

DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No: H13-0459-25 **Applicant:** Moulton Windmill Project

Proposal: Proposed siting of photovoltaic panels on existing roof

Location: The Mill High Street Moulton

Terminal Date: 31st July 2025

Planning Policies

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan - Adopted: March 2019

01 Spatial Strategy
31 Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
02 Development Management
03 Design of New Development
29 The Historic Environment

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework December 2024

Section 14: Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change
Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Representations:

	Object	Support	No Obj.	Comments
PARISH COUNCIL	0	0	0	0
WARD MEMBER	0	0	0	0
OTHER STATUTORY BODIES	1	0	0	4

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Proposal

Listed building consent is sought for the installation of solar panels on the southern roof plane of the

former granary building of Moulton Mill. A manufactures specification has been submitted as part of the application and a Heritage Statement and BNG Exemption Statement.

A separate application seeking planning permission for the work has been submitted under application reference H13-0458-25 and is being considered concurrently.

Site Description

Moulton Mill is a Grade I listed building constructed in 1822, with a three storey former granary building attached dating from the early nineteenth century, with upper floors added in 1985. The Mill is also located within the Moulton Conservation Area.

The list description of the building reads:

MOULTON HIGH STREET

TF 32 SW (east side)

9/105 Windmill (formerly listed 7.2.67 with buildings at 20.10.87 entrance to road)

G.V. I

Tower mill. c.1822, by Robert King, 1895, 1928. Brown brick. Corrugated iron shallow pointed roof of 1928, with finial, and dentillated brick eaves. 8 storeys plus basement, a total of 80 feet in height to the curb. 18 feet, 9 inches in diameter at ground level; 12 feet in diameter at curb. 3 round basement openings, one each to the south-east, south-west and north-west. To the north is a large drive wheel, part of steam engine gearing inserted after 1895 after the sails had been damaged by gales. West side with flanking flights of 8 stone steps on each side that lead up to doorway with cambered head and panelled door. 7 glazing bar casements, one above the other, above; that on the third floor inserted into blocked doorway that originally gave access to reefing stage. North and south sides each with 8 glazing bar casements, one above the other above. East side with a 2 storey granary attached masking the lower 3 storeys, the ground floor of early C19 and rendered, the upper floors of 1895 and in red brick. Both storeys with pivotal glazing bar casements. 5 glazing bar casements rise one above the other, above the roof of the granary. All the windows with cambered heads. Almost all the internal machinery survives intact. The basement contains the engine drive gearing of c.1895 which originally powered the subsidiary shaft rising up to the great spur wheel. The first floor contains an electrically powered Turner Inkoos Mill, a Kibbler and a Hunt's roller mill. The second floor contains storage bins and the third, originally the spent floor with bridge trees and now missing the governor. 2 pairs of French stones remain in place on the fourth floor, one inscribed: 'WJ & T Child.Maker. Hull. 1853'. Pair of grey stones lean against wall. Spur wheel with iron nuts and morticed wooden cogs, iron hub and rib, with wooden radiating spokes. Small iron nut engages the subsidiary drive shaft. Fifth and sixth floors with bins intact. Upper two floors are empty. Above, the wallower with chamfered and stopped wooden shaft with upper iron section, and an exceptional wooden clasp arm bevel wheel with wooden cogs. Endless chain sack hoist formerly driven from a friction rim on the underside of the wheel. Hexagonal wooden curb frame built into the brickwork, with iron track, inward facing tooth ring and centring wheels running below. The wind shaft no longer exists but the tail bearing housing remains. This is the tallest windmill in the country (not including the tallest complete windmill, including the cap, at Sutton in Norfolk). Source: Dolman, p.23. Buildings at entrance to road now demolished.

Listing NGR: TF3075524035

History

No recent or relevant site history.

Consultation Responses

Responses Received (consultation period between 17th June 2025-8th July 2025)

Moulton Parish Council

No response received.

Historic England

Concern 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.

Suggest consideration is given 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.

The Georgian Group

Strongly recommend that the present application is withdrawn and that other less intrusive locations for solar panels are explored such as ground mounted solar collectors. Further advise the extent of the array proposed will also need to be carefully justified against its impact on the setting of the grade I listed building.

