

PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

May 2026

GHMPLANNING

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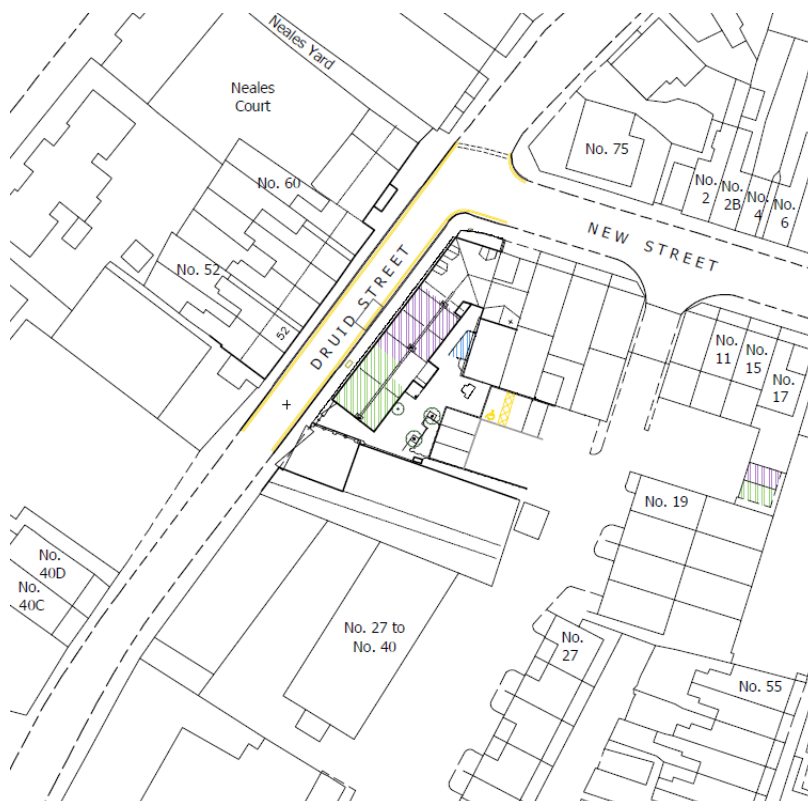
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement and Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared in support of the planning application for the change of use of the ground floors of 67 and 69 Druid Street, Hinckley, to create two x one-bedroom flats.
- 1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying documents which include:
 - Plans and drawings prepared by David Granger Architectural Design Ltd
 - Application forms
- 1.3 This statement describes the application site and locality, assesses the application in terms of local and national planning policy and assesses the merits of the proposal. It also includes a heritage impact assessment.
- 1.4 This statement has been prepared by Joe Mitson, Director of GHM Planning Ltd, BA (Hons) Urban Studies (University of Sheffield), DipTp (University of Sheffield, Cert Conservation (University of Nottingham).

2.0 Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The site is located on the eastern side of Druid Street and comprises a terrace of properties built of brick and slate. The buildings abut the highway. The properties form part of a longer L-shaped terrace which fronts onto Druid Street and wraps around New Street.
- 2.2 The majority of these properties are in residential use. 67 and 69 Druid Street have been used for commercial purposes including offices and as a dog groomers.
- 2.3 To the north of the site there is a mix of dwellings and commercial properties on the northern and southern sides of New Street. On the western side of Druid Street there is a terrace of Victorian dwellings. Commercial properties are located further south along Druid Street on both sides.
- 2.4 To the rear of the site there is hardstanding for vehicle parking to serve the properties. Access is from New Street. There are also rear gardens serving 1-7 New Street. This hardstanding also provides an area for bin storage, cycle storage etc.
- 2.5 The site is shown below on the site location plan:



2.6 The site is shown below on the Google Maps image.



2.7 The existing building is shown below:



3.0 Relevant Planning History

3.1 There is a detailed history on the site. This includes the following:

03/01464/FUL Erection of 19 residential units and 2 workshops with associated access and servicing.

