

Wigston Estates Limited

**FORMER DANILO CINEMA
TRINITY LANE HINCKLEY
LEICESTERSHIRE**

**STATEMENT OF HERITAGE
SIGNIFICANCE AND HERITAGE
IMPACT ASSESSMENT**



Michael Taylor Conservation and Planning

**FORMER DANILO CINEMA, TRINITY LANE,
HINCKLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE**

**STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE AND
HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Michael Taylor Conservation and Planning (MTCP)

MTCP specialises in advising private and public sector clients on the interface between the conservation of historic buildings and places and the planning system. This work includes planning advice for historic sites and places, statements of significance, heritage impact assessments, setting studies, research, writing and representation.

Michael Taylor had over 20 years' experience as a planner with Leicester City Council. From 1988 to 2000 he was Leicester's Senior Building Conservation Officer. He joined English Heritage in the West Midlands Region in 2000 and was Historic Areas Adviser for the region until 2013.

Since 2013 Michael has practiced independently as Michael Taylor Conservation and Planning. Recent projects have included a heritage appraisal for proposed conversion of Stanton Hall, Derbyshire, a contextual study of a proposed development site in Harpur Hill, Derbyshire, a heritage statement for a development site in Blackpool and advice to Leicester Diocesan Board of Finance on the reuse of properties in central Leicester. In 2016 he completed a new version of the book *The Quality of Leicester* for Leicester City Council. Michael was engaged in 2018 by Historic England to advise on the development of the site of Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings, a site that includes the earliest iron-framed building in the world. Other recent clients have included Leicester Cathedral, Coventry City Council (with Node Urban Design) and Trafford Council.

Michael Taylor holds a BA Honours degree in sociology and a postgraduate Diploma in Town Planning. He also holds an MA degree in Architectural Building Conservation awarded with Distinction. He is a Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute and of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation. He is recognised by IHBC as a historic environment service provider. He is active in IHBC as chair of the institute's Editorial Board responsible for producing the journal *Context*. Michael has been an Honorary Fellow in the Centre for Urban History at the University of Leicester, is a member of the advisory board for the Centre and has lectured there on Urban Sustainability and on Conservation in Practice. He is a member of Leicester City Council's Conservation Advisory Panel.

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Summary

Part A of this report is a statement of heritage significance for the former Danilo Cinema in Trinity Lane, Hinckley, Leicestershire. Part B is a heritage impact assessment for a proposal to convert the former cinema to residential use with external additions and alterations and parking. This document has been produced to satisfy the requirements of paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021¹ (NPPF). MTCP has been commissioned to research and write the report by Nathaniel Chima of Wigston Estates Ltd.

Statement of Heritage Significance

The former Danilo cinema is located on the northern edge of the town centre of Hinckley at Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference 442540 E 294209 N and at postcode LE10 0BH. The local planning authority is Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC).

The subject of the report is a former cinema built in the 1930s. It is faced in brick and has flat roofs. It is generally plain in design but has some decorative features characteristic of its period including a quarter-dome entrance. The building has a small curtilage partly used for car parking.

The former cinema is within the Hinckley Hollycroft Conservation Area and development may affect the setting of the Holly Bush PH, a grade II listed building.

The report has been researched and written in general conformity with relevant advice from Historic England. A visit to the site was made and a Historic Environment Record search commissioned. Primary sources of information have been accessed in the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland. Online and secondary sources have also been used.

The building is not listed and the interior was not examined as part of this research. Only steelwork and brick walls remain inside the building.

This document is a statement of heritage significance and an assessment of the impact on significance of the proposals described in Part B only and should not be cited or used for any other purpose.

The legislative and policy framework for consideration of proposals affecting the former cinema consists of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework 2021, the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2009 with the Site Allocations and development Management Policies 2016 and the Hinckley Town Centre Action Plan 2011.

The Hollycroft Conservation Area was designated in 1998 and includes Hollycroft Park and streets around its perimeter plus the group of inter-war buildings, including the former cinema, around Bond Street Circus. The area also includes the grade II listed Holly Bush Inn.

