



Historic England

Mr Oscar Patman  
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Direct Dial: 07823608338

Our ref: L01598902

22 October 2025

Dear Mr Patman

**Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2021  
& T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015  
& Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**65 HOLBEACH ROAD, SPALDING  
Application Nos H16-0882-25 & H16-0881-25**

Thank you for your letters of 2 October 2025 regarding the above applications for listed building consent and planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the applications.

### Summary

Historic England has concerns with the application which would cause harm to the significance of the former vicarage and the Church of St Paul due to impact on their setting. The application has further potential to cause harm due to the limited information available at present.

### Historic England Advice

#### Significance

The former vicarage to the Church of St Paul was built between 1877-1879. It was designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott, one of the most prominent architects of the nineteenth century, along with the church (and attached schoolroom) which were built at the same time.

The former vicarage is a finely detailed red brick Victorian building of high architectural quality. It is listed Grade II\* for its more than special historic and architectural interest - a category which just 5.8% of all listed buildings represent (of over 370,000 total).



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The Church of St Paul (with attached schoolroom) which the former vicarage served is a grand, impressive, ornately detailed church listed Grade I for its exceptional historic and architectural interest - a category which just 2.5% of all listed buildings represent (of over 370,000 total).

The historic and ongoing connection between the former vicarage and church, designed and built as part of the same project, is integral to their character and significance. Adding to the significance of this group of buildings is the fact that it was the last project designed by Scott before he died in 1878, after which the project was completed by his son, John Oldrin Scott. The setting of this group of buildings contributes considerably to their significance. The vicarage garden forms a vital part of the setting of the vicarage and church and contributes to the significance of both heritage assets

The former vicarage features an expansive front garden to the south. This adds to the grandeur of the vicarage and its commanding presence, emphasises its architectural interest, and contributes to its significance.

The church is located in very close proximity to the former vicarage (approximately just 10 metres to the east) within the vicarage garden. The positioning of the vicarage so close to the church was intentionally designed by Scott. The physical connection between the two heritage assets is uninterrupted - there appears to be no fence or other physical separation between them. This close spatial arrangement of the vicarage and church and the way in which they relate to each other emphasises how they were designed to be appreciated as one whole composition. This contributes to the impressive architectural effect and significance of the group of buildings.

## Impact

As part of the proposed conversion to use as a dental practice, the application seeks to build a new car parking area including the creation of ten spaces within the vicarage front (south) garden. We note the requirement for additional parking spaces to facilitate the change of use, however as outlined above, this is highly significant location and therefore any proposed development would need to be highly sensitive.

The proposed car parking spaces and associated alterations to the vicarage garden at the south would cause harm to the former vicarage and the Church of St Paul through eroding their historic setting. The car parking spaces would introduce hard landscaping to the setting of the vicarage and church and would create an incongruous visual intrusion to the historic character of this important group of George Gilbert Scott buildings.





The Heritage Statement notes that; *'the proposed parking will be largely hidden from the adjacent Grade I Listed Building [Church of St Paul] because of the mature landscaping within both curtilages'* however our concerns raised in this letter relate to views towards the designated heritage assets as a group. The Church of St Paul is appreciated within the context of the associated vicarage and its garden, to which the proposal would cause harm.

Furthermore, the Heritage Statement provided does not include a Statement of Significance, indicating that plans have been developed without a thorough understanding of the significance of heritage assets to be affected. Without an understanding of the significance of the heritage assets, the impact of proposed work cannot be adequately assessed, nor appropriate mitigation designed in as necessary. The importance of the grouping, relationship and setting of the buildings does not appear to have been considered proportionately to their significance.

## Policy

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. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. (NPPF 207)

Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. (NPPF 208)

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. (NPPF 213)

Where a development proposal will 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 including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. (NFFP 215)





## Recommendation

Historic England has concerns regarding the applications on heritage grounds. We consider that the issues and safeguards outlined in our advice need to be addressed in order for the applications to meet the requirements of paragraphs 207, 208, 213, 215 of the NPPF.

We recommend that plans are amended to omit the proposed car parking spaces to the south of the vicarage. Historical research should be undertaken to understand the significance and historical evolution of the proposed development area, to then inform design. An options assessment outlining all options considered would also be useful.

In determining these applications you should bear in mind the statutory duty of sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Your authority should take these representations into account and seek amendments, safeguards or further information as set out in our advice. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us.

Yours sincerely

I. Hartley

### **Isobel Hartley**

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