

DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No: H16-0882-25 **Applicant:** Robert Doughty
Consultancy Limited

Proposal: Change of use from a single dwelling to dental surgery including alterations, additional gravel parking, improvements to existing access and plant shed

Location: 65 Holbeach Road Spalding

Terminal Date: 20th November 2025

Planning Policies

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan - Adopted: March 2019

02 Development Management
03 Design of New Development
29 The Historic Environment

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework December 2024

Section 12 - Achieving well designed places
Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Representations:

	Object	Support	No Obj.	Comments
WARD MEMBER	0	0	0	0
SPALDING & DISTRICT CIVIC SOCIETY	0	1	0	0
SHDC INTERNAL	0	0	0	2
OTHER STATUTORY BODIES	0	0	0	2
RESIDENTS	0	1	0	0

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Description of Proposal

This is a listed building consent application seeking consent for works and alterations to 65 Holbeach Road to allow for the change of use from a residential dwelling (Class C3) to a dental surgery (Class E).

This listed building consent application has been accompanied by a Full planning application.

The existing access shall be widened to a width of 4.1m. New 1.2m high, five-bar gates would be installed, set back 5m from the highway. Additional parking places will be provided in the grounds. This will be done using a geocellular confinement system with a grass finish, intended to be reversible. 21 spaces total will be provided, with this representing a 16-space increase.

A detached, wooden plant room would be installed to the rear of the site, towards the boundary with St Paul's Church. This would measure 2.2m by 1.5m, with a height of 2m. The room would store the power equipment needed for the dental apparatus. Pipe work will run from the plant room across to a section of 40mm removable pipework mounted on the exterior of the building. Primarily this will then enter the building through the floors. Minor punctures into walls would be required to facilitate this.

Continuing with external alterations, and existing door within the north elevation would be replaced with a wooden painted door. No precise details of the door have been provided. An existing "up and over" metal garage door, contained within a later addition to the property, would be removed, and the space bricked up with materials to match the host. A removable access ramp would be added to the front access, joining from the north of the entryway. Brass plaques are proposed on either side of the entrance.

Internally a stud wall is proposed within the existing kitchen to create a dental surgery and corridor. This stud wall would be removeable. An additional door to an existing downstairs WC would be re-hung so that it opens outwards. Studwork would be installed in the first-floor bathroom to provide better welfare facilities for staff.

The flooring for the dental surgeries (2 at ground floor and 2 at first floor) would be laid on top of the existing wooden floorboards. On the ground floor, these would be ventilated via existing air bricks. Only part of the floor boards would be covered as to retain some of the original character. This would be removeable.

Site Description

The site is within the settlement boundaries of Spalding, as outlined within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019. The site is located towards the north-east of the settlement, within the Fulney area. Holbeach Road bridge, over the Coronation Chancel, is located approximately 100m east of the site. The recreation ground lies opposite. Three protected trees stand within the south eastern corner.

65 Holbeach Road is a Grade II* listed, former vicarage associated with the Grade I listed Church of St Paul to the immediate east. Both were designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1877 and read as a trio alongside the schoolroom associated with the church. It is a red brick dwelling, with brick and stone dressing. It features a plain tile roof with coped gables and stone finials and ornamental brick stacks with linked and moulded octagonal flues. The building retains many original features, such as the banisters.

Relevant History

H16-0402-11 - Full - Erection of boundary fence - Approved 19/08/11

H160919-12 - LB - Proposed boiler and flue within garage and new bathroom on second floor (retrospective) - Approved 11/01/13

H16-0881-25 - Full - Change of use from a single dwelling to dental surgery including alterations, additional gravel parking, improvements to existing access and plant shed - Ongoing

Consultation Responses

The responses received from consultees during the initial consultation exercises, which can be viewed in their entirety through the South Holland website, can be summarised as follows:

Spalding and District Civic Society

Support - "The property has been un occupied for a considerable amount of time, (presumably the former Vicarage) and it is considered that the proposed use, which retains the external facade, apart from the building up of the garage door is a viable use and much needed in the town. Care should be taken when building up the garage door opening to make sure that reclaimed bricks are used of a similar size and colour to the existing. Perhaps a narrow hedge could be introduced to lessen the impact. Holbeach Road is very busy and it is felt that cars should leave the site in forward gear. Consideration should be given to remove the first parking spaces behind the gate to enable vehicles to maneuver"

