 and 9 measure 8.4m in height up to the roof ridgeline, and the other dwellings measure 7.8m in height up to the ridgeline.

The council's conservation officer set out some concerns with the proposed use of concrete mock tiles to cover the roofs of the dwellings, as the officer considered that this would not reflect the roofing material of the locality and detract from the overall character of the area. This was raised

with the applicant and an amended material schedule has been submitted confirming the use of natural slate as the roofing material.

The proposal would result in an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in accordance with Policy 29 of the Local Plan and Section 16 of the NPPF. Furthermore, the overall design and layout of the development is considered to accord with Policies 2 and 3 of the Local Plan.

Impact on Amenity

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that development should create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Policies 2 and 3 of Local Plan set out that residential amenity and the relationship to existing development and land uses is a main consideration when making planning decisions.

The proposed dwellings would be provided with sufficient internal living space and external amenity space.

It is not considered that the proposed dwellings would result in an unacceptable degree of overshadowing of one another or of neighbouring dwellings.

In terms of separation distances, a concern was raised within a public representation due to the proximity of Plots 8 and 9 to the rear elevation of 4 Bartholomew Close, which is located to the south of the site. Plot 9 was also considered close to the rear elevation of 11 West Street and there was concern that first floor windows would overlook the rear garden area of No.11. It was requested that the distance Plot 8 and 9 are situated from the respective boundaries was indicated on the site plan. A revised site plan has been received, this indicates that the relationship of Plots 8 and 9 to no.4 Bartholomew Close are acceptable, these Plots are sited an appropriate distance from this existing dwelling to ensure no direct overlooking arises nor is there any overbearing or enclosing impact. However, the first floor windows serving Plot 9 are located close to the garden of no.11 West Street and would create overlooking over this garden from a short distance. To overcome this, it was requested that one of the bedroom was re-located to the front of the dwelling with the bathroom to the rear and the other bedroom window in the rear elevation was repositioned to the side. Amended plans have been received showing this amendment which will ensure there will be no direct overlooking from Plot 9 onto the garden of no. 11 West Street.

The occupants of an existing property have also raised concerns in terms of potential overlooking from a window in the side elevations of Plots 5 and 6. These windows connect to bathrooms which are not habitable rooms and as such, it is not considered that the position of these windows would result in an unacceptable degree of overlooking.

The proposed dwellings are located sufficient distance from existing properties to ensure no direct overlooking arises, nor will the development create any overbearing or enclosing impact.

The proposal provides adequate levels of amenity for the future users of the development and as amended will not cause detriment to the level of amenity which existing occupants of nearby property currently enjoy, and in this regard the proposal accords with the provisions of the Framework and Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019.

Highway Safety and Parking

Paragraph 116 of the NPPF sets out that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe, following mitigation.

Policy 2 of the Local Plan sets out that proposals requiring planning permission for development will be permitted provided that sustainable development considerations are met, specifically in relation to access and vehicle generation.

Policy 3 details that development proposals will demonstrate how accessibility by a choice of travel modes including the provision of public transport, public rights of way and cycle ways will be

secured, where they are relevant to the proposal.

Policy 36 and Appendix 6 of the Local Plan, set out minimum vehicle parking standards. The standards require at least two spaces for dwellings of up to three bedrooms, and three spaces for dwellings with four or more bedrooms.

The proposal would utilise an existing access from North Street; however, this access is proposed to be re-surfaced to ensure it is more suitable for use by 9 dwellings. The highway authority has not raised objections to the development. It is considered that there is sufficient space for parking and turning within the site.

Whilst it is acknowledged that concerns have been raised regarding the access within some of the public representations that have been received, the access is considered to be suitable for the proposed development. The proposed access is located within a 30mph carriageway and although narrow, it will not be detrimental for the safe passage of vehicular movements. For example, there is suitable forward visibility and room for vehicles to wait safely and pass within the site to enter and leave without causing extensive queuing or obstruction should they meet other vehicles at the access. It should be noted that the proposed widths of the private shared access road does conform to Manual for Streets.

The proposal accords with Policies 2, 3 and 36 of the Local Plan and Section 9 of the NPPF as the proposal would not result in an adverse highway safety impact.

