# AUSTIN JOHN LTD

## Planning Statement



Proposed Change of Use from B8 Storage and Distribution to Class E Photography Studio at The Bungalow, Camelgate, Spalding, PE12 6ES

Prepared for: Ms Sampson, Slice of Life Photography
Prepared by: Austin John Ltd, Rualen, Mill Green Road, Pinchbeck, Spalding PE11 3PU
On Behalf of: South Holland District Council
By Lauren Austin, August 2026

AUSTIN JOHN LTD

## Contents


1. Introduction
2. Site Context
3. Planning Policy Context
4. Principle of Development and Economic Benefits
5. Design and Visual Impact
6. Access, Parking, and Transport
7. Noise and Neighbouring Amenity
8. Waste Management
9. Flood Risk and Climate Resilience
10. Biodiversity Net Gain
11. Planning Balance
12. Conclusion

## 1.0 Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Slice of Life Photography Limited in support of a full planning application for the change of use of the bungalow-style commercial premises at The Bungalow, Camelgate, Spalding, from storage or distribution within Use Class B8 to a photography studio within Use Class E. The application also includes the installation of business signage, as shown on the submitted plans.

The proposed development would not involve any extension or material alteration to the footprint, scale, roof form, external appearance or fabric of the existing building. The proposal would make use of the established access, parking areas and internal layout. The application relates solely to the bungalow-style premises and would not alter the established use of the adjacent buildings forming part of the wider commercial site.

This document should be read in conjunction with the following drawings and supporting information:
- AJA/1418/26/00 - Existing Plans
- AJA/1418/26/01 - Proposed Plans
- Business Plan and Operational Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Town-Centre Sequential Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Biodiversity Net Gain Exemption Statement

## 2.0 Site Context

The application site is located at The Bungalow, Camelgate, Spalding, within an established commercial and industrial area.

The surrounding area is characterised by warehouses, storage and distribution premises, retail and leisure development, food outlets, commercial buildings, service areas, access

roads and parking. Springfields Outlet Shopping and Leisure is situated nearby and contributes to the mixed commercial character of the locality.

Historic plans associated with application H16-0246-04 identify a house and garage adjoining the commercial premises. The effects of the proposal upon neighbouring amenity have therefore been considered within this statement and the Design and Access Statement.

The application premises comprise an existing bungalow-style commercial building containing approximately 167 square metres of internal floorspace. The building has been vacant and unused by the current occupying company for approximately two years. It represents an opportunity to bring an existing commercial building back into active and beneficial use.

The premises are served by an existing vehicular access from Camelgate and approximately eight on-site parking spaces. The customer entrance is approached by an existing access ramp, with level circulation available throughout the building.

## 3.0 Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan principally comprises the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011–2036, adopted in March 2019. The August 2026 National Planning Policy Framework is an important material consideration.

The policies most relevant to the application include:

National Planning Policy Framework:

- E2 – Meeting the Need for Business Land and Premises;
- TC3 – Main Town-Centre Uses Outside Town Centres;

- TC4 – Assessing the Impact of Development on Town Centres;
- L2 – Making Effective Use of Land;
- DP3 – Key Principles for Well-Designed Places;
- TR3 – Locating Development in Sustainable Locations;
- TR4 – Street Design, Access and Parking;
- TR6 – Assessing Transport Impacts;
- P3 – Living Conditions and Pollution;
- F4 – Assessing Flood Risk for Decision-Making;
- F5 – The Sequential Test;
- F6 – Development in Areas at Risk of Flooding from Rivers or the Sea; and
- F7 – Ensuring Development is Safe from Flooding.

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan:

- Policy 1 – Spatial Strategy;
- Policy 2 – Development Management;
- Policy 3 – Design of New Development;
- Policy 4 – Approach to Flood Risk;
- Policy 7 – Improving South East Lincolnshire's Employment Land Portfolio;
- Policy 24 – Retail Hierarchy;
- Policy 25 – Supporting the Vitality and Viability of Boston and Spalding Town Centres;
- Policy 30 – Pollution;
- Policy 31 – Climate Change and Renewable and Low-Carbon Energy;

- Policy 33 – Delivering a More Sustainable Transport Network; and
- Policy 36 – Vehicle and Cycle Parking.

## 4.0 Principle of Development and Economic Benefits

Policy E2 of the NPPF requires substantial weight to be given to the economic benefits of commercial development which allows businesses to invest, expand or adapt. The proposal would enable an established local creative business to relocate from its existing premises in Whaplode to larger and more suitable accommodation. The proposed premises would provide the space, accessibility and secure storage required to support the continued operation and development of the business. The development would therefore provide a direct economic benefit by supporting local enterprise and retaining commercial activity within the district.

