

Heritage Statement

4A Castle Street, Hinckley, LE10 1DB



1. Introduction

- 1.1. This proportionate Heritage Statement has been prepared to support the Listed Building and Advertisement Consents applications at 4A Castle Street, Hinckley, LE10 1DB. The building is under the jurisdiction of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council.
- 1.2. The building is known as 'Millets'. It is Grade II listed (Historic England list entry reference: 1074226) and is located within the Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Area.
- 1.3. The application proposal involves the alterations to the existing shopfront with the replacement of fascia signage and installation of 1no. projecting sign. The modest proposal involves alterations to modern fabric only. Listed Building Consent for a similar proposal to 2 Castle Street (Replacement of signage, ref: 13/00046/LBC) was granted in April 2013.
- 1.4. This assessment has been produced to inform proposals and focuses on the significance of the heritage assets potentially affected by the proposals.

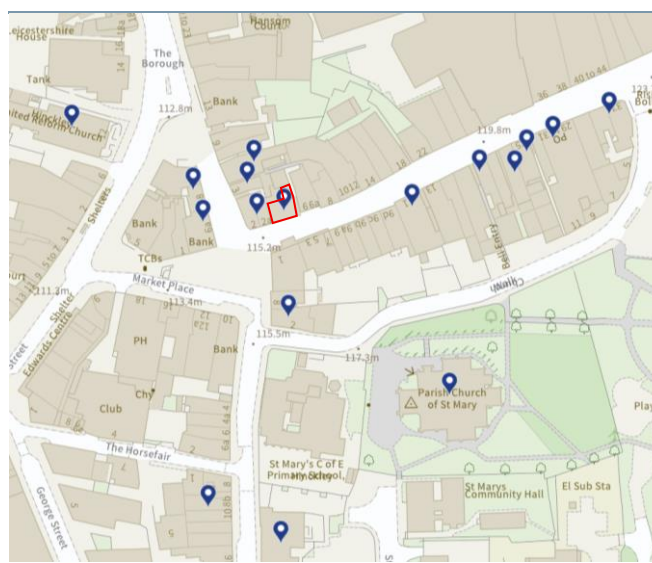
2. Site Description and Context

- 2.1. The application site is Grade II listed, comprising a late-eighteenth century red brick, three-storey building with sash windows, decorative window head detailing, and a modern 20th century shopfront. The building is noted for its group value within a nexus of listed buildings on Castle Street and within the Town Centre. The listing description is as follows:

House, now shop. Late C18 with C19 and C20 alterations. Red brick, the front painted and partially rendered; plain tile roof. 3 storeys with parapet band to plain coped parapet; reduced proportions to second floor. Regular 4 window front; sashes with rusticated lintels and raised key blocks. Later C20 shop front with wide fascia and inset glazed door to right of centre. Included for group value.

- 2.2. The proposals relate to the ground floor unit at No. 4, most recently occupied by Cashino Gaming/Merkur Slots.
- 2.3. There are other listed buildings surrounding the site, as shown in the map below.

Site Location



Source: Historic England

Site Plan



Source: Merkur Casino UK

3. Planning History

- 3.1. The relevant planning history for the site is listed below.

- **93/00417/4.** Installation of roller shutters. Approved 28 Jun 1993.
- **93/00416/4L.** Installation of roller shutters. Approved June 1993.
- **93/00133/4A.** Hanging sign. Approved 24 March 1993.
- **93/00140/4L.** Hanging sign. Approved 14 March 1993.
- **90/00834/4L.** Extension to listed building. Approved 21 August 1990.
- **90/00310/4L.** Alteration to listed building. Approved 24 April 1990.
- **90/00309/4L.** Alterations to listed building. Approved 24 April 1990.
- **90/00160/4A.** Illuminated signs. Refused 24 April 1990.
- **89/00136/4.** Installation of new shop front. Approved 10 April 1989.
- **87/00781/4.** Shopfront alterations. Approved 21 September 1987.
- **85/00871/4.** Installation of new shopfront and fascia on retail premises. Approved 14 October 1985.
- **85/00871/4.** Installation of new shopfront and fascia on retail premises. Approved October 1985.