¹ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

The conservation area appraisal notes the larger scale and mass of the former cinema in relation to the buildings around it. Part of the Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Area may also be affected by proposals for the former cinema along with listed buildings within it.

Hinckley developed from a Saxon settlement to an important centre for hosiery manufacture. Archaeological evidence reveals little indication of medieval or later settlement on the site of the former cinema and its immediate context. Map evidence from 1782 similarly shows an open site on the edge of the town. By 1889 development was advancing from the core of the town but the cinema site remains unbuilt on until after the OS map edition of 1903. By 1924 a hosiery factory had been built on part of the site but by 1942 this had been replaced by the Danilo Cinema. Aerial photographs dated circa 1970 show the cinema in its present form within the townscape of the town centre.

The cinema was built to the design of Ernest Roberts and opened in July 1937. It traded as the Danilo until 1970 and under other names until 1994 after which it was changed to a sports bar in 1998 and finally became vacant in 2004.

Subsequent planning applications have had no tangible outcome.

The setting of the former Danilo cinema is formed by its landmark quality in Bond Street Circus and by views along Lower and Upper Bond Street, Hollycroft and Trinity Lane. The building has a close visual relationship with the listed Holly Bush PH.

In terms of its heritage significance the former cinema has little or no archaeological value, moderate architectural and artistic value in its design, characteristic of its period, and its position in the street scene of Bond Street Circus. It also has a measure of historical value as an illustration of changing tastes in leisure during its lifetime and its role as a key feature of an area developed mainly in the 1930s. Overall the building and its site has moderated significance.

Heritage Impact Assessment

It is proposed to convert the former cinema to residential use providing 36 one-bedroom flats. The elevation to Hollycroft will be rebuilt to a new design, the roof will be extended upwards and new window openings will be made. 17 car parking spaces will be provided within the site. The proposal is shown on Design to Construct Ltd drawings 23/848/01-08.

The proposal will have a marked impact on the building although some details will echo the original design and the bulk of the building as a feature in the street scene will remain.

The proposal will preserve the character of the Hollycroft Conservation Area and will preserve the setting of the Holly Bush PH. It will not affect the setting of nearby listed buildings in the Town Centre Conservation Area. It will therefore conform to relevant provisions in legislation and meet the requirements both national and local policy.

