



Mr Greg Watkinson
Planning Department
South Holland District Council
Via email

24 July 2025

planningadvice@sholland.gov.uk

Dear Mr Watkinson

RE: H16-0767-23 | The Former Bull and Monkey Public House, Church Gate, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 2RA (Conservation Area, C20th

Thank you for consulting the Victorian Society on this application. Having considered the proposal carefully, we **object** to these plans in their current form.

The Spalding Conservation Area is defined by ‘*fine Georgian terraces and detached houses*’, as well as the highly significant Ayscoughfee Hall (Grade I), a war memorial by Lutyens (Grade I) and the Parish Church of St Mary and St Nicholas (Grade I). The South side of Welland is of particular interest to this application, being the location of the proposed development, but also the Parish Church and Ayscoughfee Hall.

The Parish Church of St Mary and St Nicholas has Mediaeval origins, but also shares a significant and interesting C19th heritage, being adapted by the renowned *Sir George Gilbert Scott* in 1865-7. *Gilbert Scott* is synonymous with the Gothic Revival movement of the C19th and his work on churches and cathedrals can be found all over Britain and parts of Europe. In particular to this restoration is the perpendicular hammerbeam roof with angels, which the Historic England listed specifically as being restored by *Gilbert Scott*. For this restoration work and connections to *Gilbert Scott*, as well as its Mediaeval routes, that this church is listed as Grade I, recognising its exceptional significance and special interest.

Ayscoughfee Hall neighbour's the proposed site, and is also of exceptional significance and special interest, being listed at Grade I. With origins dating to the C15th-C16th, Ayscoughfee was expanded in the C19th. Crucially, in 1902 it was developed into a public museum and park in celebration of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. It has remained a public museum since passing through to South Holland District Council in 1974, having been restored in 1987.

**Campaigning for
Victorian & Edwardian
Built Heritage**

The Victorian Society

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Ayscoughfee is a Classical building which displays its provenance to the early-mid C19th, with a strong brick principal façade and large sash windows.

The former Bull and Monkey Public House is a C20th building, which is currently disused. While the Society does not have any particular concerns regarding its demolition, the proposed replacement is not a sympathetic response to the conservation area and will have a detrimental and harmful impact to the setting of listed buildings.

Massing

The proposed building has been designed in such a way as to attempt to minimise the architectural impacts on the wider setting. While this is mostly successful, the height of the proposed would harm the views to and from the two Grade I listed buildings and a Grade I listed structure. This would be due to the blocking of the view of the spire of St Mary and St Nicholas Church from the riverfront, the impact of the view when looking from Ayscoughfee Hall and gardens (as well as the war memorial located in them). This is chiefly due to the height of the building, which is out of keeping for the low-level streetscape immediately surrounding the proposed development site.

If the scheme were to be lowered by a floor, allowing the spire of the parish church to be seen, and a less obtrusive view from the museum gardens, the Society may find this proposal less detrimental. We understand that efforts have been made to lessen the impact of the building architecturally, and while these are partially successful, the height of the proposed poses a threat the conservation area as existing.

Archway

The proposed archway provides essential access to the proposed care home but is incongruous with the largely Classical style of the conservation area. While arches are a common theme in Classical architecture and large Classical residential and town buildings (York Mansion House, for example), the proposed arch lacks crucial detail and masonry that is common with these features. We assume that the aim was not to draw attention to the arch, but in such a prominent position on the river front, it seems too self-apologetic. If the arch can't be moved elsewhere to a less prominent elevation, then our advice would be to make it a feature that contributes to the conservation area rather than detracts.

Windows

The windows of the property could be more sympathetic to the wider context, perhaps by incorporating the wider area's C18th and C19th heritage and using sash windows. These would

make the proposed building blend in much more with the setting. This, in turn, would mean a minimised impact on the listed buildings in the conservation area.

In conclusion, the Society object to these plans. The harm posed by the building to the setting of three Grade I listed buildings/structures, as well as the conservation area as a whole is unacceptable. The need for care homes is recognised by the Society, as is the efforts to use a sympathetic architectural language, however the massing of the building is still too great when considered against the wider streetscape. The National Planning Policy Framework is very clear on the need for preserving and enhancing conservation areas and the role of setting in sustaining and curating a listed building's significance.

The Society strongly urges your Authority to refuse this. I would be grateful if you could inform the Victorian Society of your decision in due course.

Yours sincerely

Thomas Ollivier
Northern Conservation Adviser