4. Heritage Legislation, Policy and Guidance

- 4.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (2026), with which all Local Development Plans must comply, constitutes the national level of planning policy and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 4.2. Policy HE4 'Securing the Conservation of Heritage Assets' states that heritage assets should be conserved according to their significance. Development proposals should secure uses compatible with conservation, recognising the assets' maintenance needs, contribution to sustainable communities and local economies, and role in local character and distinctiveness; and avoid, or minimise, harm to heritage significance and conserve that significance.
- 4.3. Where harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset is identified, the NPPF requires clear and convincing justification of the proposals. Policy HE5 'Assessing Effects on Heritage Assets' requires proposals affecting heritage assets to include a proportionate assessment of their significance, including setting, and the proposal's likely effect. Assessments should identify whether proposals would: Enhance or better reveal heritage significance; or have no effect on heritage significance; or harm heritage significance, either directly or through setting, with the degree of harm identified; or cause total loss of heritage significance.
- 4.4. Policy HE6 'Proposals Affecting Designated Heritage Assets' gives substantial weight to conservation, with greater weight for more important assets. Any harm is a matter of considerable importance and weight. Where harm is identified, it should be weighed against public benefits, including long-term reuse of vacant or underused listed buildings and energy-efficiency or low-carbon heating measures. Where a development proposal would cause substantial harm to, or the total loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, consent should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss, or if all of the following apply:
 - a. The nature of the heritage asset would otherwise prevent all reasonable uses of the site;
 - b. No suitable use for the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
 - c. Conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is not possible; and
 - d. The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the asset back into use.
- 4.5. The Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan 2006–2026 seeks to ensure that development reinforces local identity, distinctiveness and townscape character, particularly where it affects conservation areas, listed buildings and the borough's historic environment. Policy 1 requires development in Hinckley to respect the town's industrial heritage, conservation areas and public realm, while

Spatial Objectives 9 and 11 promote high-quality, locally distinctive design and the safeguarding or enhancement of the historic built environment.

- 4.6. **Policies DM11 Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment**, and **DM12 Heritage Assets**, set out the key heritage requirements. Development affecting designated or non-designated heritage assets must demonstrate an understanding of their significance, assess any impact on that significance, minimise or avoid harm, and justify proposals where harm arises. Alterations to listed buildings, and development within or affecting conservation areas, should preserve or enhance significance, reflect local character, maintain important features and views, and contribute positively to the distinctiveness and vibrancy of the area.
- 4.7. **Policy DM23** requires new or refurbished shopfronts and advertisements to be well-designed, proportionate and sensitive to their context. Shopfronts should reflect the local style, materials and scale of the host building and surrounding area, while fascias, illumination, security features, blinds, canopies, entrances and associated equipment should be carefully integrated to avoid visual clutter or harm to amenity.
- 4.8. Where shopfronts are of historic interest, particularly within conservation areas, they should be retained wherever possible. Replacement or significant alteration will only be acceptable where it preserves or enhances the character of the heritage asset and wider area. Advertisements requiring consent should not harm public safety or amenity, should avoid unnecessary proliferation, and should maintain or enhance the character of the conservation area.
- 4.9. The **Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Shopping and Shop Fronts Supplementary Planning Document** (adopted October 2007) provides detailed guidance on the design of shopfronts, advertisements, fascia signs, projecting signs and illumination. It emphasises that shopfront advertisements should be of high quality and sympathetic to the architectural character and quality of the host building, with particular care required where proposals are located within conservation areas.
- 4.10. The SPD advises that fascia signs should sit within the established fascia zone, respect the depth and width of the shopfront, avoid excessive projection, and use appropriate lettering, colours, materials and illumination. Hanging and projecting signs should be appropriately scaled, generally located at fascia level, avoid visual clutter, and, where illuminated, use discreet external lighting rather than bulky internally illuminated box signs.
- 4.11. **Policy BE9 – Shop Fronts in Conservation Areas** requires historic, architecturally interesting or characterful shopfronts within conservation areas to be retained where possible, with repair or restoration preferred. Where replacement or alteration is justified, proposals should be of high quality and appropriate to the building, street scene and wider townscape. Policy BE11 – Advertisements in Conservation Areas similarly supports the retention of existing signs and fascias that make a positive contribution, while requiring replacement advertisements, signs and fascias to be traditionally styled, carefully detailed and appropriate to their context.
- 4.12. In respect of town centre uses, **Policy Retail 2 – Primary Shopping Frontages**, Hinckley Town Centre seeks to protect the retail function and character of primary shopping frontages, ensuring that changes of use do not harm the town centre or remove existing shop-type frontages. **Policy Retail 6 – Shop Fronts** confirms that new or refurbished shopfronts will be acceptable where they respect local style, materials, scale and proportions; where fascias are not over-dominant; where signage illumination is sensitively located and does not harm road safety; and where security features, blinds, canopies and access requirements are carefully integrated into the overall design.

