

DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No: H16-0996-25 **Applicant:** Managing Trustees of Broad Street

Proposal: Demolition of existing external store, erection of single storey extension with flat roof & alterations to roof over large north-west facing window to hall

Location: Broad Street Methodist Church Broad Street Spalding

Terminal Date: 10th December 2025

Planning Policies

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan - Adopted: March 2019

01	Spatial Strategy
02	Development Management
03	Design of New Development
28	The Natural Environment
29	The Historic Environment

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework December 2024

Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Representations:

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

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Description of Proposal

This is a full application for the demolition of an existing external store, erection of single storey extension with flat roof & alterations to roof over large north-west facing window to hall. The proposal would primarily impact upon the former Sunday School wing of the building.

An existing external store building would be demolished, with this small alleyway covered with a polymeric sheet flat roof. The roof would extend to cover the existing north facing window, with a roof light added to maintain natural light. This roof cover would be of timber and zinc construction. The same approach can be seen on the south facing windows of the same wing of the building. A new access to the roof is proposed.

In addition to the works listed above, internal alterations are also proposed. These include the complete removal and replacement of an existing set of stairs and the reconfiguration of the bathrooms. It should be noted that as this application falls as a planning application, within the control of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, which, under Section 55, explicitly excludes internal alterations, these elements have not been considered as part of this proposal.

It should be noted that as a Methodist church, the works benefit from an exemption for the need for Listed Building Consent under The Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (England) Order 2010. That being said, consent has been granted by the Connexional Conservation Officer under the procedure required of the Methodist Church.

Site Description

The site is within the settlement boundaries of Spalding, as outlined within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019. The site is comprised of a Grade II listed Methodist Church, which has seen several modern additions, including a new entry hall. The official Historic Description is as follows:

"Methodist church and attached Sunday school. 1887. By F Boreham. Red brick with ashlar dressings and Welsh slate roofs with decorative terracotta ridge tiles. Chamfered plinth. Church entrance front has a pair of ashlar doorways which project slightly from facade, both have pointed arch surrounds with moulded arches supported on pilasters with banding and stiff-leaf capitals, plus pairs of C20 glazed doors with quatrefoil overlights. Each doorway is topped by a decorated gable with carved angel kneelers and foliate finials. Behind these gables a band of blind pointed arches continues in brick across the whole facade, and either side are single plain lancets. Above a tall 4-light pointed arch window with rectilinear tracery, moulded brick hood and ashlar impost band. Above in the gable a tiny ventilation lancet. Either side of this central section are octagonal turrets each topped with a stone spire. Beyond single storey stair wings, each with doorways with gabled ashlar surrounds, pilaster jambs and carved foliate heads, C19 plank doors with ornate iron hinges. Above each door a pair of thin lancets, and an ashlar parapet decorated with trefoils. The ends of these wings have a single lancet and above a circular window under a gable. The side facades each have 8 windows arranged 2:4:2 the 2 central gables each have 2 tall lancets divided at gallery level and topped with a circular window under a coped gable with brick buttresses between and either side each topped by an ashlar finial. The flanking 2 windows on each side are flat headed and divided at gallery level. INTERIOR retains almost all its original interior fittings. Including the U-shaped wooden gallery with panelled front supported on ornate iron columns, and the similar upper columns which support the original wooden roof. Wooden pews survive throughout, wooden reading desk and altar table also survive. Behind a chamfered and pointed arch contains the organ with its own shallow gallery also with panelled front. The windows retain their simple patterned stained glass. Sunday school, to the north-west, has a 4 window gabled front, arranged 1:2:1. The central 2 windows have tall 2-light lancets divided at first floor level by terracotta panels with plain ashlar tracery, and linked by impost and cill bands. Above a central circular window in moulded brick surround with 4 circle ashlar tracery. The wide coped gable has carved kneelers and a finial. Either side are single 2-light windows with ashlar mullions and segment brick heads, linked by a flush ashlar cill band. The corners have brick buttresses with ashlar set-offs and eroded ashlar finials.

Beyond to the left a doorway with moulded brick head and plank door with overlight."

Relevant History

H16-1272-18 - Full. Single-storey extension to form new foyer. Approved 20/02/19.

H16-0139-15 -Full. Single-storey extensions to form new foyer, store and WC facilities. Approved 22/04/15.

H16-0243-11 - Full. Single-storey extensions to form foyer, store and wc facilities. Approved 08/06/11.