Drainage Considerations

Paragraph 182 of the NPPF sets out that applications which could affect drainage on or around the site such incorporate sustainable drainage systems to control flow rates and reduce volumes of runoff, and which are proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal.

Anglian Water have advised that there is a 3-inch water main crossing the development site and this would be affected by the proposal. The permeable paving on the access road, parking areas and plots 7,8,and 9 are affected by the Anglian Water owned assets.

Initially, Anglian Waters advised that the site is located within the catchment of the Crowland Water Recycling Centre (WRC) which lacked the capacity to accommodate the additional flows that would be generated by the proposed development. Therefore, Anglian Water recommended that planning permission be refused on the grounds of insufficient infrastructure capacity and to prevent environmental harm. Anglian Water have since been re-consulted and within their latest consultation response (dated 25 March 2026), they have advised that there is now capacity at the WRC for the proposed 9 dwellings.

Anglian Water further state the preferred method of surface water disposal would be to a sustainable drainage system SUDs, with connection to the sewer seen as a last resort. Anglian Water consider that the the Drainage Statement and Strategy is unacceptable due to the Surface Water Hierarchy not being fully explored. However, according to the submitted drainage strategy:

"Although ground investigation works have not been undertaken to determine ground conditions, evidence found from information available on the British Geological Survey GeoIndex mapping system indicates conditions being unsuitable for infiltration techniques. Bedrock geology is described as mudstone of the Oxford Clay Formation and superficial deposits being Tidal Flat Deposits consisting of clay and silt."

Therefore, whilst permeable paving is proposed, which can form part of a sustainable drainage scheme, it is not proposed to use infiltration or soakaways to manage surface water. Whilst sustainable drainage strategies are preferred, the site is located within Flood Zone 1, which is considered to have less than a 0.1% (1 in 1,000) annual probability of flooding. It is considered appropriate to secure further drainage details via conditions; however, it is not considered necessary to insist on the submission of infiltration testing as part of the current application.

Archaeology

The NPPF advises, at Paragraph 207, where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment, and where necessary,

a field evaluation.

Policy 29(C) of the Local Plan sets out the following:

Wherever possible and appropriate, mitigation strategies should ensure the preservation of archaeological remains in-situ. Where this is either not possible or not desirable, provision must be made for preservation by record according to an agreed mitigation scheme for investigation submitted by the developer, undertaken by a suitably qualified person and approval by the local planning authority.

LCC's Historic Environment Officer advises the submitted desk-based assessment confirms the prehistoric and medieval archaeological potential of the site. The proposed development groundworks and any temporary works associated with the development will have a significant impact on any surviving archaeological remains, resulting in total or partial loss, if present. Therefore, conditions have been recommended to secure an archaeological investigation of the site and any necessary mitigation. This will initially comprise but may not be limited to a trial trench evaluation of the site which should aim to determine the presence, absence, significance, depth and character of any archaeological remains which could be impacted by the proposed development as noted above and to inform a programme of further archaeological mitigation work which may be required if archaeological remains are identified in the evaluation. This will enable any remaining archaeology which currently survives on this site to be properly assessed and recorded prior to their alteration or destruction.

Conditions have been agreed with the applicant. With the inclusion of these conditions, the proposal provides appropriate mitigation to ensure any archaeological remains are recorded prior to commencement of development in accordance with Policy 29 of the Local Plan and Section 16 of the NPPF.

Impact on Protected Species

Paragraph 193 of the NPPF sets out that when determining planning applications, if significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

Policy 28 of the Local Plan seeks to promote biodiversity net gain by maximising opportunities to enhance and connect natural habitats, incorporate biodiversity conservation features to enhance green infrastructure and ecological corridors, and conserve or enhance habitat to adapt to climate change.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), April 2025, formed part of the submitted application which identified the potential for bat roosts within several buildings on the site. The PEA concluded that although no bats or evidence of bats were identified, due to the presence of external roosting features suitable for void and crevice dwelling species, buildings B3 and B4 were assessed as moderate habitat value. Building B2 was assessed as low habitat value due to the presence of external roosting features suitable for void dwelling species. Building B1 was assessed as negligible habitat value due to the lack of external bat roosting features and openness of the building exposing it to the elements. The PEA recommended one bat emergence/re-entry survey on B2 during the active bat season (May-September) to confirm the presence or absence of bats roosting in or on the building. Two bat emergence/re-entry surveys were recommended on buildings B3 and B4.

