DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No:	**H18-0186-26**	**Applicant:**	**API Ltd**
Proposal:	Change of use from hotel Class C1 to residential Class C3 including the creating of 15 residential units - Approved under H18-0463-24. Modification of Condition 2 to allow amendments to previously approved plans		
Location:	Bridge Hotel 4 Bridge Road Sutton Bridge		
Terminal Date:	27th May 2026		

Planning Policies

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan - Adopted: March 2019

01	Spatial Strategy
02	Development Management
03	Design of New Development
29	The Historic Environment
30	Pollution
36	Vehicle and Cycle Parking

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework December 2024

Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development
Section 4 - Decision-Making
Section 5 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the Historic environment

Representations:

	Object	Support	No Obj.	Comments
PARISH COUNCIL	0	0	0	0
WARD MEMBER	0	0	0	0
PLANNING LIAISON OFFICER - FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT	0	0	0	1
HIGHWAYS & SUDS SUPPORT	0	0	0	1
OTHER STATUTORY				

BODIES	0	0	0	1

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Proposal

This application is made under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The applicant seeks to vary Condition 2 (approved plans) attached to planning permission H18-0463-24.

Planning permission H18-0463-24 granted consent for the "Change of use from hotel (Use Class C1) to residential (Use Class C3) including the creation of 15 residential units".

A subsequent Section 73 permission was later granted under application H18-0752-25. That permission varied the approved plans associated with H18-0463-24 and, in doing so, created a new standalone planning permission with its own schedule of conditions, including a separate approved plans condition.

The current submission seeks approval for the following amendments:

·Second Floor:
Changes to the second floor layout to utilise additional attic space within Units 12 and 15. The proposal includes the addition of a further bedroom within Unit 12 together with additional rear-facing rooflights.

·Staircases:
Alterations to the previously approved external staircases to the rear of the building, changing them from covered external stairwells to enclosed staircases.

The applicant states that the amendments are required to better utilise the available attic accommodation and due to cost implications associated with the approved external steel stairwells.

Within the application form the applicant states:

"The new proposal changes the external staircase serving units to the rear to an internal staircase. Internal alterations on the second floor to improve escape distances and more efficient use of floor space."

The application form further states:

"The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and/or documents:

(This application)
723-04-H Proposed Plans
723-18-D Proposed Elevations

H18-0752-25:
723-01 - Location & Site Plan

H18-0463-24:
Flood Risk Assessment prepared by S M Hemmings dated 23rd July 2024

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning."

The application therefore seeks, in part, to retain certain previously approved plans and supporting documents associated with earlier permissions whilst introducing further amendments through the

current Section 73 submission.

Site Description

The application site relates to the former Bridge Inn Hotel, Sutton Bridge, a substantial former hotel building occupying a visually prominent location within Sutton Bridge town centre and the defined Primary Shopping Area.

The building has remained vacant since approximately 2008. The site occupies a corner position adjacent to West Bank and Wharf Street and historically displayed a strong traditional architectural appearance through the use of red facing brick, parapet detailing, sash window openings and decorative lintel and cill features.

The building is arranged across four floors, including basement accommodation. Parking is located to the rear of the site.

The application site lies within Flood Zone 3 in accordance with the Environment Agency Flood Maps and is identified within the South East Lincolnshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment as falling within an area categorised as "Danger for Most".

A Grade II Listed Building is located immediately to the west of the application site.

The site has been visited by officers on several occasions during the course of redevelopment works. These inspections identified that extensive operational development has occurred, including significant rebuilding works to parts of the rear elevation and roof structure.

Officers also observed the introduction of new external brickwork which materially contrasts with the original historic brickwork of the building. The brick currently utilised on site appears visually discordant and unsympathetic to the character of the host building, resulting in a stark and harmful contrast between the retained historic fabric and reconstructed elements.

Furthermore, officers observed a number of apparent discrepancies between the submitted plans and the development presently evident on site, including fenestration arrangements and external detailing.

History

H18-1234-16 - Redevelopment of site to provide 21 one-bed flats, parking and infrastructure - Non-determination - 12.09.2017

H18-0463-24 - Change of use from hotel Class C1 to residential Class C3 including the creation of 15 residential units - Approved with accompanying Section 106 Agreement - 28.01.2025

H18-0240-25 - Change of use from hotel Class C1 to residential Class C3 including the creation of 15 residential units approved under H18-0463-24 - Removal of Condition 5 to allow basement level to be used as habitable accommodation - Refused - 07.05.2025

H18-0752-25 - Change of use from hotel Class C1 to residential Class C3 including the creation of 15 residential units approved under H18-0463-24 - Modification of approved plans through Section 73 permission - Approved - 13.11.2025

The approved amendments under H18-0752-25 included:

·raising of a rear roof section associated with Unit 15;
·amendments to window head and cill heights;
·revised attic accommodation within Unit 15;
·additional windows to rear and side elevations;
·and conservation-style rooflights.