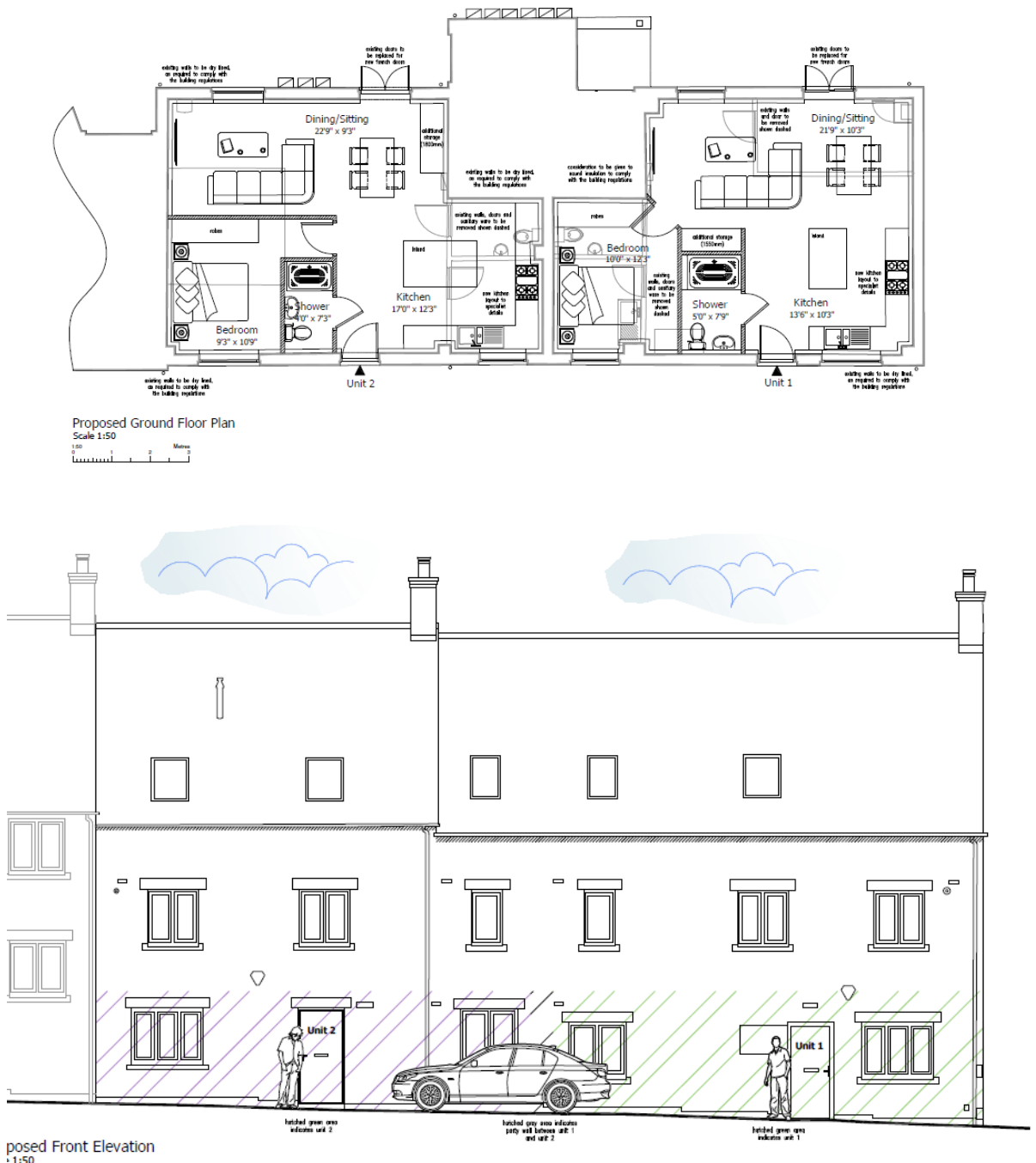
04/01346/FUL Erection of 6 new residential units, conversion of the existing factory into 11 residential units, 5 workshops and 1 retail unit with associated access and servicing.