Policy L2 gives substantial weight to the benefits of making better use of vacant and underutilised buildings. The application premises have been vacant for approximately two years and would be brought back into productive use without demolition, extension or additional land take. The proposal would make efficient use of the embodied energy and materials contained within the existing building and avoid the environmental effects associated with constructing replacement commercial floorspace.

Spalding is identified as a Sub-Regional Centre under Policy 1 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan. The proposal would support its wider economic role by accommodating an established local business within an existing commercial area.

The proposal also accords with the general objectives of Policy 2 by providing a use appropriate to the established commercial context, making effective use of existing infrastructure and avoiding unacceptable effects upon neighbouring uses.

Policy 7 supports economic prosperity and the improvement of South East Lincolnshire's employment land and premises. Although the application would change the use of the building from B8 to Class E, it would remain in productive commercial and employment-

generating use. The building has been vacant for approximately two years, and the proposal would not displace an operational storage or distribution business. It would instead diversify the commercial activity undertaken at the site.

The proposal would affect only the bungalow-style premises. The wider site and adjoining commercial buildings would remain available for B8 operations. The development would not prejudice the continued functioning of the wider commercial site or materially reduce the district's supply of operational storage and distribution premises.

The principle of bringing the vacant premises back into active commercial use is therefore supported by national and local economic policies.

## 5.0 Design and Visual Impact

Policies DP3 of the NPPF and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan require development to respond appropriately to its context and provide functional, accessible and well-designed places.

The proposal would not alter the building's footprint, scale, roof form, windows, doors or external materials. Its established appearance and relationship with surrounding buildings would therefore remain unchanged. The photography studio would be compatible with the mixed industrial, retail, leisure and commercial character of the locality.

The existing internal layout would be adapted without material changes to the external fabric. The premises would provide a functional arrangement of studio space, customer reception, storage, staff facilities and emergency access.

Business signage would be provided as shown on the submitted plans. It would be modest in scale and appropriate to the established commercial setting. The existing signage posts at the vehicular entrance would be reused, avoiding the need for additional freestanding structures. Any separate advertisement consent required would be obtained before installation.

The proposal accords with Policies DP3 and 3.

## 6.0 Access, Parking, and Transport

Policies TR3, TR4 and TR6 of the NPPF and Policies 33 and 36 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan are relevant to access, sustainable transport, parking and highway effects.

The premises are served by an established access from Camelgate. No new or altered vehicular access is proposed. The site is accessible by foot, bicycle, public transport and private vehicle. Bus services operate between Spalding and stops serving Camelgate and Springfields. The customer entrance is approached by an existing ramp, and level circulation is available throughout the premises. This provides convenient access for people with limited mobility and customers attending with babies, young children, prams or photography equipment.

On-site parking spaces would be available. This is sufficient to accommodate the applicant's vehicle and the limited number of customer vehicles associated with the business. Customers would normally arrive in one vehicle per appointment, with two vehicles only occasionally. As appointments would be distributed throughout the day, no significant concentration of traffic or parking demand would arise. No overspill parking within Camelgate is anticipated.

No dedicated external cycle store currently serves the premises. However, a staff or customer bicycle could be stored securely within the building where required. Given the single initial member of staff and very limited number of customer visits, this represents a proportionate arrangement.

Deliveries would primarily comprise photography props, packaging and printed products. They would normally occur approximately once a week and would be undertaken by standard courier vehicles.

The proposed studio would be likely to generate fewer and less intensive vehicle movements than the lawful B8 use, which could involve staff journeys, delivery vans, servicing and larger commercial vehicles.

The development would not generate a significant amount of movement. A separate Transport Statement, Transport Assessment or Travel Plan would therefore be disproportionate. The Design and Access Statement and Business Plan and Operational Statement provide an appropriate assessment of transport effects.

The proposal would not have a severe adverse effect upon the highway network or an unacceptable effect upon highway safety. It accords with Policies TR3, TR4, TR6, 33 and 36.

## 7.0 Noise and Neighbouring Amenity

Policies P3 of the NPPF and 2 and 30 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan require development to be appropriate for its location and avoid unacceptable pollution, noise or adverse effects upon living conditions.

Historic plans identify a house and garage adjoining the commercial premises. The potential effect upon the amenity of this property has therefore been considered. Photography sessions would take place internally and would not involve industrial machinery, manufacturing, amplified entertainment, commercial extraction or other inherently noisy processes.

The principal operating hours would be 8:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Saturday. Occasional Sunday and evening appointments may be undertaken, but all customer visits would remain pre-booked and limited in number. Approximately two to four appointments would take place each day. Noise from conversations and customer arrivals and departures would be modest and consistent with the established commercial surroundings.