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 - no objection

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 within the Spalding Conservation Area, the SHDC Conservation officer must be consulted before a decision is made (direct and setting impact)"

Historic England

"Historic England provides advice when our engagement can add most value. In this case we are not offering advice. This should not be interpreted as comment on the merits of the application. We suggest that you seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers. You may also find it helpful to refer to our published advice at <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/find/> 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."

Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority

"The proposal is for demolition of existing external store, erection of single storey extension with flat roof & alterations to roof over large north-west facing window to hall and it will not affect the public highway."

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, one letter of support has been received.

This can be summarised as:

- This application has already received listed building consent under the Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (England) Order 2010
- The opportunity to raise any concerns was therefore given during this statutory process but no formal representation was received from the local authority.
- It would be unreasonable therefore if the LPA was to come to a different conclusion to that already issued under the Exemption

Key Planning Considerations

Evaluation

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended, requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

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.

Principle of Development

Policy 1 of the SELLP sets out the settlement hierarchy in respect of delivering sustainable development, which meets the social and economic needs of the area whilst protecting and enhancing the environment; in order to provide enough choice of land for housing to satisfy local need, whilst making more sustainable use of land, and to minimise the loss of high-quality agricultural plots by developing in sustainable locations and at appropriate densities.

Policy 1 expresses this sustainable hierarchy of settlements, ranking the settlements deemed to be most sustainable in descending order. The most sustainable locations for development are situated within the 'Sub-Regional Centres', followed by 'Main Service Centres'. Lower down the hierarchy are areas of limited development opportunity including Minor Service Centres, with areas of development constraint comprising 'Other Service Centres and Settlements'. The countryside is at the bottom of the settlement hierarchy and represents the least sustainable location.

The site is within the settlement of Spalding which is classed as a sub-regional centre within Policy 1. As such development will be permitted that supports Spalding's role as a service centre, helps sustain existing facilities or helps meet the service needs of other local communities.

As the site is within Spalding, development within this location is considered appropriate. In any event, the proposal solely relates to the extension of an existing and established use and therefore, the principle of such development is considered to be appropriate.

As such, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the requirements of the SELLP when viewed in principle. This is subject to the assessment against site specific criteria; including (but not limited to) the impact of the proposal on the character or appearance of the area, impact on the residential amenities of neighbouring occupiers, and impact on highway safety, which are discussed in turn in the following sections.

Layout, Design, Scale and Consideration of the Character of the Area and Heritage and Conservation Considerations

Policy Context - Character and Design

Section 12 of the NPPF, "Achieving well-designed places", states that the "creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve" and as such, it is generally accepted that good design plays a key role towards sustainable development.

Paragraph 135, contained within Section 12 of the NPPF, states that new development should function well and add to the overall quality of the area (including beyond the short term) and should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. This goes on to establish that it is important that new development should be of the highest quality, to enhance and reinforce good design characteristics, and that decisions must have regard towards the impact that the proposed development would have on local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting such as topography, street patterns, building lines, boundary treatment and through scale and massing. Developments should create places that are safe, inclusive, and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, among other considerations.

Likewise, Policy 2 of the SELLP outlines sustainable development considerations for proposals; providing a framework for an operational policy to be used in assessing the sustainable development attributes of all development proposals. Furthermore, Policy 3 of the SELLP requires development to comprise good design; identifying issues that should be considered when preparing schemes so that development sits comfortably with, and adds positively to, its historically designated or undesignated townscape or landscape surroundings.

These policies accord with the provisions of the NPPF and require that design which is inappropriate to the local area, or which fails to maximise opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area, will not be acceptable. Proposals for new development would therefore require the aforementioned considerations to be adequately assessed and designed, including the siting, design, and scale to be respectful of surrounding development and ensure that the character of the area is not compromised.

Policy Context - Conservation Area

The site is within Spalding Conservation Area, as well as being Grade II listed.

In respect of any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, through Section 72 the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

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 220 expands upon this, in relation to Conservation Areas, stating:

"Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 214 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 215, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole"

Policy 29 (The Historic Environment) states amongst other matters that the distinctive elements of the South East Lincolnshire historic environment will be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced, in keeping with the policies in the NPPF. Development proposals will be expected to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of designated and non-designated heritage assets. Policy 29 is broken into five interrelated sections, with parts A, and B relevant here.

Policy 29A, relating to listed buildings, states: "Proposals that affect the setting of a Listed Building will be supported where they preserve or better reveal the significance of the Listed Building." This section is discussed in greater detail later in this report.