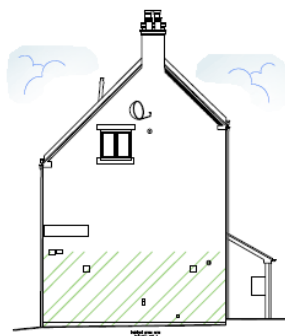
4.0 Proposed Development

4.1 The development comprises the conversion of the ground floors into two flats. The accommodation would comprise:

Flat	Floor	Accommodation	M2/B/P
1	Ground	Kitchen/Dining/Sitting/shower/bedroom	54/1B/2P
2	Ground	Kitchen/Dining/Sitting/shower/bedroom	57/1B/2P

4.2 The proposed floor plans are below:





Proposed Side Elevation
Scale 1:100

1:100
0 2 4 6
Metres



Proposed Rear Elevation
Scale 1:100

1:100
0 2 4 6
Metres

- 4.3 No external changes are proposed other than the provision of replacement French doors on the rear elevations of both proposed flats.

5.0 Planning Policy

- 5.1 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, an application for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for this area comprises the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD.
- 5.2 Relevant policies are listed below:

Core Strategy

Policy 1	Development in Hinckley
Policy 16	Housing Density, Mix and Design

Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD

DM1	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
DM10	Development and Design
DM11	Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment
DM12	Heritage Assets
DM17	Highways and Transportation
DM18	Vehicle Parking Standards

- 5.3 There are no relevant policies in the Hinckley Town Centre Area Action Plan. There is no Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.4 The site borders the Druid Street Conservation Area which was designated in 2001.
- 5.5 The NPPF makes clear that applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and in this respect the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 5.6 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. There are three overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives. These are an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective. The economic objective seeks to ensure sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places at the right time to support growth. The social objective seeks to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by ensuring a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of the present and future generations and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment. The environmental objective seeks to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land.

- 5.7 So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
- 5.8 At paragraph 48 of the NPPF it states planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.
- 5.9 Section 5 of the NPPF seeks to secure a sufficient supply of homes and at paragraph 61 it states to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet an area's identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.
- 5.10 Section 11 at paragraph 124 states planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or 'brownfield' land.
- 5.11 Section 12 seeks to achieve well-designed places. It states the creation of high-quality buildings is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and creates better places in which to live. Planning decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping, are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting and establish or maintain a strong sense of place using streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit. It also states permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

- 5.12 Section 15 relates to conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraphs 187 to 189 set out the approach to determining planning applications where there are habitats and biodiversity issues.
- 5.13 Section 16 of the NPPF relates to heritage. Paragraph 207 states 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. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
- 5.14 Paragraph 208 states local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
- 5.15 Paragraph 210 states in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 5.16 Paragraph 212 states 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.
- 5.17 Paragraph 213 states 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. Substantial harm to or loss of a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.
- 5.18 Paragraph 214 states where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local

planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply: a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