Historic Environment Officer

"Thank you for consulting us on this. Having reviewed the application documents and the updated available Historic Environment information for this application, the proposal is unlikely to have an impact on significant archaeological remains. Consequently, no further archaeological input is necessary for this application. It is not necessary to consult us on this application again, unless there are material changes to the proposals. However, if you would like advice from us, please contact us to explain your request. Finally, considering the proposal is for a Grade II* Listed building, Historic England and the SHDC Conservation officer must be consulted before a decision is made (direct and setting impact"

Conservation Officer

Initial comments, dated 23/10/25

"I write to confirm that I have no objections on built heritage conservation grounds to this proposal. The proposed conversion of this site to use as a dental surgery seeks only extremely minor internal alterations, inclusive of a small amount of additional subdivision of ground floor rooms and 1st floor bathroom using reversible stud walling, the routing of new utilities (namely air, drainage and hot water) from external plant to further rooms, which requires only minor incision into walls, and is proposed as fully reversible.

Exterior alterations include the bricking up of existing garage door opening, the erection of a small plant room lean-to in timber on the rear elevation, as well as the reformatting of the driveway and a portion of the front garden for use as a car park for customers.

None of the proposed alterations risk undue or unjustified harm to the special interest in the listed building. The proposed new subdivisions internally should not remove readability of the original layout and are quite minor in scale, as well as being easily reversible. The proposed utility works bear a negligible impact upon the asset.

Regarding external works; the most major shall be the bricking up of the garage door. There is no value inherent to this portion of the building being used as a garage, and the extant doors appear to be a mid-late C20th affectation. The proposed lean-to is quite modest and features only to rear and lesser elevations. Alterations to the driveway are relatively minor, and do not strip character from the garden setting of the site.

Less than Substantial Harm could be said to be identified in the subdivision of the internal layout and in the erection of the modern timber lean-to. However, I would suggest that the applicants justification for this is clear and convincing in claiming that these works are important to the use of this site as a dental surgery, which would be securing an optimum use for this site, presently unused.

I am therefore satisfied that this application may be approved subject to conditions which require brickwork and mortar to match the existing, and which requires the removal of the proposed timber lean-to and making-good of associated surfaces should the site cease operation as a dental surgery, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA."

Further comments, dated 18/11/25

"The latest amendment does not alter my views, and lack of objections to this proposal. The proposed amendments to the front garden space, providing more planting and greenspace should be seen as a betterment to the scheme. Historic England is correct in identifying that there would be some less than substantial harm, in particular associated with the internal alterations and the parking in the front yard. However, I hold that the minimal quantity of less than substantial harm is indeed outweighed by the proposed viable use of this site. "

Historic England

Initial Comments - Dated 22/10/25

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 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.

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".

Revised Comments - Dated 11/11/25

Historic England thanks the applicant for their engagement with our previous comments. We are appreciative of the additional information and views provided, along with the amended scheme.

We consider that the proposed scheme would still cause some harm to the significance of the assets identified in our previous comments, although this would be less harmful than the original scheme.

We refer you to the expertise of your Conservation Officer going forward.

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."

Public Representations

This application has been advertised in accordance with the Development Procedure Order and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. In this instance, two letters of representation have been received, both from the same party.

These can be summarised as:

Support:

- The proposal would celebrate the original features.
- Change of use is essential.
- Broad economic, cultural and architectural benefits.
- Highlights error in Historic England's comments - clarifying that there is a boundary treatment between the church and former vicarage.

Key Planning Considerations

Evaluation

Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

The adopted South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036, adopted March 2019 (SELLP), is the development plan for the district, and is the basis for decision making in South Holland. The relevant development plan policies are detailed within the report above.

The policies and provisions set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, 2024 (NPPF) are also a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, alongside adopted Supplementary Planning Documents.

