

# Development Management Delegated Decision Report

B/20/0502



## SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

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Application Reference	B/20/0502		
Application Type	Listed Building Consent		
Proposal	Listed Building Consent to make internal and external alterations to the whole building including the conversion of No.2 Skirbeck Road (half of the building) from a six-bedroom House in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) to four individual bed-sits / flats (Class C3)		
Location	2-4 Skirbeck Road, Boston, PE21 6DA		
Applicant	Alistair Arundell, Smart Move (Boston) Limited		
Agent	Mr Gillick, Gillick Brothers		
Received Date:	18-Dec-2020	Consultation Expiry Date:	17-Feb-2021
Valid Date:	20-Jan-2021	Statutory Expiry Date:	17-Mar-2021
Date of Site Visit:	22-Mar-2021	Extension of Time Date:	01-Apr-2021
Objections received?	None		
5 day notification record: Not applicable			
Councillors notified	Date	Response received – date	Ok to continue
Recommendation	GRANT Listed Building Consent		
Report by:	Simon Eldred		
Date:	25 <sup>th</sup> March 2021		

## OFFICER REPORT

### SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

The application site is located on the northern side of Skirbeck Road, Boston, and contains a pair of semi-detached buildings built in red brick, and with roofs in a mixture of tile colours, types, and materials. The buildings are largely three-storeys in height, with single-storey elements on their western and northern elevations. There is a brick wall of approximately 0.75m in height enclosing a small garden onto Skirbeck Road in front of no. 2, and there are gardens to the rear of both buildings (separated by a 2m-high brick wall), and a gravel-surfaced parking/manoeuvring area to the east of no. 4.

The buildings appear to be in residential use, and there are further dwellings to their north, north-west, east and south-east. The property to the south (on the opposite side of Skirbeck Road) is disused former industrial land, and that to the west is a public house/restaurant.

The buildings are Grade II listed and the list description reads:



*“Pair of houses. Late C18, altered C20. Red brick in English bond, pantile and concrete tile roofs, brick coped gables with partial tumbling, central large ridge stack.*

*EXTERIOR: 3 storeys, 4-bay front arranged 2:2, with dentilled wooden eaves cornice. To left a 6-panel C19 door with plain overlight, broad pilastered surround, flat hood on brackets. To right a blocked former door opening with to the left of it a C20 doorway. In the centre a margin light sash and a C20 3-light casement in C20 opening with brick soldier course. To 1st floor 4 margin light sashes and to 2nd floor 4 smaller similar ones. INTERIOR: not inspected.”*

## **DETAILS OF PROPOSAL:**

It is proposed to:

- on no. 2's ground-floor:
  - block up one existing internal doorway, leaving the opening visible and retaining the original architrave;
  - create a new internal doorway in an existing wall – the new door will not be to Georgian period detail to distinguish new from original features;
  - install two new timber partition walls containing a new door;
  - reinstate recently removed external double-doors in the northern elevation;
  - install a uPVC double-glazed unit on the interior of a window reveal on the southern elevation, retaining the existing sash window; and
  - box in an existing fire surround;
- on no.2's first-floor:
  - block up one existing internal doorway, leaving the opening visible and retaining the original architrave;
  - create a new internal doorway in an existing wall – the new door will not be to Georgian period detail to distinguish new from original features;
  - install two new timber partition walls containing two new doors;
  - reinstate a recently-removed wooden sliding sash window in the northern elevation;
  - install uPVC double-glazed units on the interior of two window reveals on the southern elevation, retaining the existing sash windows; and
  - box in two existing fire surrounds
- on no.2's second-floor:
  - install a new door and door frame into an existing opening;
  - create a new internal doorway in an existing wall and install a short flight of wooden stairs – the new door will not be to Georgian period detail to distinguish new from original features
  - install uPVC double-glazed units on the interior of two window reveals on the southern elevation, retaining the existing sash windows; and
  - box in an existing fire surround
- on no.4's ground-floor:
  - remove the existing window in the southern elevation, modify the opening and install a new sash window to match (in materials, appearance, detail and finish) its original counterpart on no.2's southern elevation; and
  - remove the existing door in the southern elevation, infill the opening and form a new door opening with portico surround to match (in materials, appearance, detail and finish) its original counterpart on no.2's southern elevation;
- refurbish no.4's roof and replace concrete tiles with clay pantiles;