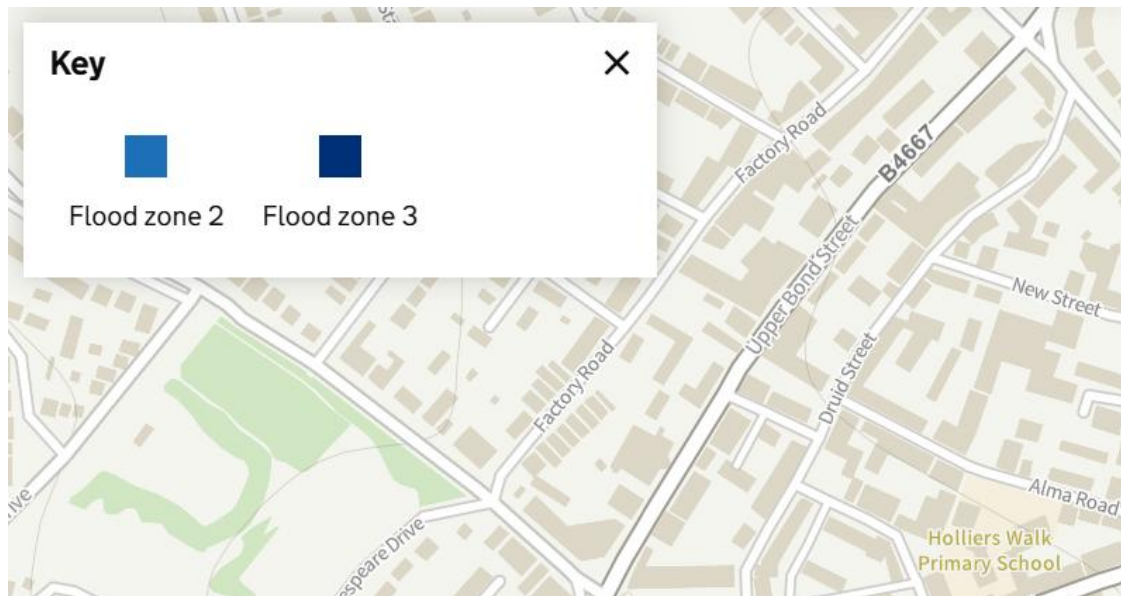
- 5.19 Paragraph 215 states where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 5.20 Paragraph 216 states the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 5.21 Paragraph 217 states local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.
- 5.22 Paragraph 219 states local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.
- 5.23 Paragraph 220 states not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 214 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 215, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.
- 5.24 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a Listed Building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall 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.

- 5.25 The Local Planning Authority is required to ensure that with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 at Section 72.

6.0 Planning Assessment and Justification

- 6.1 The proposal comprises the conversion of the two properties from commercial use to residential. The properties comprise ground floor accommodation and have historically been used as offices and for other commercial uses such as a dog groomers. However, the commercial rental market in Hinckley has slowed and the properties have been under-utilised for some time. An assessment has therefore taken place to consider viable, suitable alternative uses.
- 6.2 The area has a mixed use of residential and commercial and therefore any use must be compatible with the uses of neighbouring properties. As the remainder of the block is in use for residential, the use of 67-69 Druid Street as flats appears to be the optimum use of the buildings.
- 6.3 The proposal would result in the loss of two commercial premises. However, the lost floor area would be limited to approximately 110m²; this would have no impact on the wider commercial offering of the town centre. Furthermore, the premises have been vacant for some time which has led to the proposed change of use in order to better utilise the buildings.
- 6.4 The buildings are not protected as employment sites/buildings in the Development Plan. The properties occupy a town centre location which is sustainable with policy CS1 supporting development in Hinckley. The use of the neighbouring buildings and sites is a mix of residential and commercial with residential abutting to the north and north-east and on the western side of Druid Street. The historic commercial part of Druid Street lies to the south.
- 6.5 The site occupies a sustainable location within the town. Access to shops, services and public transport links are available on foot or by cycling.
- 6.6 It is therefore considered that the proposals would not give rise to a material loss of required commercial floorspace. It is also considered that the proposals would provide two additional residential units in a sustainable location. Furthermore, by re-using the building the proposals are sustainable.
- 6.7 The proposed conversion could take place with limited external alteration. No changes are proposed to the front or side elevations with the only external alteration comprising the replacement of the double doors to the rear with French doors. As such, the proposals are considered to be visually acceptable.
- 6.8 The area is characterised mostly by residential properties with housing to the north, north-east and west. The proposed conversion could take place without harm to the residential amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties. No external alterations are proposed other than replacement ground floor doors to the rear elevation. There would be no harm to residential amenity through any overbearing impact, overshadowing, loss of daylight/sunlight etc. There would also be no overlooking or loss of privacy with the units being limited to ground floor accommodation.
- 6.9 Furthermore, the proposals would provide future occupants with a high level of amenity with the accommodation meeting the national space standards and with all rooms illuminated by natural light. The flats would be serviced by a rear yard providing bin storage, cycle storage, outdoor drying etc.