Pet photography may occasionally result in short periods of animal noise. Such activity would occur internally, during individual appointments, and would not result in sustained disturbance. No new windows, external customer areas or outdoor studio activities are proposed. The development would therefore not cause overlooking or loss of privacy. The limited frequency of courier deliveries would not generate unacceptable disturbance.

The proposal would not materially harm the amenity or living conditions of neighbouring occupiers and accords with Policies P3, 2 and 30.

## 8.0 Waste Management

The photography studio would generate only very small quantities of ordinary commercial waste, principally comprising paper, packaging and incidental operational materials. No specialist, hazardous or significant-volume waste streams are anticipated. Any waste generated would be stored securely and disposed of through an appropriately authorised commercial waste arrangement in accordance with the applicant's statutory duty-of-care obligations. No substantial external waste-storage compound would be required. The arrangements would not cause visual clutter, odour, noise or harm to neighbouring amenity.

## 9.0 Flood Risk and Climate Resilience

The site lies within Flood Zone 3. A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment accompanies the application in accordance with Policy F4 of the NPPF and Policy 4 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan. The proposal constitutes a change of use and is expressly exempt from the flood-risk Sequential Test under Policy F5(2)(c)(iii) of the August 2026 NPPF.

Policy 4 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan similarly confirms that the flood-risk Sequential Test is not required for ordinary changes of use. The existing B8 use and proposed commercial photography studio are considered to fall within the less-vulnerable classification. The proposal would therefore not introduce a more vulnerable use.

Policy F6 confirms that the Exception Test does not need to be applied where the development falls within one of the exemptions contained in Policy F5. Notwithstanding these exemptions, Policy F7 requires development to remain safe throughout its anticipated lifetime, manage residual risk and avoid increasing flood risk elsewhere.

The proposal would not increase the building footprint, create additional impermeable area, raise ground levels or reduce flood-storage capacity. It would therefore not increase flood risk elsewhere. Flood resilience, warning, emergency arrangements and safe access or refuge are considered within the submitted Flood Risk Assessment. The reuse of the existing building also accords with Policy 31 of the Local Plan by avoiding unnecessary construction, conserving embodied resources and ensuring that flood and climate risks are appropriately addressed.

## 10.0 Biodiversity Net Gain

The proposal relates to a change of use of an existing building and associated signage. It would not affect any on-site habitat or linear habitat feature. The development falls within the statutory small site exemption because it would not affect more than 25 square metres of habitat or more than five metres of linear habitat. A Biodiversity Net Gain Exemption Statement accompanies the application. No biodiversity metric is required.

## 11.0 Planning Balance

The proposal would deliver a number of clear planning benefits:

- Bringing a building which has been vacant for approximately two years back into active use
- Supporting the continued development of an established local business
- Retaining commercial and employment activity at the site
- Diversifying the local economy through a creative business
- Making effective use of existing land and premises
- Avoiding demolition, new construction and additional land take

- Providing accessible ground-floor premises
- Generating very limited customer and delivery movements
- Potentially reducing the intensity of vehicle movements compared with the lawful B8 use
- Avoiding material effects upon neighbouring amenity, highway safety, town-centre vitality and flood risk.

No material planning harm has been identified. The proposal would be compatible with the established commercial character of the locality and would make use of existing access, parking and infrastructure.

## 12.0 Conclusion

The proposed development would secure the productive reuse of an existing vacant commercial building and provide suitable premises for an established local photography business.

The photography studio would be modest in scale and operate strictly by prior appointment, typically accommodating approximately two to four sessions per day. It would not rely upon passing trade and would generate limited, predictable vehicle movements distributed throughout the working day. No extension or material external alteration is proposed. The established appearance of the building and its relationship with the wider commercial site would be retained.

The premises provide suitable internal space, secure storage, ramped access, level circulation and sufficient on-site parking. The use would be compatible with the surrounding commercial context and would not cause unacceptable noise, disturbance, highway effects or harm to neighbouring living conditions.

The development is supported by Policies E2 and L2 of the August 2026 NPPF and Policies 1 and 7 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, which support economic development

and the effective use of existing commercial buildings. The accompanying Town-Centre Sequential Assessment addresses Policy TC3 of the NPPF and Policies 24 and 25 of the Local Plan. The development would not materially affect the vitality or viability of Spalding town centre. The proposal also accords with Policies DP3, TR3, TR4, TR6, P3, F4, F5, F6 and F7 of the NPPF and Policies 2, 3, 4, 30, 31, 33 and 36 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.

The proposal represents sustainable economic development, and its benefits are not outweighed by any identified adverse effects. Accordingly, the proposed change of use and associated signage are acceptable in planning policy terms, and planning permission should be supported.