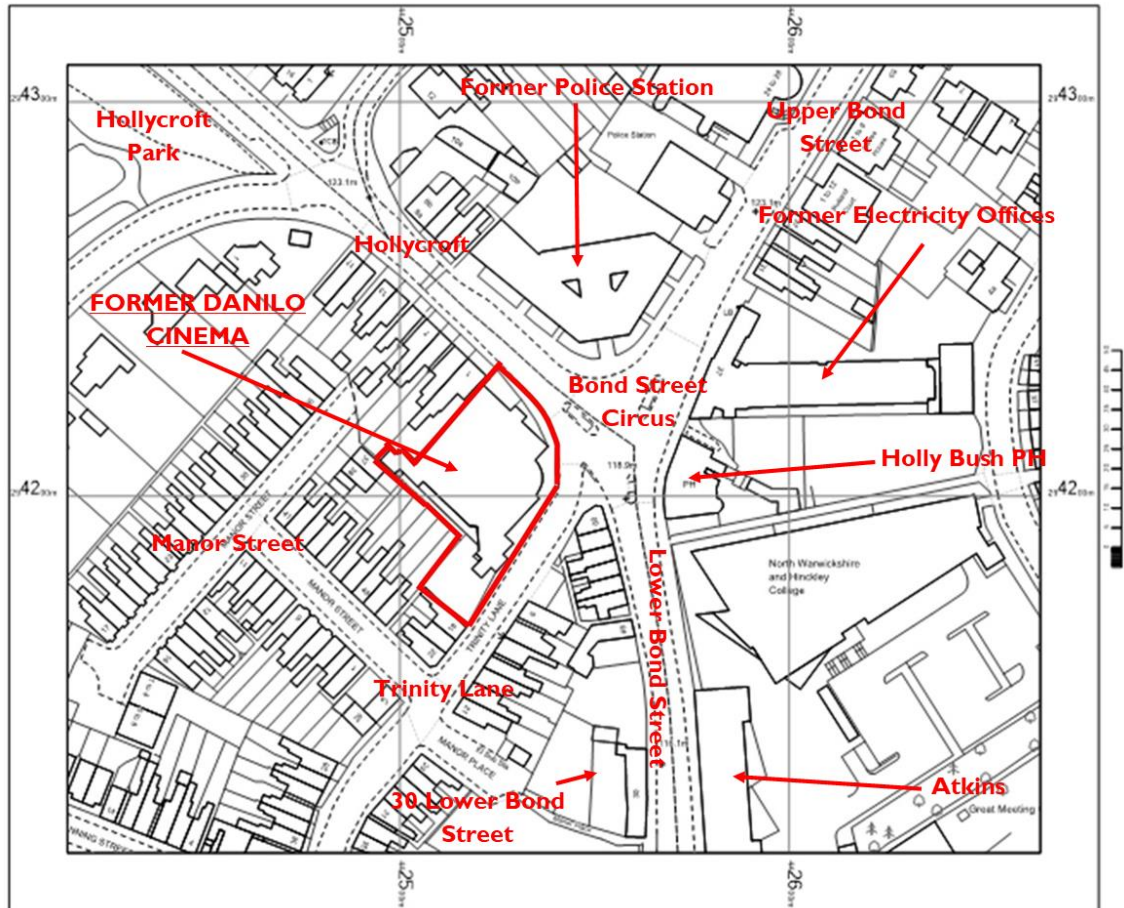


Fig 1: Orientation (Reproduced under Ordnance Survey licence number AC0000805567)

PURPOSE

Part A of this report is a statement of heritage significance for the former Danilo Cinema in Trinity Lane, Hinckley, Leicestershire. Part B is a heritage impact assessment for a proposal to convert the former cinema to residential use with external additions and alterations and parking. This document has been produced to satisfy the requirements of paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021² (NPPF). MTCP has been commissioned to research and write the report by Nathaniel Chima of Wigston Estates Ltd.

² NPPF 2021 op cit

PART A: STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

I. Introduction

Location

The former Danilo Cinema is located on the northern edge of Hinckley town centre about 0.43 km north-west of the parish church. It is at Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference 442540 E 294209 N and at postcode LE10 0BH. The local planning authority is Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC).

Description

The building which is the subject of this report is a former cinema built in the 1930s. It stands on a site of about 1,450 m² in area at the junction of Lower Bond Street, Upper Bond Street, Trinity Lane and Hollycroft on the northern edge of Hinckley town centre. It has flat roofs and echoes the ridge height of the houses to the north-west and the former civic buildings on the opposite sides of Hollycroft and Upper Bond Street. The cinema is faced in pinkish brown wirecut brick with simple decorative details formed in brick including a corbel device on the stair tower. Parts of the south-west side and the rear elevations are faced in common brick. External elevations to the auditorium are generally treated simply and there are blank elevations to Hollycroft and Manor Street. The elevation to Trinity Lane is relieved by five tall window openings currently covered for security. There is a rectangular stair or lift tower on the south-west corner facing Trinity Lane. The entrance, facing the junction of the four streets (referred to as Bond Street Circus) is a single-storey quarter dome rendered and painted white. It is simply decorated with a frieze of inset panels above the entrance doors. A tall, chamfered wooden structure in the angle of the entrance façade terminates in a stone coping. Terrazzo steps lead up to the doors from the footway.

The building stands in a small curtilage partly used for car parking. The site includes a vacant and unsightly patch of land south-west of the building fronting Trinity Lane.

Heritage status

The former Danilo Cinema is wholly within the Hinckley Hollycroft Conservation Area. Development may therefore affect the character and appearance of the area. On the opposite side of Trinity Lane the Holly Bush public house is a grade II listed building. Development of the former cinema may affect the setting of the Holly Bush.