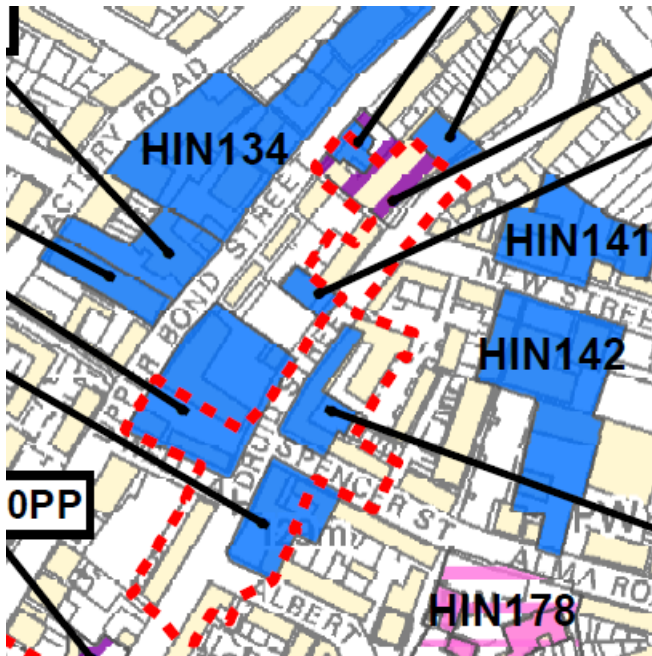
- 6.10 The proposals would be accessed via the existing vehicular access off New Street. This leads to a dedicated parking space for each flat together with on-site turning. This is the same relationship as with the existing commercial use.
- 6.11 It is not considered that the proposed change of use would result in a material increase in traffic generation and that the access and parking is adequate for the proposed use. The proposals would therefore be acceptable in terms of highway safety and parking.
- 6.12 The site is in Flood Zone 1 as per the Environment Agency Flood Map below:



- 6.13 It is therefore considered that the proposals are acceptable in terms of the principle of development, visual amenity, residential amenity, highway safety, parking and flood risk.

7.0 Heritage Assessment

- 7.1 The site borders the Druid Street conservation area.
- 7.2 There are no listed buildings in the locality. There are no scheduled monuments and the site is not within a historic park and garden. Pevsner refers to 66 Druid Street. The HER did not reveal other heritage assets.
- 7.3 This statement will therefore consider the impact of the proposals on the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 7.4 The conservation area covers the area shown below:



- 7.5 The Druid Street Conservation Area is located immediately to the north of Hinckley town centre, a part of the town which has undergone recent restoration. It is known nationally as the cradle of the hosiery industry although the town itself has few protected buildings associated with the trade. The most important phase of factory based hosiery production extended from the late 19th until the mid-20th Century. Changes in clothing retailing however led to the closure of several of these factories and put these important local heritage buildings and the area's industrial environment under threat. Druid Street was a major centre for the town's industrial development at this time and has largely escaped modern development.
- 7.6 The Druid Street Conservation Area was designated in 2001 to provide some protection to the area. The designation was also seen as a way to highlight the importance of the hosiery industry to the town's heritage.
- 7.7 The proposals would not result in any external alterations to the front or side elevations with only minor changes to the rear elevation. The building to be converted is a relatively modern building which responds to the prevailing

character through abutting the highway, addressing the junction of Druid Street and New Street and of being of brick and slate.

- 7.8 The proposals would not have any impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area. As such, the proposals would meet the tests set in the Act, NPPF and Development Plan.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 For the reasons set out above, it is considered that the proposals are acceptable in principle, would be visually acceptable including in terms of heritage assets, would protect the residential amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties and provide a high standard of amenity for future occupiers, and would be acceptable in terms of highway safety and parking and flood risk.
- 8.2 The proposal is deemed to meet local and national planning policies with no harm identified and it is respectfully requested that permission be granted.