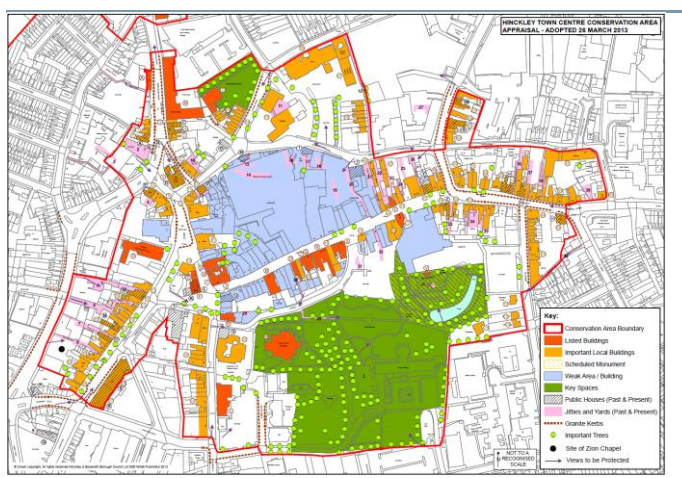
5. Heritage Significance of the Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Area

- 5.1. Historically, Hinckley developed as an important hosiery-producing industry, dominating its economy during the early 19th century. Although growth was initially limited, the arrival of the railway in 1862 encouraged industrial expansion, and the later introduction of steam-powered factory production supported rapid population growth and prosperity by the late 19th century. This period of expansion is reflected in the construction of substantial Victorian buildings, including churches and factories associated with prominent industrial families such as the Atkins.
- 5.2. The Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Area was designated in 1986 and the area extended in February 1998. It comprises the historic centre of Hinckley, including Argents Mead, the Parish Church, the Market Place and The Borough.
- 5.3. The Conservation Area's character reflects Hinckley's hosiery-led industrial growth and later commercial development. This is evident in its substantial Victorian buildings, factories and commercial premises, alongside surviving 18th- and 19th-century narrow-fronted shops and houses on The Borough, Regent Street and Castle Street. Castle Street and The Narrows are

particularly notable for a continuous eastern frontage, including a former hosiery factory, late Victorian houses and a Victorian office building, with the factory's distinctive lancet windows adding character to the streetscape.

- 5.4. **Historic Interest:** The historic interest of the Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Area lies in its illustration of the town's development as an important hosiery-producing centre, and its' 19th-century industrial expansion following the arrival of the railway.
- 5.5. **Architectural and Artistic Interest:** Architecturally, the Conservation Area derives interest from its varied 18th- and 19th-century historic town-centre character, where surviving narrow-fronted shops and houses on The Borough, Regent Street and Castle Street sit alongside a Victorian factory, public buildings, and commercial shop premises associated with Hinckley's industrial prosperity.
- 5.6. **Archaeological Interest:** Assessment of archaeological interest is beyond the scope of this report.

Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Area



Source: Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

Millefs, 4 Church Street Labelled as Listed Building 'J'



Source: Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

6. Heritage Significance of 4A Castle Street, Hinckley, LE10 1DB

- 6.1. 4A Castle Street, Hinckley, was designated a Grade II listed building on 10 August 1989. The list entry (1074226) describes the building as:

House, now shop. Late C18 with C19 and C20 alterations. Red brick, the front painted and partially rendered; plain tile roof. 3 storeys with parapet band to plain coped parapet; reduced proportions to second floor. Regular 4 window front; sashes with rusticated lintels and raised key blocks. Later C20 shop front with wide fascia and inset glazed door to right of centre. Included for group value.