Former Danilo Cinema Hinckley
statement of heritage significance and heritage impact assessment



Fig 2: The former Danilo cinema from Upper Bond Street



Fig 3: Rear elevation of the former Danilo cinema facing Manor Street



Fig 4: Side (south-west) elevation



Fig 5: Part of elevation to Trinity Lane



Fig 6: Entrance to the former Danilo Cinema Trinity Lane / Hollycroft

2. Method and limitations

This report has been compiled in general conformity with advice on the preparation of statements of heritage significance published by Historic England³. This advice (HEAN 12), in paragraphs 29-31, stresses the need for the analysis of significance to be proportional to the importance of the asset and the scale of proposed changes to it and that advice has guided the present document. The document is an analysis based on observation and readily available primary and secondary sources not an academic history of the site.

³ Historic England 2019 *Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* Historic England Advice Note 12. Swindon. Historic England.

This statement of heritage significance has been compiled following a visit to the site on 8 November 2023. Weather for the visit was cloudy and dull. A photographic record was made and observations noted. A Historic Environment Record (HER) search has been commissioned from Leicestershire County Council and appropriate primary sources have been examined at the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (ROLLR). Online sources such as the Historic England archive have also been consulted. An enquiry has been made with the Cinema Theatre Association.

As the building is not listed the interior was not examined as part of this research. The interior has been reduced to steel and brick walls⁴.

This document is a statement of heritage significance and an assessment of the impact on significance of the proposals described in Part B only and should not be cited or used for any other purpose.

3. Legislation and Policy Context

Legislation

The **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990** provides the legislative framework for the conservation of listed buildings and conservation areas within the planning system.

Section 66 of the Act states that: *in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority...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.*

Section 69 defines a conservation area as: *an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.*

Section 72 requires the local planning authority, in the exercise of powers in respect of buildings or land within a conservation area, to give *special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.*

National Policy

The **National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF)**⁵ contains a suite of national government policies for the management of the historic built environment in the planning process. These are contained in Chapter 16 of the NPPF.

Paragraphs 199 and 200 set out the importance of heritage assets in considering the merits of development affecting them.

⁴ Information from Ian Storm, Design to Build Ltd 30 November 2023

⁵ NPPF 2021 op cit

199. 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.

200. 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.*

Paragraphs 201 to 202 go on to distinguish between substantial and less than substantial harm to heritage assets.

201. 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.

202. 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.

Paragraph 203 deals with non-designated heritage assets.

203. 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.

Paragraphs 204 and 205 set out duties on developers in proposals that affect heritage assets.

204. 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.

205. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly

accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

Paragraphs 206 and 207 contain provisions affecting development in conservation areas.

206. 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.

207. 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 201 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 202, 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.

Local policy

Local policy is contained in **Hinckley and Bosworth Local Development Framework Core Strategy** adopted December 2009

Spatial objectives 9 and 11 address the distinctiveness of the borough's built environment.

THE ENVIRONMENT Spatial Objective 9: Identity, Distinctiveness and Quality of Design

To ensure development contributes to the local distinctiveness of the borough, and enhances both settlement identity and the environment through the quality of sustainable design. Design and other measures will be used to develop strong community identities and neighbourhood pride.

Spatial Objective 11: Built Environment and Townscape Character

To safeguard, enhance and where necessary regenerate the borough's distinctive built environment including its wider setting particularly that associated with Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and historic industries.

Site Allocations and Development Management Policies were adopted in 2016.

Relevant policies include:

DM11 Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment

The Borough Council will protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment throughout the borough. This will be done through the careful management of development that might adversely impact both designated and non-designated heritage assets. All development proposals which have the potential to affect a heritage asset or its setting will be required to demonstrate:

a) An understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and its setting, and

- b) The impact of the proposal on the significance of the asset and its setting, including measures to minimise or avoid these impacts;
- c) How the benefits of the proposal will outweigh any harm caused; and
- d) Any impact on archaeology in line with Policy DM13.

DM12 Heritage Assets

All development proposals affecting heritage assets and their setting will be expected to secure their continued protection or enhancement, contribute to the distinctiveness of the areas in which they are located and contribute to the wider vibrancy of the borough.