- refurbish the south-eastern end of no.4's gutter and cornice; and
- replace the existing 20<sup>th</sup> Century brick boundary wall in front of no. 2 with 1.2m-high metal railings on a new stone plinth – the railings to extend approximately 5m further east.

### **RELEVANT HISTORY:**

In 2000, full planning permission (B/00/0343) and listed building consent (B/00/0344) were granted for the erection of a 2m high close-boarded fence.

In 2009: full planning permission (B/09/0229) was granted for change of use from a dwelling (Class C3) to a house in multiple occupation (sui generis); and Listed Building Consent (B/09/0230) was refused for change of use from a dwelling (Class C3) to a house in multiple occupation (sui generis).

In 2020, applications for listed building consent (B/20/0265) and full planning permission (B/20/0266) for change of use from a 5-bed HMO to 4 bedsit flats and associated alterations were withdrawn.

### **RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS:**

The **South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036** shows the application site as being within Boston's Settlement Boundary, and within the Conservation Area. Policies of relevance to this proposal are:

- Policy 3: Design of New Development; and
- Policy 29: The Historic Environment.

### **OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS / LEGISLATION / GUIDANCE:**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (2019)**

At the heart of the 2019 Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The following sections are relevant to this scheme:

- Section 4: Decision-making; and
- Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

#### **National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**

The following categories of the Planning Practice Guidance are relevant to this proposal:

- Determining a planning application; and
- Historic environment.

### **CONSULTATION RESPONSES:**

Heritage Lincolnshire initially identified that the proposals include:

- a number of positive elements, namely the re-instatement of the door portico and window on the front elevation, and the use of traditional roofing materials. They asked that *“conditions on the new portico, reinstatement of the historic rear doors (method statement) and samples of roofing materials would need to be applied to any approval”*; and
- some elements that will adversely impact on the character of the listed building and its internal features, namely:
  - the excessive height of the proposed new 1.6m-high front boundary railings;

- proposed installation of a uPVC window, and failure to remove existing uPVC windows which have been recently installed without consent; and
- the sub-division of the front first-floor bedroom.

In response to these comments, the applicant indicated that:

- the boundary railings would be reduced to 1.4m in height;
- the proposals would be amended to omit uPVC windows and to show the replacement of existing uPVC examples; and
- *“the subdivision proposed is critical to being able to create a workable, self-contained flat ... Whilst I appreciate that it is not ideal and will have an effect on that particular room, it will not fundamentally change the character of the building, particularly as the partition would be a reversible element; enabling the original room layout to be reinstated in future. Impact can be reduced by reducing the 2 proposed door openings through the central wall to 1 (door to bathroom off kitchen). I believe there is sufficient space to attach a partition wall between the cupboard and fireplace without damaging either historic fitting. Careful carpentry would be used so that fixings are minimal and only affect wall plaster.”*

and the proposals were amended accordingly.

Heritage Lincolnshire commented on these amended proposals to indicate that:

- Railing height - should be reduced to 1.2m;
- uPVC windows – *“the proposals have been adjusted, But I’m not sure that the correct window was identified. I thought it was the one above the doors though I may be incorrect;”* and
- First-floor sub-division – *“this is still in place, and so still an issue.”*

In response to these comments, the proposals were amended to reduce the height of the railings to 1.2m.

### **THIRD PARTY REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED:**

No third party representations have been received.

### **EVALUATION:**

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires a local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses (Section 16).

This statutory duty sits above the policy objectives identified within the earlier section of this report. In this context, the objective of preservation is to cause no harm, and is a matter of paramount concern in the planning process. Beyond this, where harm would be caused, there is a necessity to establish the extent of that harm, and consider this within the policy context.