- 6.2. The Hinckley tithe map, surveyed between 1836 and 1850, shows a 'House & Yards' located on the future site of 4A Castle Street, designated as plot '81'. On 28 March 1844, the Landowner was recorded to be Arthur Malin, and the main occupier was William Grimes.
- 6.3. By the time of the 1886 Leicestershire OS Map, the site formed an integral part of the mercantile townscape, with the neighbouring marketplace, nearby inns, church and town hall all surrounding the site. The plot form of the property itself expanded north in comparison to the 1836-50 tithe map, with the below 1886 Map demonstrating a larger footprint. The crosshatched area indicates some kind of temporary structure, perhaps open roofed, and to the north elevation of the building two small 'infill' extensions have been made to expand the building. The 1886 OS Map shows that the building's setting was altered by the construction of additional infill buildings to the north.

1836-50 Tithe Map



Source: Genealogist

1886 OS Map



Source: NLS

- 6.4. From the 1880s to the 1920s, the property experienced no major changes or alterations. In the 1901 Census, 4 Castle Street is recorded as having 4 occupants: Eleanor Farndon, aged 90 and described as 'Living On Own Means', alongside her daughter, and two nieces, the latter three women all working in occupations including draper, dressmaker, and music professor. From 1916 the ground floor was used as a shopfront called 'Anthony Bradley's', one of ten clothing and drapers' shops on Castle Street recorded in Kelly's 1916 Trade Directory of Leicestershire.
- 6.5. The below aerial view demonstrates the built-up nature of Hinckley by the mid-twentieth century, with the site itself in the centre of the photograph, just to the right of the town hall. The site looks to be largely the same as the contemporaneous mapping, though the image quality is slightly impaired.

17 June 1959 Aerial View



Source: Historic England

1961 OS Map



Source: NLS

- 6.6. The 1961 OS Map demonstrates alterations to the rear or north elevation to the site. The neighbouring property, 2 Castle Street, seems to have extended east into the northmost section of the site, creating an L-shape. The site also clearly shows a side wall or alley, between numbers 4 and 6, likely owned by Number 6.
- 6.7. By 1961, the property was still occupied as a commercial unit by the clothing retailer Bradleys. Extant photographs show a ground floor glazed shopfront with modern large fascia signage not dissimilar to the building's current south-facing frontage.

1964 Photographs of Castle Street



Source: Francis Frith Collection

- 6.8. The more recent character of the site is shown in the 2001, 2016 and 2022 photographs below. These illustrate that the ground floor shopfront served as 'Shipleys Amusements' in 2001, and more recently, as 'Cashino Gaming' for at least the decade since the 2016 photographs.

2001 Photographs of Castle Street



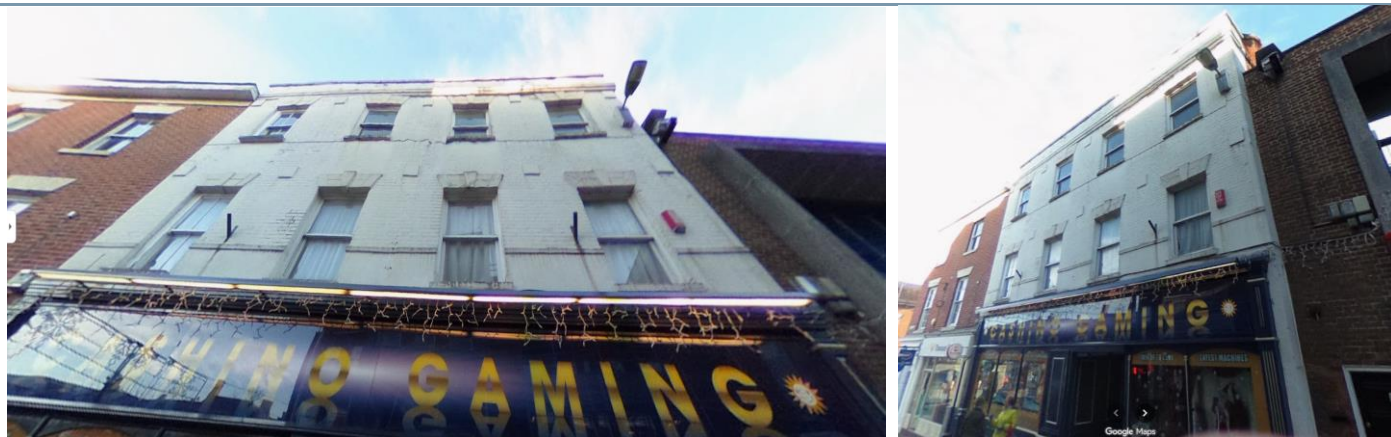
Source: Historic England Archive (IOE01/04151/06 and IOE01/04151/04)