All development proposals affecting the significance of heritage assets and their setting will be assessed in accordance with Policy DM11: Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment and will require justification as set out in this policy.

All development proposals will need to accord with Policy DM10: Development and Design. Listed Buildings Proposals for the change of use, extensions and alterations of listed buildings and development affecting the setting of listed buildings will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the proposals are compatible with the significance of the building and its setting.

Conservation Areas Development proposals should ensure the significance of a conservation area is preserved and enhanced through the consideration and inclusion of important features (as identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan) including, but not limited to the following: materials which are characteristic of the conservation area; and out of the Conservation Area; with those of the same or similar species;

- a) Appropriate boundary treatments which reflect the local style and
- b) The preservation and enhancement of key views and/or vistas in
- c) The replacement of dead or dying important trees and hedgerows
- d) Reinforce or mirror the historic street pattern and plan form where feasible;
- e) The use of sensitively styled street furniture;
- f) The use of natural building materials, preferably locally sourced; and,
- g) The retention of key spaces within the conservation area.

Proposals which seek to improve identified neutral and negative areas inside designated conservation areas, which also lead to the overall enhancement of the conservation area, will be supported and encouraged.

All applications which include the demolition of buildings and means of enclosure within a Conservation Area must propose an adequate replacement which enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area. Conditions will be imposed to ensure demolition does not occur until immediately prior to the redevelopment or remediation.

Historic Landscapes

Proposals affecting historic landscapes, their features or setting should have regard to their significance and be justified in line with Policy DM11.

Locally Important Heritage Assets identified on the Locally Important Heritage Asset List should be retained and enhanced wherever possible. The significance of the assets illustrated in the List and the impact on this significance should be demonstrated and justified in line with Policy DM11.

The Hinckley Town Centre Area Action Plan was adopted in 2011. Included in its policies is:

Spatial Objective 7: To improve the public realm through new public spaces, environmental improvements and public art, and to enhance the conservation of the historic character of the town centre through heritage-led regeneration.

The Council is working on a new local plan for the borough for the period 2020-2041. There is no neighbourhood plan made or in preparation covering the centre of Hinckley.

4. Hollycroft Conservation Area and related assets



Fig 7: Boundary of Hollycroft Conservation Area and part of Town Centre Conservation Area. Former Danilo Cinema indicated by red triangle (Reproduced by kind permission of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council)

The former cinema is within Hollycroft Conservation Area although the vacant part of the cinema site on Trinity Lane is outside the conservation area boundary. The area was designated in 1998 and has the benefit of a full appraisal and management plan published in 2011⁶.

The appraisal shows that the land that now forms the conservation area was based on a 12-acre purchase in 1930 from the Thomas Atkins Trust by Hinckley Urban District Council. The council laid out Hollycroft Park which is the central feature of the conservation area. Hollycroft Park today is well-kept and picturesque with a fine collection of specimen trees.

The conservation area also includes Hollycroft hill, Shakespeare Drive and St George's Avenue forming the perimeter roads on three sides of the park. A south-eastward projection of the conservation area takes in Hollycroft and the junction with Bond Street and Trinity Lane. This area includes some houses of the late 19th or early 20th century but is mainly a striking inter-war set-piece with the former cinema, the former police station and the former offices of Leicestershire and Warwickshire Electric Power Company.



Fig 8: Holly Bush Public House

Also part of this group is the Holly Bush Inn, by architects Heaton and Walker, listed in grade II. The Inn was built in the late 1930s and has some Art Deco features. It is immediately opposite the former cinema⁷.

The conservation area appraisal identifies this area as the Bond Street Circus. It notes in paragraph 7.15 that the busy junction is 'the commercial heart of the area' standing at the top of Hollycroft hill and that the street edge buildings are of a different character of the rest of the conservation area. These buildings are of a much larger scale and mass and dominate the skyline at the top of the hill. The appraisal describes the former cinema in paragraph 12.12 as 'a very important art deco landmark building which adds significantly to the character of the conservation area and needs to be brought back into use'.

The appraisal and management plan identify the former cinema, along with all the other older buildings within the conservation area as 'Important Historic Buildings'.