A Bat Emergence and Re-entry Survey was undertaken in August 2025, in accordance with the recommendations of the PEA. The Bat Emergence and Re-entry Survey concluded that while the buildings may offer some limited potential for day roosting or transient shelter during the active season, they are assessed as having negligible suitability for hibernating bats. The report further states that although no roosts were identified during the surveys, there remains an elevated risk due to the bat activity on site, particularly the intermittent use of B4 for foraging. Therefore, the report advises that a Bat Mitigation Plan is required to provide bespoke protection to bats that may be present on site.

The Council's Ecologist concurs with the findings of the PEA and Bat Emergency and Re-entry Survey and advises there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the proposal will not have significant impacts on local populations of protected species provided that the recommended precautionary measures and post-development mitigation measures are secured by a condition. With the inclusion of suitably worded conditions, the proposal accords with Policy 28 of the Local

Plan and the NPPF.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is required under a statutory framework introduced under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021) and requires developers to deliver a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain using standardized biodiversity units measured by statutory biodiversity metrics. This is often referred to as the mandatory requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain.

The effect of Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the "biodiversity gain condition". The effect of this "biodiversity gain condition" is that development granted by this notice must not begin unless:

(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
(b) the planning authority has approved the plan, or
(c) the development is exempt from the biodiversity gain condition.

For applications that are submitted prior to the introduction of this requirement, the development would exempt from the mandatory 10% requirement and as such, the Biodiversity Gain Condition would not apply. However, this application was submitted following the introduction of this legislation. As such, unless comprising development that is exempt from this mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (10%), a condition would be required, as mandatorily set.

The Council's Ecologist advises overall, the biodiversity assessment and metric calculations appear rigorous. The metric indicates that 10% mandatory net gain can be achieved on-site with a predicted gain overall of 11.2% in habitat units (0.04unit gain) and 672% in hedgerow units (0.08 unit gain). BNG can be secured via a condition which has been agreed with the applicant.

Planning Balance

As detailed above, Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended, requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The proposal seeks the redevelopment of a site which contains some previously developed land in a sustainable location within Crowland town centre, to provide 9dwellings. The development could result in some economic, social and environmental benefits which collectively are given significant weight.

The proposal will preserve the character and appearance of the Crowland Conservation Area and there will be no detriment to existing levels of residential amenity or highway safety. Matters relating to drainage and ecology can be mitigated through appropriately worded conditions.

The proposal accords with the Local Plan and the provisions of the NPPF when viewed as a whole. In this instance there are no material considerations that weigh against the proposal and as such the planning balance is in favour of the development.

Additional Considerations

Public Sector Equality Duty

In making this decision the Authority must have regard to the public sector equality duty (PSED) under s.149 of the Equalities Act. This means that the Council must have due regard to the need (in discharging its functions) to:
A. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
B. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This may include removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; taking steps to meet the special needs of those with a protected characteristic; encouraging participation in public life (or other areas where they are underrepresented) of people with a protected characteristic(s).
C. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The PSED must be considered as a relevant factor in making this decision but does not impose a duty to achieve the outcomes in s.149. It is only one factor that needs to be considered, and may be balanced against other relevant factors.

It is not considered that the recommendation in this case will have a disproportionately adverse impact on a protected characteristic.

Human Rights

In making a decision, the Authority should be aware of and take into account any implications that may arise from the Human Rights Act 1998. Under the Act, it is unlawful for a public authority such as South Holland District Council to act in a manner that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. The Authority is referred specifically to Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property).

It is not considered that the recommendation in this case interferes with local residents' right to respect for their private and family life, home and correspondence, except insofar as it is necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others (in this case, the rights of the applicant). The Council is also permitted to control the use of property in accordance with the general public interest and the recommendation is considered to be a proportionate response to the submitted application based on the considerations set out in this report.

Conclusion

Taking the above considerations into account, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 17, 24, 28, 29, 30 and 36 of the Local Plan, along with the identified sections contained within the NPPF. The are no significant factors in this case that indicate against the proposal and outweigh the consideration in favour of the proposal and the policies referred to above.

Recommendation

Based on the assessment detailed above, it is recommended that the proposal should be approved under delegated powers.