- 6.9. The front (south) elevation has undergone several alterations since 2001, including the replacement of the flat fascia board to support new lettering, alongside changes in colour scheme. The fascia was replaced by Cashino, as shown in the below 2016 images.
- 6.10. Comparing the 1964 photographs with those below also illustrates that the shopfront, fascia and double doors are later additions to the building. The stall-risers and pilasters were also added between 1960s and before 2000s. Judging from the extant planning

history, this likely happened in the mid-1980s to the early 1990s, due to the shopfront and other alterations detailed in this time period.

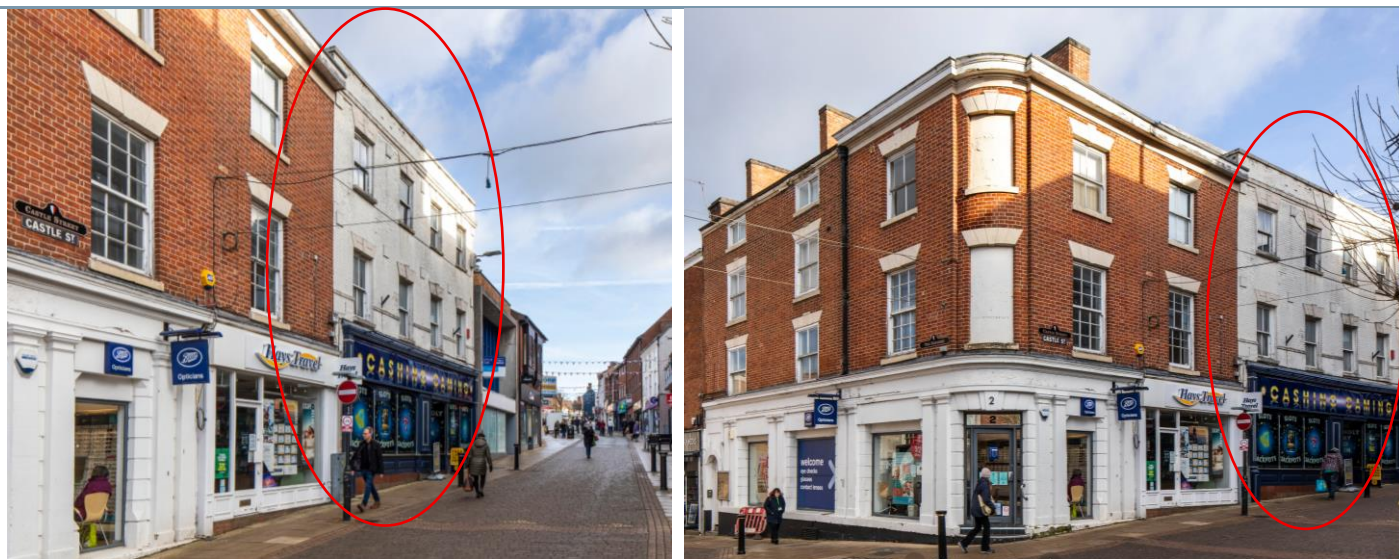
- 6.11. The lighting above the transom looks to be a very recent addition. The central hanging sign on the principal elevation of the property, just above the transom and fascia sign, was seemingly added after the 1960s, as this is present in the 2001 photographs, but then has been removed by the time of the 2016 photographs.

2016 Photographs of 4A Castle Street



Source: Google Maps

2022 Photographs of Castle Street



Source: Historic England Archive (DP312131 and DP312133)

- 6.12. **Historic Interest:** The historic interest of the listed building is primarily found in its development as a prominent terraced property, laid out as part of the expansion of Hinckley due to the town's industrial growth using steam-powered frames in factories over the nineteenth century. The variety of occupiers over time, from music professors to clothing retailers, contributes to the site's historic interest.
- 6.13. **Architectural and Artistic Interest:** Architecturally, the building's upper floors maintain a pleasant classical symmetry, characterised by its symmetrical window composition and some simple classical themed detailing. Its architectural interest lies in its regular sash-and-case fenestration, and its prominent cornice and banding toward the roof, alongside surviving original features

including the timber sash windows with decorative keystone window heads, contributing to the historic streetscape despite undergoing changes to its ground floor through multiple shopfront alterations.