Consultation Responses

Environment Agency

We have no comments to make in respect of the proposed variation of Condition 2.

Highways & SuDS Support

No objections. The proposal relates to minor amendments associated with the approved residential conversion. The proposed changes would not adversely impact upon the public highway or surface water flood risk.

Conservation Officer

The Bridge Hotel is located adjacent to the Grade II Listed Buildings at 8 and 10 Bridge Road. The introduction of rooflights to the rear elevation would not adversely affect the Listed Buildings or their setting.

No objection is raised in principle to the enclosure of the staircases. However, concern is expressed regarding the appearance of the proposed render finish associated with the staircase adjoining Unit 11. Further details of the proposed render would be required were permission to be granted.

Planning Considerations

Evaluation

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 adopted South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) forms the Development Plan for the purposes of decision making in South Holland.

The policies and provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) are also material considerations in the determination of planning applications.

Assessment

The principal issues relevant to the assessment of this application are considered to be:

·Scope of Section 73;
·Accuracy and certainty of the submitted plans;
·Character, design and impact upon the historic environment;
·Residential amenity; and
·Highway safety and drainage.

Scope of Section 73

The proposal seeks to vary Condition 2 attached to planning permission H18-0463-24 through the submission of an application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Section 73 enables the Local Planning Authority to consider whether planning permission should be granted subject to conditions differing from those attached to an existing permission. Planning Practice Guidance confirms that a Section 73 permission results in a new standalone planning permission sitting alongside the original permission.

Following the approval of H18-0463-24, a subsequent Section 73 permission was granted under H18-0752-25. That permission established a separate and independent planning permission with its own approved plans condition and accompanying schedule of conditions.

The current application nevertheless seeks to vary Condition 2 attached to H18-0463-24 whilst

simultaneously referencing and seeking to retain certain plans and documents associated with H18-0752-25 and the original permission.

Whilst officers acknowledge that applicants may reference approved plans or documents from earlier permissions where appropriate, the Local Planning Authority must nevertheless be satisfied that the cumulative form of development proposed is clearly identifiable and capable of robust assessment.

In this instance, officers are not satisfied that the relationship between the original permission, the subsequent Section 73 approval and the current amendments has been sufficiently clarified through the submitted application documents.
Furthermore, based upon observations made during multiple site inspections, the operational development presently evident on site appears to incorporate elements associated with the original permission, the subsequent Section 73 permission and additional works not clearly reflected within either approved scheme or the currently submitted plans.

This creates significant uncertainty in respect of:

·the operative permission presently being implemented;
·the cumulative extent of amendments sought;
·the extent of operational development undertaken; and
·whether the submitted plans accurately reflect the development proposed and/or carried out.

Accuracy and Certainty of the Submitted Plans

The Local Planning Authority must be satisfied that submitted plans accurately and comprehensively reflect the development proposed in order for a lawful and robust planning assessment to be undertaken.

In this case, officers are not satisfied that the submitted plans provide a sufficiently accurate basis upon which the cumulative impact of the amended development can properly be assessed.

During several site inspections officers observed:

·extensive rebuilding works to parts of the rear elevation and roof structure;
·fenestration arrangements not clearly corresponding with submitted drawings;
·alterations to architectural detailing;
·and the introduction of external facing brickwork not clearly reflected within the submitted application documents.

Whilst the applicant seeks approval for relatively limited amendments through this Section 73 submission, the operational development presently evident on site appears materially broader in extent.

The inconsistencies between the submitted plans and the works undertaken create substantial uncertainty regarding the precise form of development being assessed by the Local Planning Authority.

Consequently, officers are unable to reasonably conclude that the submitted plans accurately or comprehensively reflect either the development undertaken or the cumulative form of development proposed through the current application.

Character, Design and Historic Environment

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the Local Planning Authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of Listed Buildings.

Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) requires great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets.

SELLP Policies 2, 3 and 29 require development to respond positively to local character, achieve a

high quality of design and conserve and enhance the historic environment.

The former Bridge Inn is a visually prominent historic building within Sutton Bridge and derives much of its character and townscape significance from its traditional architectural composition, historic detailing and cohesive red brick appearance.

