

Sibley, Sally

From: isobel.hartley@historicengland.org.uk
Sent: 27 June 2025 12:55
To: _planningadvice
Subject: Historic England advice on Application no(s) H13-0459-25
Attachments: H13-0459-25_HERef_L01593997_L472797.doc

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Dear Ms Pinna-Morell,

Please find attached our advice on the following site -

The Mill, High Street, Moulton, Spalding, PE12 6QB
Application No(s):H13-0459-25

Please consider this advice also for the associated H13-0458-25.

Yours sincerely,

Isobel Hartley
Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas
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Historic England

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Our ref: L01593997

27 June 2025

Dear Ms Pinna-Morell

**Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2021
& T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
& Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**THE MILL, HIGH STREET, MOULTON, SPALDING, PE12 6QB
Application Nos H13-0459-25 & H13-0458-25**

Thank you for your letters of 17 June 2025 regarding the above applications for listed building consent and planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the applications.

Summary

The proposal seeks to install solar panels at Moulton Mill, to the south elevation of the former granary building which is attached to the east of the windmill. Moulton Mill is located within Moulton Conservation Area.

Historic England has concerns regarding the placement of the photovoltaics and considers that their proposed location would be harmful to the significance of the listed building.

Historic England Advice

Significance

Moulton Mill is a nine storey windmill with an attached associated granary building, built in approximately 1822. It is listed Grade I because of its exceptional historic and architectural interest, a category which only 2.5% of all listed buildings represent (of over 370,000 in total).

Impact

The installation of photovoltaics in this prominent location would be highly visible in views of the Windmill from the south. They would become a conspicuous element of the south elevation and would cause harm to the significance of the building through



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erosion of its historic character. This visual impact would be exacerbated by the pitch of the south roof slope.

We note that the granary building roof covering is not original fabric, however our concerns relate to the visual impact of the proposed photovoltaics rather than impact on fabric.

The harm would be caused by the starkly modern character of the proposed photovoltaics viewed in juxtaposition to the historic character of the Grade I listed building, and the consequent effect on the architectural and historical character of the mill.

The proposed photovoltaics would also have a negative impact on the Moulton Conservation Area through erosion of its historic character.

We appreciate the desire to improve energy efficiency, however the proposed installation of the photovoltaics would damage the appreciation of the building's special interest.

It is not clear from the information available what alternative, and less harmful, approaches may have been considered.

Policy

Further to the general duty upon the authority in the 1990 Act S66(1) to have special regard, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out that all harm to designated heritage assets requires clear and convincing justification and in the case of less than substantial harm to be balanced against public benefits, '...great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be) [NPPF 212, 213, 215].

Position

It is possible to install sources of renewable energy on, or near to, many historic buildings without notable harm to their significance. For example, through the installation of ground-mounted solar collectors.

We in no way contest the move toward more sustainable energy solutions, however there may be better, less impactful solutions than that proposed in respect of a Grade I listed building and Conservation Area.

See also our published advice at:

Energy Efficiency and Retrofit in Historic Buildings

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/retrofit-and-energy-efficiency->



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Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency

<http://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/adapting-historic-buildings-energy-carbon-efficiency-advice-note-18/heag321-adapting-historic-buildings-energy-carbon-efficiency/>

Recommendation

Historic England has concerns regarding the applications on heritage grounds.

Historic England is concerned that the proposed location of the photovoltaics on the south roof slope would look visually obtrusive and harmfully impact the significance of the Grade I listed mill and that of the Moulton Conservation Area.

We encourage the consideration of alternative ways to generate renewable energy, such as ground-mounted solar collectors, which would be less harmful to the significance of the Grade I listed mill.

We consider that the issues and safeguards outlined in our advice need to be addressed in order for the applications to meet the requirements of paragraphs [insert para. numbers] of the NPPF.

In determining these applications you should bear in mind the statutory duty of sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess and section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Your authority should take these representations into account and seek amendments, safeguards or further information as set out in our advice. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us.

Yours sincerely

I.Hartley

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