Heritage and Conservation

Policy Context - Heritage and Conservation

The application site, 65 Holbeach Road, is a Grade II* listed building and forms a former vicarage, associated with the Grade I listed Church of St Paul, which lies to the immediate east.

Both assets were designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1877 and read as a trio alongside the schoolroom, which itself is also associated with the church. The application site is a red brick dwelling, with brick and stone dressing. It features a plain tile roof with coped gables and stone finials and ornamental brick stacks with linked and moulded octagonal flues. The building retains many original features, such as the banisters.

The former vicarage is considered by Historic England as being "a finely detailed red brick Victorian building of high architectural quality". It should be noted that Grade II* listed buildings are particularly important buildings of 'more than special historic and architectural interest', and the category of grade II* listings, equates to just 5.8% of all listed buildings.

Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Policy 29 of the SELLP, alongside Section 16 of the NPPF, relates to the preservation of the historic environment. Both outline that all applications within the Conservation Area or which effect heritage assets, such as listed buildings, should preserve or enhance these assets.

The NPPF expresses the importance of considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets; advising that development and alterations to designated assets and their settings can cause harm. These policies ensure the protection and enhancement of the historic buildings and environments. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance should be treated favourably.

Section 16 of the NPPF states that "When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's

conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance".

Paragraph 213 of the NPPF outlines that "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." In other words, should a proposal result in harm to an asset, this should be weighed against the public benefits arising from the proposal.

Paragraph 214 expands upon this, relating to substantial harm, detailing that "where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss". Paragraph 215 states that "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."

The above assessment of harm should be informed by the submission of an appropriate Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA). On this point, Paragraph 207 of the NPPF outlines that 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".

Policy 29 of the SELLP outlines that all proposals shall conserve and enhance the character and appearance of designated heritage assets. Section A of Policy 29 outlines criteria which applications relating to listed buildings should conform to. These are as follows:

- "1. Proposals to change the use of a Listed Building or to alter or extend such a building will be granted where the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the proposal is in the interest of the building's preservation and does not involve activities or alterations prejudicial to the special architectural or historic interest of the Listed Building or its setting.
2. Proposals involving the demolition of Listed Buildings will not be permitted, unless in an exceptional case, or wholly exceptional case (depending on their grade) where a clear and convincing justification is made in line with national policy
3. Proposals that affect the setting of a Listed Building will be supported where they preserve or better reveal the significance of the Listed Building."

Assessment

The historic connection between the former vicarage and church, designed and built as part of the same project, is integral to their character and significance. It is also considered that the "setting of this group of buildings contributes considerably to their significance".

The proposed change from a dwelling to a dentist surgery would, to some extent, alter the character of the property. It would consolidate a severance of any functional relationship to the Church of St Paul, in respect of the use of the site. However, said severance has occurred previously, to some degree, through the change in ownership from vicarage to private domicile; albeit, the proposed change of use to a dental surgery would increase the sense of severance in this regard and would introduce a level of harm. However, broadly dentists are not uncommon in primarily residential areas, and would not fundamentally clash with the character of this section of Holbeach Road.

In terms of the impact that these works would have to the significance of the building from a heritage perspective, it is considered that the impact when taken as a whole, would amount to less than substantial harm.

It is intended that all works would be reversible, and within the less integral aspects of the asset, such as comprising works to more modern elements of the asset. The alterations would not create undue harm to the historic or architectural interest of the asset. That being said, fundamentally there would be a degree of harm generated due to the introduction of non-traditional features.

The interior alterations, again are intended as to ensure that all works would be reversible. As expressed by SHDC's Conservation Officer, "the proposed conversion of this site to use as a dental surgery seeks only extremely minor internal alterations". This would reduce the long term impact upon the character or significance of the building. Where floor boards are intended to be entirely covered, air bricks would be installed to reduce the potential to damage these features. On the first floor, floors are already carpeted, so there has already been a degree of loss of original features which would not be exacerbated by this proposal.

SHDC's Conservation Officer has highlighted that "None of the proposed alterations risk undue or unjustified harm to the special interest in the listed building. The proposed new subdivisions internally should not remove readability of the original layout and are quite minor in scale, as well as being easily reversible. The proposed utility works bear a negligible impact upon the asset".