- 6.14. The ground floor shopfront of no. 4a has undergone several twentieth and twenty-first century alterations and contributes little to the architectural significance of the building.
- 6.15. There is no artistic interest in the site.
- 6.16. **Archaeological Interest:** An assessment of archaeological interest is beyond the scope of this report.

Contribution to the Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Area

- 6.17. The building forms part of a prominent terrace plot at the intersection between Castle Street, The Borough and the adjacent Market Place to the south.
- 6.18. Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal highlights Castle Street within Character Area 1, mentioning its 'continuity of the core buildings which are of good proportions', on 'an attractive pedestrian scale despite new building lines which have eaten into its original gently meandering form'. The Appraisal also noted the need to ensure no further erosion of historic character and historic shopfront appearances, due to some loss of traditional fascias in Character Area 1.

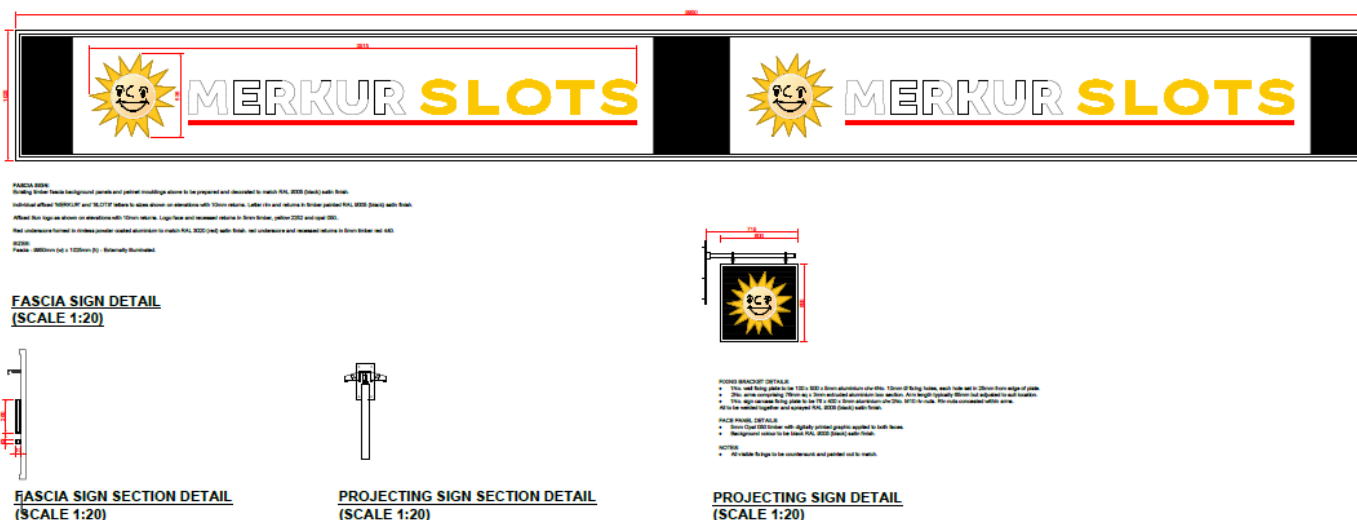
7. Proposals

- 7.1. The application relates to modest external alterations at ground floor only. These alterations include:
 - 1no. externally illuminated signage, including new timber fascia panel with black satin finish. The signage will feature Sun logo and text 'Merkur Slots'. All visible fixings to be countersunk and painted out to match. New trough light (length to illuminate artwork only). The details, including the parameters are provided on the drawings.
 - 1 no. new double-sided timber framed projecting sign with Sun logo. It will be affixed to background fascia. Sign and bracket to be decorated black paint finish. Sign to be fixed to prevent any swing. Sign will be externally illuminated.
 - Existing stallrisers to be painted black matte finish and repaired where necessary.
 - Existing timber fascia background panels and pelmet mouldings above to be prepared and decorated to match black satin finish. The shopfront to be painted matte black, a similar colour to the current dark blue colourway of the shopfront.