Policy 29B, relating to conservation areas, states: "Proposals within, affecting the setting of, or affecting views into or out of, a Conservation Area should preserve (and enhance or reinforce, as appropriate) features that contribute positively to the area's character, appearance and setting. Proposals should:

1. Retain buildings/groups of buildings, existing street patterns, historic building lines and ground surfaces;
2. Retain architectural details that contribute to the character and appearance of the area;
3. Where relevant and practical, remove features which are incompatible with the Conservation Area;
4. Retain and reinforce local distinctiveness with reference to height, massing, scale, form, materials and plot widths of the existing built environment;
5. Assess, and mitigate against, any negative impact the proposal might have on the townscape,

roofscape, skyline and landscape;"

To this end, all proposals in the Conservation Area or which affect listed buildings should preserve or enhance their settings.

Policy Context - Listed Building

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.

In assessing proposals of this nature, the Local Planning Authority must also ensure special regard to preserving the Listed Buildings and their settings in relation to Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the 'Act'). No harm should be caused with the historical assets and their surroundings requiring to be preserved or enhanced.

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 215 expands upon this, stating 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 - Character & Heritage

The existing parapet wall, coupled with the angle between the footpath and the roof, restricts views of the effected area. The store itself is not visible from the public realm, with views only being available from within the site itself. As a result of this reduced visibility, any impact of the works is reduced accordingly.

The small external area surrounding the store does not contribute to the appearance or the importance of the building. The feature is impractical and reduces the functionality of the area. As a result, the proposed covering of this area would be a benefit from a practical perspective, allowing the better use of this area. This in turn allows for storage to be redirected to the proper areas, allowing for the proper function of the church, which is a key community asset. Beyond a functional perspective, the covering would reduce the weathering of the original external bricks of this section, thereby allowing historic features to be maintained. Moreover, this portion of the development would not be visible from the public realm, and therefore, its impact upon the appreciation of the building is reduced.

The former Sunday School is characterised by its symmetry. This is a key component of the architectural and visual importance of the building and site as a whole. Whilst this symmetry has already been offset somewhat by the foyer extension, any further loss of the symmetry and regularity of the built form would be detrimental to the overall appearance of the building.

As a result, the proposed window covering is considered to represent less than substantial harm. 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, taken as a whole, would allow for the better function of the church. In covering windows and brickwork, the longevity of these features would be increased, allowing for the long-term appreciation of these features whilst cutting costs for the church. These funds can then be redirected to community programmes.

As a result, there would be a small, but tangible, community benefit emerging from the proposal due to the improved practicality of the church's arrangement. It is considered that this benefit outweighs the perceived less than substantial harm.

Taking the above into account, the proposal is considered to be acceptable. The proposal would not cause an adverse impact to the character or appearance of the area that would warrant refusal in this instance and, whilst less than substantial harm is identified to the significance of the assets, it is considered that there is an outweighing public benefit and as such, the proposal would therefore be in accordance with Policies 2, 3 and 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.

Impacts Upon Resident Amenity

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that development should create places that are safe, inclusive, and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Policies 2 and 3 of SELLP sets out that residential amenity and the relationship to existing development and land uses is a main consideration when making planning decisions.

The proposal would create no additional intrusive openings. There would be no overlooking or additional overshadowing resulting from the works.

As detailed above, the scale and design of the proposal is considered to have no significant or unacceptable impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of adjacent properties or land users, when also taking account of the conditions recommended. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with Section 12 of the NPPF and Policies 2 and 3 of the Local Plan in terms of impact upon residential amenity.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021) requires developers to deliver a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain using standardized biodiversity units measured by statutory biodiversity metrics. This is often referred to as the mandatory requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain.

"Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met ("the biodiversity gain condition"). This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits".

The biodiversity gain condition is a pre-commencement condition. This relates to a condition that seeks, once planning permission has been granted, a Biodiversity Gain Plan that must be submitted and approved by the planning authority before commencement of the development, alongside the need to submit a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan.

The effect of Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that

planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the "biodiversity gain condition". The effect of this "biodiversity gain condition" is that development granted by this notice must not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan, or
- (c) the development is exempt from the biodiversity gain condition.

The proposal would impact less than 25sqm of habitat and would therefore be exempt from the need for Net Gain under The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024

Planning Balance

As detailed above, Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended, requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The proposal is considered to cause less than substantial harm to a Grade II listed building. That being said, it is considered that the public benefits of the proposal outweigh the identified harm.

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

Taking these factors into consideration, the proposal is considered to comply with Policies 1, 2, 3,

28 and 29 of the SELLP, as well as Sections 12, 15 and 16 of the NPPF. There are no significant factors in this case that would outweigh the benefits of the proposal; therefore, the planning balance is in favour of the proposal.

Recommendation

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