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

Consider that the proposal of fitting photovoltaic panels on the roof would negatively alter the appearance of the Grade I listed mill.

The Victorian Society

Recommends the application is refused.

Historic Buildings and Places

Advise If roof mounted panels are pursued, very strong justification is needed for alterations to a grade I listed building. An energy needs analysis should be provided that identifies the typical energy use on the site and the minimum number of panels needed to satisfy this use. It is considered there is no evidence to suggest the extent of panels proposed is needed to meet that demand (or indeed if it is enough) and potentially a more discrete row of panel may be suitable.

Public Representation

The application has been advertised in accordance with the Development Management Procedure Order and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. In this instance, no letters of representation have been received.

Planning Considerations

The main issues and considerations in this instance are:

Heritage Considerations

Evaluation

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.

In this case, the adopted South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036, adopted March 2019, forms 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 (updated December 2024) are also a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, alongside adopted Supplementary Planning Documents.

Furthermore, where a Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted, this alongside the adopted Local Plan, forms part of the Development Plan for the District, and must be considered when assessing development proposals. In this instance, no relevant neighbourhood plans have been adopted.

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 concerns whether to grant listed building consent for development which affects a listed building or its setting and requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special or architectural interest which it possesses.

Heritage Considerations

The effect of the proposal on the special interest, including the setting of the listed building.

The Framework, at paragraph 202, advises heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Further stating, at paragraph 212, "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."

Policy 29 of the SELLP advises that to respect the historic legacy, varied character and appearance of South East Lincolnshire's historic environment, development proposals are required to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of designated and non-designated heritage assets.

Policy 29(A1) states:

Proposals to change the use of a listed building or alter or extend such a building will be granted where the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the proposal is in the interests of the building's preservation and does not involve activities or alterations prejudicial to the special architectural interest or its setting.

Moulton Mill is a Grade I listed building, is located within the Moulton Conservation Area, its significance lies in its architectural and historic interest. The proposal seeks listed building consent for the installation of solar panels on the south elevation of the former granary building, attached to the east of the windmill. Although the roof covering of the building is not original fabric, the existing metal covering is simple in form and does not detract from nor compete with the sublimity of the Windmill. In contrast, it is considered that the proposed solar panels, covering almost the entire roof slope, would have a stark and incongruous appearance which would harm the architectural and historic character of the Grade I listed building.

Paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) states that where a proposed development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

The applicant considers that due to the subtle nature of the works, the fact that they are minimal and do not affect important historic fabric and generally can be reversed the harm caused to the significance of the listed building would be less than substantial.

It is acknowledged that the installation of solar panels would give rise to benefits in terms of renewable energy, and whilst no evidence has been presented on the contribution these would make to operational costs of the building or if such an extensive area of panels is needed to meet the energy requirements of the site, the installation of the panels are nonetheless a public benefit in accordance with paragraph 167 of the Framework. However, this benefit is considered modest and does not outweigh the significant harm to the listed building.

The proposal is therefore contrary to the requirements of Section 66(1) of the Act and provisions within the Framework which seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment. The proposal is also contrary to Policies 29 and 31 of the SELLP as there would be harm to the heritage asset including its setting, nor is the local planning authority satisfied that the proposal does not involve alterations prejudicial to the special architectural interest and setting of the listed building.

Planning Balance

As detailed above, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2024, as amended, requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The proposal involves the installation of solar panels, a source of renewable energy which is also considered a public benefit, to which moderate weight is attached. However, the solar panels would create a stark and incongruous addition to the southern roof slope, which, when viewed in the context of historic character of the Grade I listed building such installation would adversely affect the architectural and historic character of Moulton Mill, to which significant weight is attached.

The proposal is contrary to the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019, and the provisions of the

National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024 when viewed as a whole. In this instance there are no material considerations that weigh in favour of the proposal and as such the planning balance is against the development.

Conclusion

Taking the above considerations into account, the proposal is considered to be contrary to policies 29 and 31 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019), along with the identified sections contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). There are no significant factors in this case that indicate in favour of the proposal and outweigh the consideration against the proposal and the policies referred to above.

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.

Recommendation

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