The proposed exterior alterations would have only a minor character impact upon the wider area. Alterations are primarily located away from the public realm, reducing their impact. The shed, piping and parking would not fundamentally alter the character of the area or building itself.

SHDC's Conservation Officer has expressed that "the most major shall be the bricking up of the garage door", with it being viewed that there is no value inherent to this portion of the building being used as a garage, and the extant doors appear to be a mid-late C20th affectation. It was also commented that "the proposed lean-to is quite modest and features only to rear and lesser elevations. Alterations to the driveway are relatively minor, and do not strip character from the garden setting of the site".

On balance, it is considered that the proposal would create less than substantial harm to the listed building, when the works are taken as a whole, considering the further severance of the two units in respect of their use, the subdivision of the internal layout and in the erection of the modern timber lean-to. As outlined previously, Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that where less than substantial harm is identified, "this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use".

The benefits of the proposal are discussed in greater length in the accompanying Full application (H16-0881-25). However, in short, the proposal offers a notable benefit through its introduction of a purposeful use, offering an optimum viable use for the building. Furthermore, the resultant use would offer a public health care service, through introducing a dental surgery to the area. As such, when considering the notable public benefits of the scheme, on balance, it is considered that the benefits outweigh this less than substantial harm.

Moreover, as briefly referred to above, the proposal can be considered as the optimum viable use for the property. The dwelling has been unoccupied for a relatively significant period of time, and so the proposal represents an opportunity for the continued use of the property, resulting in appropriate maintenance etc occurring.

Taking the above into account, the proposal is considered to be acceptable. Whilst less than substantial harm is identified to the significance of the asset, it is considered that there is an outweighing public benefit and as such, the proposal would therefore be in accordance with Policy 29 of the SELLP and Section 12 and 16 of the NPPF, in addition to the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Additional Considerations

Public Sector Equality Duty

In making this decision the Authority must have regard to the public sector equality duty (PSED) under s.149 of the Equalities Act. This means that the Council must have due regard to the need (in discharging its functions) to:

A. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act

B. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This may include removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; taking steps to meet the special needs of those with a protected characteristic; encouraging participation in public life (or other areas where they are underrepresented) of people with a protected characteristic(s).

C. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The PSED must be considered as a relevant factor in making this decision but does not impose a duty to achieve the outcomes in s.149. It is only one factor that needs to be considered, and may be balanced against other relevant factors.

It is not considered that the recommendation in this case will have a disproportionately adverse impact on a protected characteristic.

Human Rights

In making a decision, the Authority should be aware of and take into account any implications that may arise from the Human Rights Act 1998. Under the Act, it is unlawful for a public authority such as South Holland District Council to act in a manner that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. The Authority is referred specifically to Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property).

It is not considered that the recommendation in this case interferes with local residents' right to respect for their private and family life, home and correspondence, except insofar as it is necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others (in this case, the rights of the applicant). The Council is also permitted to control the use of property in accordance with the general public interest and the recommendation is considered to be a proportionate response to the submitted application based on the considerations set out in this report.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the listed building, when the works are taken as a whole, considering the further severance of the two units in respect of their use, the subdivision of the internal layout and in the erection of the modern timber lean-to.

In this regard, as outlined previously, Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that where less than substantial harm is identified, "this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use".

The proposal offers a notable benefit through its introduction of a purposeful use, offering an optimum viable use for the building. Furthermore, the resultant use would offer a public health care service, through introducing a dental surgery to the area. As such, when considering the notable public benefits of the scheme, on balance, it is considered that the benefits outweigh this less than substantial harm.

Notwithstanding the less than substantial harm identified, the benefits of the proposal, namely securing the viable use of the property and the provision of health care facility, are considered to provide an outweighing public benefit.

Taking these factors into consideration, the proposal is considered to comply with Policies 2, 3, 29 of the SELLP, as well as Sections 12 and 16 of the NPPF.

Recommendation

Based on the assessment detailed above, it is recommended that the proposal should be approved under Delegated Authority.