Online Comment

Application	H14-1172-17
Location	The Bell Inn 33 Church Street Pinchbeck PE11 3UB
Proposal	Demolition of existing building; creation of new single-storey A1 retail unit, with associated car park and rear yard area (with fencing); creation of new access road into site, with turning area for delivery vehicles; removal of trees

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Date Submitted	21-02-18
For/Against	Comments

Many thanks for forwarding the Heritage Statement to me, sadly it is wholly inadequate. It neither assesses the impact of the demolition of the historic Bell Inn or the proposed new development on the Pinchbeck Conservation Area or a range of nearby Listed Buildings, and therefore is not in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (section 12, para 128):

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting- As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary."

Firstly the statement wrongly identifies the building as being located in the Spalding Conservation Area, and then goes on to quote at length from Spalding's conservation area appraisal, without mention to the character or significance of the Pinchbeck Conservation Area in which the proposed development would take place. Setting aside that this document relies heavily on the wrong conservation area, it regurgitates the Spalding conservation area appraisal without regard to any site specific interpretation, which if the authors had considered this they may have realised their error.

The description of the Bell Inn itself is inaccurate, dating the building to 1888 on the basis of the first ordnance survey map of the area. As outlined in my earlier comments the inn is recorded at least a century earlier in 1784, and the present building appears to date from this period. No justification is given as to how the conclusion was reached that the building makes "little overall contribution" (pg 7) to the conservation area.

The statement then goes on to list nearby Listed Buildings without considering the contribution the Bell Inn makes to their setting, or how the proposed development will impact their significance. By treating them in isolation there is no consideration of their value as a group, together with non-designated heritage assets fronting what is the principle street within the conservation area.

Paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that in addition to assessing the impacts to any above ground heritage assets below ground heritage assets should also be assessed, and it continues to say "As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise". The archaeological section of this report is no more than a short paragraph that appears to have been copied from the summary of a single nearby excavation on Heritage Gateway. The Heritage Gateway while being a very useful resource is not the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record, which clearly has not been consulted and the resulting information has not been assessed by someone with appropriate expertise.

Therefore, the applicant has provided insufficient detail in order for a reliable observation regarding the impact of this development upon designated and undesignated heritage assets. I recommend that further information is required from the applicant in the form of a heritage impact assessment. This should follow the good practice advice produced by Historic England in their guidance note 'The Setting of Heritage Assets', utilising its methodical 5-stage approach to assessing the impact on setting and views.