

**From:** James Darwin <James@georgiangroup.org.uk>  
**Sent:** 25 August 2021 09:21  
**To:** planning <planning@boston.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Your ref: B/21/0345 No. 125 High Street, Boston, Lincolnshire

Dear Sirs,

Thank you for informing the Georgian Group of an application to alter and partially demolish the above grade II listed building which appears to be located within a conservation area. I must sincerely apologize for my delay in responding. The Group has concerns about this application on heritage grounds.

No.125 High Street is a late eighteenth century house which forms part of a short terrace. Its plan is typical of many dwellings in port towns, similar examples having been recorded in Weymouth, Liverpool, and Whitby. Its central stair has simple square section wooden balusters and is of a type commonly associated with the period 1780-1820. The stair is located at the centre of the house and rises parallel to the entrance façade allowing space for a single heated room to its front and rear. A narrow passageway at one time connected the front door and the stair, the partition wall of which has largely been removed. Unusually some of its internal partitions are composed of painted wooden boards; we would caution against assuming these are later insertions as boarded timber partitions were once a relatively common feature of lower status later eighteenth century urban and rural dwellings. Surviving examples may therefore be of considerable significance. The house is presently empty and in poor repair.

The existing single storey rear link does not appear to make a strong contribution to the overall significance of the grade II listed building. The rear elevation of the main range however appears to remain largely as originally designed. It retains three sash windows two of which appear to be c1800 hornless sashes whilst that at ground floor level appears to be a mid-nineteenth century plate-glass sash. Both the ground floor and first floor window openings would be lost, whilst new openings would also be created at ground and first floor levels. A significant degree of harm to the appearance and significance of the listed building would thus be caused by the proposed replacement structure, and a degree of harm to the setting of the adjoining grade II listed property.

Within the building significant alterations are also proposed primarily to increase fire resistance. The replacement of historic wooden partitions, fixtures and fittings, and lath and plaster must be avoided as such works are likely to cause considerable harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building. Measures which would allow for the retention in situ of the wooden internal partitions must be explored.

The harm which would be caused to the listed building is a direct result of the intensity of the proposed conversion scheme. Paragraph 200 of the NPPF (2021) stipulates 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....' An adequate justification for converting the terraced house into a house of multiple occupation rather than repairing it as a single dwelling or converting it into two flats has not been provided. Similarly, an adequate justification for the proposed two storey rear addition has also not been provided.

When making a decision on all listed building consent applications or any decision on a planning application for development that affects a listed building or its setting, a local planning authority must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Preservation in this context means not harming the special interest of the building, as opposed to keeping it utterly unchanged. This obligation, found

in sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (1), applies to all decisions concerning listed buildings. Under section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 they also have a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

This is an intensive conversion scheme which has the potential to cause a considerable degree of harm to the special architectural and historic interest of this grade II listed building. We therefore recommend that listed building consent is refused for this scheme in its present form.

Yours Sincerely

James Darwin (Senior Conservation Adviser)

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