Whilst certain individual amendments identified within the current application submission may, when viewed in isolation, appear relatively modest in nature, officers are particularly concerned by the operational development presently evident on site and, specifically, the introduction of replacement external brickwork which materially contrasts with the original historic fabric of the building.

The replacement brickwork presently utilised appears visually harsh, discordant and wholly unsympathetic to the established character of the building. The contrast between the retained historic fabric and newly introduced materials is stark and immediately apparent within the street scene.

Rather than reading as a sensitive conversion and restoration of a prominent historic structure, the cumulative effect of the rebuilding works presently undertaken gives rise to a fragmented and visually incoherent appearance which materially erodes the architectural integrity and visual cohesion of the original building.

Historically, the former hotel displayed a relatively unified and consistent palette of materials and detailing. The replacement brickwork presently utilised fails to appropriately respond to those established characteristics and instead introduces a conspicuously modern and poorly matched appearance which is harmful to both the host building and the wider townscape.

Whilst officers acknowledge that some individual components of the proposal, including the rooflights and staircase enclosures, may potentially have been capable of acceptable design resolution in principle, the Local Planning Authority remains unable to properly assess the cumulative visual and heritage impacts arising from the development due to the inconsistencies between the submitted plans and the operational development presently undertaken on site.

Accordingly, the application fails to demonstrate that the amended development would preserve the character and appearance of the building or preserve the setting of the adjacent Grade II Listed Building.

The proposal therefore conflicts with Policies 2, 3 and 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019), Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) and the statutory duties set out under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Residential Amenity

SELLP Policies 2 and 30 seek to ensure that development does not result in unacceptable impacts upon residential amenity through overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing impact, noise or disturbance.

The amendments identified within the application submission, when considered in isolation, are unlikely to result in significant additional amenity impacts beyond those already established under the extant permission.

However, given the inconsistencies between the submitted plans and the operational development presently evident on site, officers are unable to fully assess the cumulative amenity impacts arising from the amended development.

Highway Safety

Lincolnshire County Council Highways and SuDS Support raise no objections to the proposed amendments and confirm that the proposal would not adversely impact upon highway safety or surface water flood risk.

These comments are acknowledged. However, they do not outweigh the concerns identified elsewhere within this report.

Planning Balance

The application seeks permission under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to vary Condition 2 attached to planning permission H18-0463-24.

However, a subsequent Section 73 permission was granted under H18-0752-25 which established a separate standalone planning permission with its own approved plans condition.

Whilst officers acknowledge that elements of the wider development already benefit from extant planning permission, the current application must nevertheless be determined on the basis of the amended development now proposed.
In this instance, officers are not satisfied that the submitted drawings accurately or comprehensively reflect the operational development undertaken and/or proposed at the site. Significant uncertainty remains regarding the relationship between the original permission, the subsequent Section 73 approval and the cumulative form of development presently being implemented.

Site inspections have identified clear discrepancies between the submitted plans and the operational development evident on site, including rebuilding works, fenestration arrangements, external detailing and material finishes.

Of particular concern is the introduction of replacement brickwork which appears poorly matched, visually discordant and unsympathetic to the historic character and architectural composition of the former Bridge Inn. The cumulative effect of the works presently undertaken materially erodes the architectural coherence and visual integrity of the building and fails to demonstrate a high quality or sensitive approach to the conversion of a prominent historic structure.

As submitted, the Local Planning Authority is therefore unable to conclude that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the building, respond positively to local character, or preserve the setting of the adjacent Grade II Listed Building.

The proposal is therefore considered contrary to Policies 2, 3 and 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019), Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), and the statutory duties set out under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Accordingly, planning permission should be refused.

Conclusion

The application seeks to vary the approved plans condition attached to planning permission H18-0463-24 through a further Section 73 submission.

However, officers are not satisfied that the submitted plans accurately or comprehensively reflect the cumulative form of development undertaken and/or proposed at the site. Significant uncertainty remains regarding the relationship between the original permission, the subsequent Section 73 approval and the operational development presently evident on site.
Furthermore, the operational development undertaken includes replacement external brickwork which appears visually discordant, poorly matched and unsympathetic to the established historic character and architectural composition of the former Bridge Hotel. The cumulative effect of the works materially harms the architectural coherence and visual integrity of the building and fails to demonstrate a sensitive approach to the conversion of a prominent historic structure.

The Local Planning Authority is therefore unable to conclude that the amended development would preserve the character and appearance of the building or preserve the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered contrary to Policies 2, 3 and 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019), Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), and the statutory duties set out under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Planning permission should therefore be refused.

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.