In practice, this requires a methodical approach to be followed wherein the relevant assets which would be affected need to be identified, along with their significance. Consideration can then be given to any effects on this significance resulting from the proposals, which may be reduced through mitigation. If harm is identified, it is then required to establish the scale and extent of such harm, before moving on to matters such as the planning balance and weighing the public benefits arising against any identified harm.

### ***Heritage assets affected***

Given that potential impacts upon the settings of nearby listed buildings and upon the character and appearance of the Boston Conservation Area are considered in application B/20/0501, it is considered that this application for Listed Building Consent can confine itself to considering impacts on the Grade II listed 2 and 4 Skirbeck Road only.

### ***Impacts of the proposals on these assets***

Internal works - A variety of internal works are proposed within no.2 in order to facilitate the building's change of use from a house in multiple occupancy (HMO) to provide four bedsit flats. These works will involve:

- the loss of historic fabric (where new doorways will be created in existing walls); and
- alterations to existing room layouts (the installation of new partition walls and the blocking up of existing doorways) and alterations to existing features (the boxing in of fireplaces and the installation of double-glazed units on the interior of the reveals of existing sash windows) which will hinder the interpretation of the building's original floorplan and obscure features of interest.

Of these proposed works, Heritage Lincolnshire raises concerns only about the sub-division of the front first-floor bedroom – on the basis of: concerns that this will adversely affect the character of the listed building; and doubts whether the proposed partition wall can be fitted between a fireplace and historic cupboards.

It is considered that all of the proposed internal works will inevitably have harmful impacts upon the listed building's special interest, in that they involve the removal of parts of its historic fabric, or make its original layout/special features harder to discern. However, it is considered that:

- the scale of historic fabric that will be lost is small, this fabric does not amount to 'features of special architectural or historic interest' and these works are proposed to be handled with sensitivity; and
- although fireplaces will be boxed in, these 'features of special architectural or historic interest' will be retained and the boxing in will be reversible;
- although double-glazed units will be installed on the interior of the reveals of existing sash windows, these 'features of special architectural or historic interest' will be retained and the works will be reversible;
- the closure of existing door openings is proposed to be sensitively handled and to be reversible; and
- the installation of new partition walls has been kept to the minimum necessary, and will be reversible. Although Heritage Lincolnshire has concerns about the partition walls proposed to be installed into the first-floor front bedroom, it is considered that:
  - the impacts of these walls will be no more severe than those proposed on the ground-floor, or in the first-floor's rear bedroom; and
  - there appears to be sufficient space for the new wall to be installed between the fireplace and cupboards.

As a consequence, it is not considered that the impacts of these proposed works will lead to 'substantial harm' – rather, it is considered that the impacts will be 'less than substantial' (in the terminology used in the NPPF). Indeed, bearing in mind the above factors, it is considered that the impacts would be towards the lower end of the spectrum of 'less than substantial

harm'. In such circumstances, the provisions of the NPPF indicate that the *"harm should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."* These proposals will allow the building to be converted to provide 4 self-contained bedsit flats, providing: superior residential accommodation than the current HMO arrangements; and securing the building's on-going use. It is considered that these benefits outweigh the minor harm to the listed building's special interest that would be caused.

External works - A variety of external works are proposed, with the intention of improving the buildings' condition and improving their historic appearance and integrity. These works include:

- the reinstatement of recently removed external double-doors in the northern elevation of no. 2's ground-floor;
- the reinstatement of a recently-removed wooden sliding sash window in the northern elevation of no.2's first-floor;
- the installation of a new wooden sliding sash window in replacement of a recently installed unauthorised uPVC windows no. 2's northern elevation first floor;
- on no.4's ground-floor:
  - the removal of the existing window in the southern elevation, modification of the opening and installation of a new sash window to match (in materials, appearance, detail and finish) its original counterpart on no.2's southern elevation; and
  - the removal of the existing door in the southern elevation, infilling the opening and forming a new door opening with portico surround to match (in materials, appearance, detail and finish) its original counterpart on no.2's southern elevation;
- the refurbishment of no.4's roof and replacement of the concrete tiles with clay pantiles;
- the refurbishment of the south-eastern end of no.4's gutter and cornice; and
- the replacement of the existing 20<sup>th</sup> Century brick boundary wall in front of no. 2 with 1.2m-high metal railings on a new stone plinth – the railings to extend approximately 5m further east.

