

DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No: H16-1051-25 **Applicant:** Lloyds Banking Group Ltd.

Proposal: External handrail to entrance steps

Location: Lloyds Tsb Bank Plc 15 Market Place Spalding

Terminal Date: 25th December 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
OTHER STATUTORY BODIES	0	0	0	1

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Description of Proposal

This is a listed building application for the installation of external handrails at the Grade II listed Lloyds Bank.

The rail would have a height of 900mm, and would be constructed of wrought iron. It would be secured to the bank steps by 5mm square metal plates bolted with resin.

Site Description

The site is within the town centre boundaries of Spalding, as outlined within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019. The site is designated as a primary shop frontage within the primary shopping area, and lies within Spalding Conservation Area. The building is Grade II listed, with the Historic England listing reading as follow:

"Mid-late C19. 2 storeys in red brick with ashlar dressings and slate roof, rounded to corner, with red ridge tile and ornamental chimney stacks. Carved ashlar cornice of modified anthemion pattern. Windows are 3-2 and 1 to corner and 4 to Red Lion Street elevation. All with rectangular drip moulds, with flat arches and mask terminals to ground floor and segmental arches and foliated terminals to 1st floor. Doorway to west on ground floor has similar drip mould. 1st floor windows have ashlar aprons and string between storeys. Ground floor has band at cills and ashlar plinth. Main doorway to corner has elaborately carved pointed ashlar gable, terminating in a carved poppy-head finial. Carved spandrels and round-arched doorway."

Relevant History

H16-1050-25 - Full - External handrail to entrance steps - 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:

Conservation Officer

"I have no objection to this proposal.

While the works will result in a degree of harm to the listed building due to the requirement to drill into the existing stone steps, this harm is considered to be less than substantial in heritage terms. The overall design of the proposed handrails appears discreet and constructed from materials that complement the character and appearance of the building.

Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal would 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. I consider that the public benefits - improved access ability and enhanced health and safety, outweigh the limited harm to the fabric and setting of the listed building"

Spalding and District Civic Society

Support - The design of the handrail is sympathetic to the listed building and the intrusion of the fixings to the stone steps is minimal. Therefore we have no objections to this work.

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, no letters of representation have been received.

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.

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

Policy Context - Design

Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), "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 National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), 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 South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) 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 South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) 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 National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) 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 - Heritage

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

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 National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) 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 National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) 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 National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) 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 National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) 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 (The Historic Environment) of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) 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 National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). Development proposals will be expected to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of designated and non-designated heritage assets. Policy 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) is broken into five interrelated sections, with parts A, relevant here.

Policy 29A of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019), 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.

Section A of Policy 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) 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 proposed alterations are relatively minor in scale, and therefore, the overall impact upon the building is minimal, despite its prominent positioning. The design approach, with ornate wrought iron, is consistent with that of the wider building, ensuring that the works appear as natural additions. As a result, the works are considered to be reasonably well integrated into the host property, causing only minimal impact upon the facade.

In positioning the works within the alcove of the bank, the visibility from the wider Conservation Area is reduced, thereby preventing an overly significant impact upon the area.

The use of resin-bolts would ensure only minimal physical intervention. This would also primarily impact upon the steps, which are more susceptible to general degradation than other parts of the building, reducing the tangible, long term impacts of the works further.

Nevertheless, the Conservation Officer has identified less than substantial harm to the listed building, albeit they caveat this by outlining the harm is towards the lower end of less than substantial. No contradictory position has been put forward by a heritage/conservation professional to challenge this view and, so on this basis, it is considered appropriate to proceed on the basis that the works would cause less than substantial harm, as outlined in Section 16 of the National

Planning Policy Framework (December 2024).

In line with paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), where less than substantial harm has been identified, "this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use." The harm identified is towards the lower end of less than substantial. On this basis, the level of public benefits needed to outweigh the harm is proportioned accordingly.

The benefits emerging from the proposal primarily stem from increased accessibility of the bank. The bank, to a certain extent, can be seen as a community asset, particularly in light of the broader climate and the reduction in the number of banks nationally. Therefore, enhancing access to this building (particularly given that this would principally improve accessibility for groups who historically have been more dependant upon banks) can be seen as a small but significant community benefit.

As such, despite the identified less than substantial harm, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024).

Planning Balance

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 proposal would cause less than substantial harm to a Grade II listed building. However, it is considered that this is towards the lower end of less than substantial harm. On this basis, the minor, but significant, public benefits emerging from increased accessibility to a public asset would 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 2, 3, and 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019), as well as Sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). 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.