⁶ HBBC *Hollycroft Conservation Appraisal* 1 March 2011

HBBC *Hollycroft Conservation Area Management Plan and Long Term Strategy* 29 January 2011

⁷ Historic England listed building reference 1391310

Part of the Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Area extends northward towards Hollycroft. The boundaries are separated by about 30 metres on Lower Bond Street. This northern section of the Town Centre Conservation Area includes three listed buildings namely the Atkins Brothers former hosiery factory (Grade II)⁸, 30 Lower Bond Street (grade II)⁹ and the Great Meeting (grade II*)¹⁰.

5. Development of Trinity Lane and the Bond Street Circus

Hinckley developed as a Saxon settlement and was a large village at the time of the Domesday Book in 1086. By the 12th century Hinckley had a motte and bailey castle and a priory. It prospered as a market town in the medieval period. The first stocking frame arrived in 1640 and Hinckley developed as an important centre for the hosiery industry for a time surpassing Leicester. The railway arrived in 1862 and replacement of steam-powered knitting frames in place of hand frames caused further growth of the industry and the town¹¹.

Archaeological evaluation has shown little evidence of development in the Hollycroft area before the post medieval period. Later development shows a gradual growth of the hosiery industry first as a domestic industry and then progressively moving to purpose-built factories¹².

1782



Fig 9: Robinson's map of Hinckley 1782. Approximate site of Danilo Cinema shown by red triangle
(Reproduced by kind permission of the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, catalogue number MA/141/3 DE 3045)

⁸ Historic England listed building reference 1391481

⁹ HE reference 1294992

¹⁰ HE reference 1295167

¹¹ HBBC *Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal* February 2013

¹² HER data Event ID ELE5090

A *Plan of the Town of Hinckley* by J Robinson published in 1782¹³ shows the northern edge of the town shading into open countryside with a windmill on Mill Hill roughly on the site of the modern Hollycroft hilltop. It is difficult to transpose the modern layout onto this map exactly but the site of the former cinema appears to be open land below the hilltop windmill.

1889

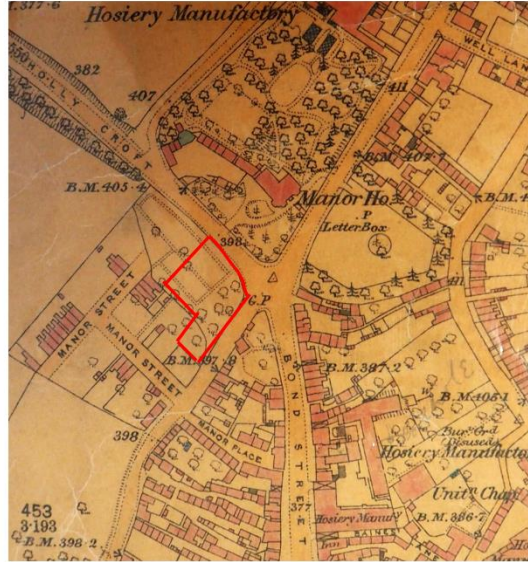


Fig 10: 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1889. Approximate outline of former cinema site outlined red.
(Reproduced by kind permission of the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland)

The 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1889¹⁴ shows much of the area around Bond Street Circus as open land although development is pushing up from the town centre to the south. The site of the former cinema is still shown as an orchard or garden but the construction of the T-shaped Manor Street is starting to define the eventual site of the cinema. The Manor House is on the north-east side of Hollycroft on the eventual site of the police station.

1903

The 2nd Edition OS map of 1903 shows less detail of trees and possible garden layout but the shape of the site is the same as that shown on the 1889 edition. The frontage to Hollycroft opposite the Manor House remains unbuilt on. There has been further development of terraced houses in Manor Street.