It is considered that these proposed external works will enhance the listed buildings' special interest by: sensitively refurbishing damaged fabric (roof, gutter and cornice); re-instating missing features (double-doors and wooden sliding sash windows in no. 2's rear elevation, portico door and wooden sliding sash window in no.4's front elevation); and replacing unsympathetic works (railings to replace front boundary brick wall). Heritage Lincolnshire has indicated that re-instatement of the door portico and window on the front elevation, and the use of traditional roofing materials will have positive impacts, and sought the reduction of the railings' height to 1.2m (as now proposed). Whilst Heritage Lincolnshire continues to express concerns that all uPVC windows and doors recently installed in no. 2's rear (northern) elevation are not proposed to be replaced with more appropriate wooden examples, it is considered that Drawing Number 196-103 Revision B (Proposed External Elevations) shows all three door/window openings either *"re-instated where unauthorised removal has happened"* or *"new timber-framed sliding sash window installed to suitable period detail; to reverse recent unauthorised removal of original sash window"*.

Nonetheless, conditions should be imposed to require the approval of: detailed drawings of new doors/windows; roof tiles; and a methodology for the re-instatement of doors and windows that have been removed without authorisation.

## **CONCLUSION:**

In all, it is considered that:

- the proposed external works will preserve and enhance the special interest of 2 and 4 Skirbeck Road; and
- whilst the proposed internal works will have harmful impacts upon the special interest of 2 Skirbeck Road, these impacts will be 'less than substantial' and will be outweighed by the benefits they will provide (i.e. providing superior residential accommodation than the current HMO arrangements, and securing the building's on-going use).

In these circumstances, it is considered appropriate for Listed Building Consent to be granted.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

GRANT Listed Building Consent subject to the following conditions and reasons:-

CONDITIONS / REASONS	
Pre-commencement conditions?	Agreed with applicant/agent - Date:
1.	<p>The works must begin no later than the expiry of four years beginning with the date of this permission.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.</p>
2.	<p>The works hereby permitted shall be carried out in strict accordance with the application received on 18-Dec-2021 and in accordance with the associated plans referenced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dwg. No. 196-001: Site Location Plan;</li><li>• Dwg. No. 196-103 Revision B: Proposed External Elevations; and</li><li>• Dwg. No. 196-104 Revision A: Proposed Floor Plans.</li></ul> <p><b>Reason:</b> To ensure the works are undertaken in accordance with the approved details and to accord with Policies 2, 3 and 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036.</p>
3.	<p>Prior to any works commencing that relate to the installation of new external windows or doors, detailed drawings of the external windows and doors shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The works shall be carried out as approved.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> To ensure that the special interest of the listed building is preserved, in accordance with Policy 2 and 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036.</p>
4.	<p>Prior to any works commencing that relate to roof refurbishments, a sample of roof tiles shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The works shall be carried out as approved.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> To ensure that the special interest of the listed building is preserved, in</p>

	accordance with Policy 2 and 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036.
5.	<p>Prior to any works commencing that relate to the re-instatement of external windows or doors which were removed without authorisation, a methodology for their re-instatement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The works shall be carried out as approved.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> To ensure that the special interest of the listed building is preserved, in accordance with Policy 2 and 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036.</p>

INFORMATIVES / NOTES TO BE INCLUDED ON/WITH DECISION NOTICE	
<p><u>STATEMENT OF PROACTIVE WORKING:</u></p> <p>In determining this application, the authority has taken account of the guidance in paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 in order to seek to secure sustainable development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the Borough.</p>	