Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)

Property: The Sessions House, Sheep Market, Spalding, PE11 1BB **Applicant:** Andrew Blach **Proposal:** Change of use of ground-floor rear cell block from residential (C3) to Cafe and Bar (Use Class E(b)). **Date:** January 2026

1. Introduction

This Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared to support a planning application for a Change of Use at The Sessions House. The site is located within Spalding, an area identified by the Environment Agency as being within **Flood Zone 3** (high probability of flooding).

2. Nature of the Proposal

The application seeks a change of use for approximately 73 sqm of internal ground-floor space within an existing Grade II listed building.

- **No Structural Alterations:** The proposal involves zero structural changes, no extensions, and no ground-disturbing works.
- **Furniture-Only Model:** The new use is facilitated exclusively through the introduction of freestanding, non-fixed furniture.

3. Vulnerability Classification

Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification:

- **Current Use (Residential):** Classified as **'More Vulnerable'**.
- **Proposed Use (Cafe/Bar):** Classified as **'Less Vulnerable'**.

The proposal represents a **net reduction in flood risk vulnerability** for this section of the building, as the residential occupancy is replaced by a commercial use.

4. Flood Risk Mitigation Measures

Given the historic nature of the Grade II listed building and the non-invasive strategy of the project, the following mitigation measures are in place:

- **Floor Levels:** The internal floor levels of the 1843 cell block remain unchanged. These levels have a historically proven resilience within the local landscape.
- **Surface Water Drainage:** There are no changes to the existing external drainage or impermeable surfaces. Surface water will continue to be disposed of via the established main sewer connection.
- **Flood Warning & Evacuation:** The management of The Sessions House is registered with the Environment Agency's Flood Warning Service. In the event of a flood warning, the commercial premises can be evacuated quickly, and since there is no residential sleeping accommodation in the application area, the risk to life is significantly minimized compared to the existing use.

- **Reversibility:** As no permanent fixtures are being installed, the site can be cleared quickly if necessary, and no historic fabric is at risk of damage from new installations.

5. Conclusion

The proposal complies with the sequential test requirements for a Change of Use. It does not increase the flood risk elsewhere, utilizes existing resilient infrastructure, and transitions the site to a 'Less Vulnerable' classification.

Prepared by: Andrew Blach