8. Assessment

- 8.1. It is proposed to install a double-sided projecting sign with external illumination, similar to that proposed in the 2013 to the adjacent 2 Castle Street. Additionally previous approvals for the application site's hanging sign were granted on 14th and 24th March 1993 (Respectively 93/00140/4L and 93/00133/4A).
- 8.2. The sign is subservient in scale relative to the shopfront elevation and resembles other projecting signs found in the Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Area. The sign would be affixed to the fascia's console bracket through using a bracket fixing. As the shopfront is itself modern, there is no impact upon historic material. The proposed fixing arrangement, including the dimensions and position of the bracket and sign, is illustrated on the submitted drawings.

Proposed Projecting Signage and Section Detail



Source: Merkur Casino UK

- 8.3. Other hanging signs along Castle Street include Hays Travel at Unit 2, 26 Castle Street in the Conservation Area, with the below images demonstrating the external and internal illumination apparent along the same street. As the below images show, the shop signage within the Conservation Area seems to have either halo or external illumination for their main fascia signage, whilst the hanging projecting sign is usually shown to have no or external illumination as this less likely to cause glare.

Photographs of Castle Street Illuminated Signage



Source: Google Maps – Hays Travel Hinckley, 2020 and Subway, 2017

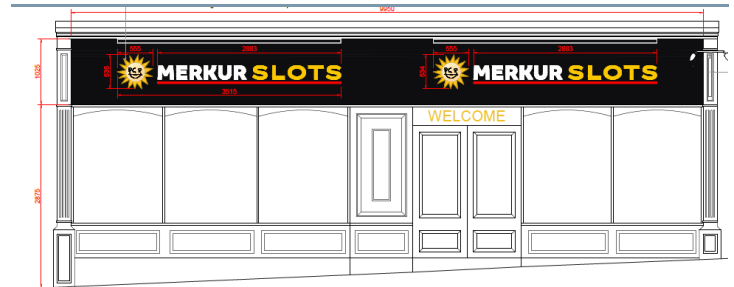
- 8.4. The proposals also include a new fascia sign with non-illuminated letters and Merkur Slots logo. The fascia is located within the established signage zone and respects the existing proportion of the shopfront. There is external illumination to the fascia sign. The fascia has been changed from the time of the mid-20th century when it was known as 'Bradleys' with modern versions of the signage including the 2001 'Shipleys Amusements' and 2016 'Cashino'. As such the fascia is modern, as well as the hanging sign on the principal elevation which was on the photographs from 2001.

