

Online Comment

Application H16-0423-18
Location 11 Tower Lane Spalding PE11 2RG
Proposal Replacement dwelling following permission for demolition of existing dwelling

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Date Submitted 06-07-18
For/Against Comments

The proposed development involves two distinct elements, the demolition of the surviving storey of the Grade II Listed No. 11 Tower Lane, and the construction of a new dwelling situated in the Spalding Conservation Area and within the setting of a number of nearby surviving Listed buildings.

The first element of the work already has permission (H16-1026-17) so needs no further consideration, except in terms of the manner in which it is carried out. This office has concerns around the lack of detail regarding the demolition methodology, in particular how the Grade II Listed garden wall of Tower House will be preserved during work. Only passing reference is made to this in the application, and it would not be acceptable for another designated heritage asset to be damaged during demolition even if it is later "repaired and reinstated" as noted in the Design & Access Statement. It is recommended that the applicant be required to submit a demolition methodology to be agreed with the local planning authority, and a condition be added to ensure that the Listed wall is protected.

The second element is a separate issue to be considered on its own merits. The supporting documents do not include a coherent written design ethos for the new building, which SHDC has made an essential requirement in the conservation area in order to ensure high quality design (Spalding Conservation Area Appraisal, pg 20-21).

This resulting proposals for new building mixes incongruous elements from different architectural periods and styles without coherence or respect to its sensitive historic surroundings; loosely resembling a converted historic agricultural building with a double height glazed barn door, mock tie-bars mimicking old repairs, modern proportioned windows and lack of detailing, with the iron railings and front garden of a polite Georgian town house. The size of the proposed building also exceeds the footprint of the original house creating a heavy block-like appearance, which is out of keeping with surrounding buildings that have varied roof lines and/or greater visual interest in their facades. Given this, the proposed development would harm the setting of nearby Listed buildings and the surrounding conservation area.

Whilst a replica of the fire-damaged Georgian house might not be desirable, any redevelopment here must enhance the conservation area. This could be as an exemplar of modern design inspired by and sensitive to its surroundings, or in the form of a historic coach house and outbuildings designed with an accurate understanding of the architectural character and detailing of surviving local examples.

Given the site's location close to the site of the long demolished 16th century Star Inn and a number of grand early Georgian houses, the redevelopment of this site has the potential to reveal archaeological evidence for the history of this part of the town's riverside.

Therefore given this it is recommended that the developer should be required to commission a Scheme of Archaeological Works (on the lines of 4.8.1 in the Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook) This should be secured by South Holland District Council's standard conditions AR01, 02 and 03.

"They [The local planning authority] should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part)" - National Planning Policy Framework section 12, paragraph 141.

Initially I envisage that this would involve monitoring of all groundwork's including the grubbing out of previous foundations, with the ability to stop and fully record archaeological features.