Existing Shopfront Signage

Proposed Shopfront Signage



Source: Merkur Casino UK

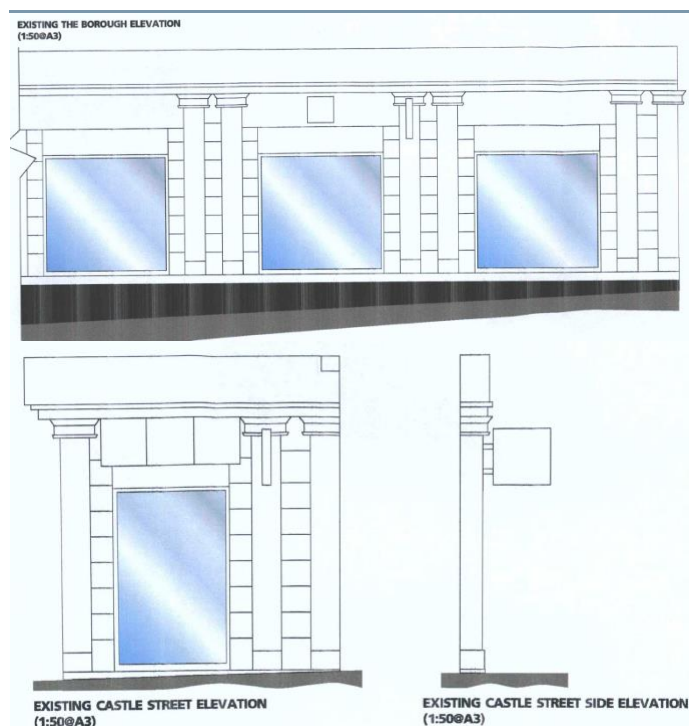


Source: Merkur Casino UK

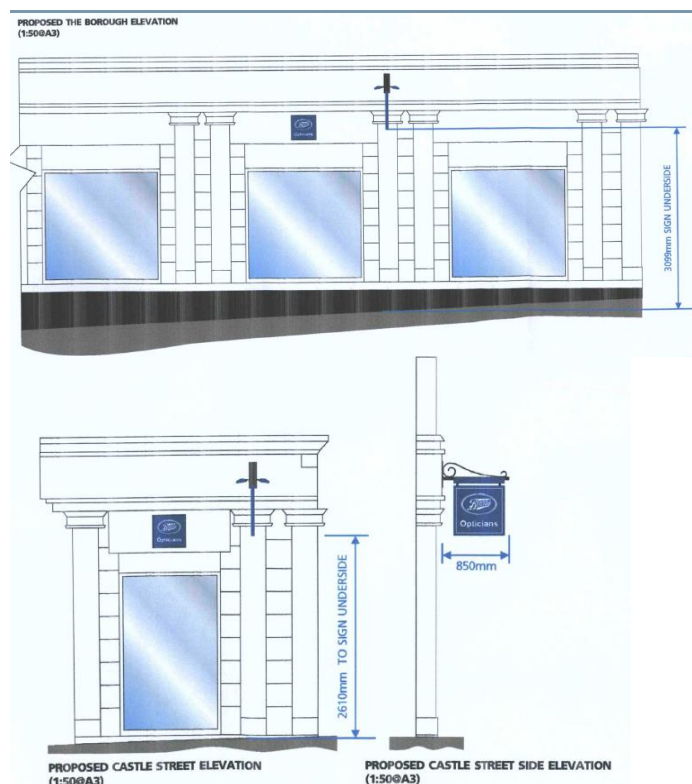
- 8.5. The current proposals for signage alterations to 4A Castle Street are very similar to the recent 2 Castle Street Listed Building Consent application (ref: 13/00046/LBC) approved 26th April 2013 for 'Replacement of signage'. This example is of particular relevance to the present application, as adjacent 2 Castle Street is a Grade II listed building, located in the immediate vicinity of 4a Castle Street.
- 8.6. The proposals involved replacing two externally illuminated projecting advertisements signs and two fascia signs. The replacement fascia signs were located in the same position as the original signage, however the externally illuminated two projecting signs were relocated to a more traditional location between the ground and first floor.

Existing Shopfront (13/00046/LBC)

Proposed Shopfront (13/00046/LBC)



Source: Blaze Signs Holdings Ltd



Source: Blaze Signs Holdings Ltd

8.7. The Delegated Report recommended granting the approval noted the following:

The projecting signs (measuring 0.65 by 0.65m) would consists of wrought iron brackets and project 0.85m from the building with two overhead trough lights illuminating the sign, one to each elevation located within the fascia and level within the proposed fascia signs. The fascia signs measures 0.42m by 0.42m with a projection of 100mm. These would be located centrally within each fascia in the same position of the signs being replaced. Amended plans have been received moving the projecting signs from level with the first floor windows to within the fascia signs.

...

The relocation of the projecting signs result in a more sympathetic treatment of this building as they would be located level with the fascia signs between ground and first floor. The application site is located within the centre of the designated retail area and advertisements contribute to the character of this area. The proposed advertisements are comparatively small and do not detract from the architectural merit of the buildings, therefore preserving the character of the building and area in which they sit. It is considered that the siting and location of the signs do not detrimentally affect the architectural or historic character of the area.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1. Overall, the proposed works represent a sensitive and proportionate intervention to the shopfront of the listed building. Where replacement is proposed, this is confined to the modern shopfront components and undertaken using appropriate materials and detailing, similar to what is currently there.
- 9.2. The replacement of fascia signage and the repainting of the existing shopfront do not alter the existing shopfront proportions, and the proposed illumination is restrained and resembles the existing, as well as other schemes within the Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Area. The proposals will also secure a viable commercial use, contributing to the vitality and appearance of the wider street scene.
- 9.3. For the above reasons, none of the works proposed would result in 'harm' to the listed building nor the character of the Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Area. As such, paragraphs 214 and 215 of the NPPF do not need to be engaged. The works also fully comply with local policy and guidance, referenced above.