¹³ ROLLR catalogues number MA/142/3 DE3045

¹⁴ 25 inches to 1 mile OS sheet XLII 8 1889 1903 1924 1942 courtesy of ROLLR

Former Danilo Cinema Hinckley
statement of heritage significance and heritage impact assessment



Fig 11: 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1903. Approximate outline of former cinema site outlined red.
(Reproduced by kind permission of the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland)

1924

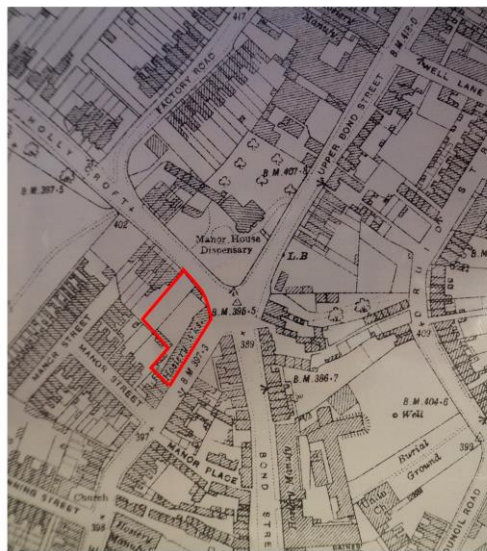


Fig 12: 1924 Edition Ordnance Survey Map. Approximate outline of former cinema site outlined red.
(Reproduced by kind permission of the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland)

By 1924 a hosiery factory had been built on Trinity Lane fronting the site. One of many such factories in Hinckley Town Centre. The building has a shallow plan leaving part of the later site of the cinema as an open yard at the rear. The length of the building covering the open area remaining on Trinity Lane explains the present extent of the site. Terraced houses have been built on the frontage to Holly Croft. The Manor House is labelled 'Manor House Dispensary'. Paragraph 12.3 of the Conservation Area Appraisal states that the Manor House was used as a tuberculosis dispensary.

1942

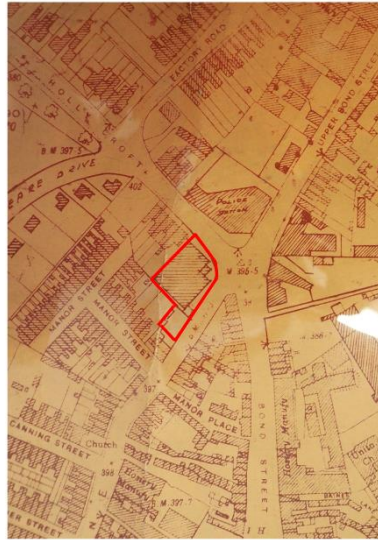


Fig 13: 1942 Edition Ordnance Survey Map. Approximate outline of former cinema site outlined red.
(Reproduced by kind permission of the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland)

The 1942 map shows the site in close to its surviving configuration. The cinema is hand drawn as are the police station and the other buildings around Bond Street Circus. The layout is drawn showing a square entrance and omits the stair tower on the south-west and the lower tower on the north-west corner of the building. The entrance was always a quarter-dome as existing. Also omitted is the projecting bay on the Hollycroft elevation. The cinema is otherwise fitted into almost the complete area of the site apart from the vacant piece of land on Trinity Lane which historic photographs¹⁵ show is the cinema car park.

The Danilo Cinema¹⁶

Following the demolition of the hosiery factory which was formerly on the site, designs for a new cinema were produced by the Birmingham architect Ernest S Roberts¹⁷. The contractors were GE and W Wincott of Nuneaton. The cinema was designed for an audience of 1,1250 and included a stage and two dressing rooms for live performance. Decoration was simple and modern. The entrance bay was decorated with neon lighting and the chamfered tower and the corbel on Trinity Lane held vertical banners carrying the name 'Danilo'¹⁸.

¹⁵ The Tony Moss collection by courtesy of The Cinema Theatre Association (CTA)

¹⁶ www.hinckleypastpresent.org/thedanilo.htms

¹⁷ Ernest Roberts was the father of James Roberts who designed much of the 1960s city centre redevelopment in Birmingham and Liverpool

¹⁸ Photographs by courtesy of CTA

The Danilo chain operated cinemas mostly in the smaller urban centres in the West Midlands. The local MP, Sir William Edge, and film star of the day Judy Kelly opened the Hinckley Danilo on 26 July 1937.

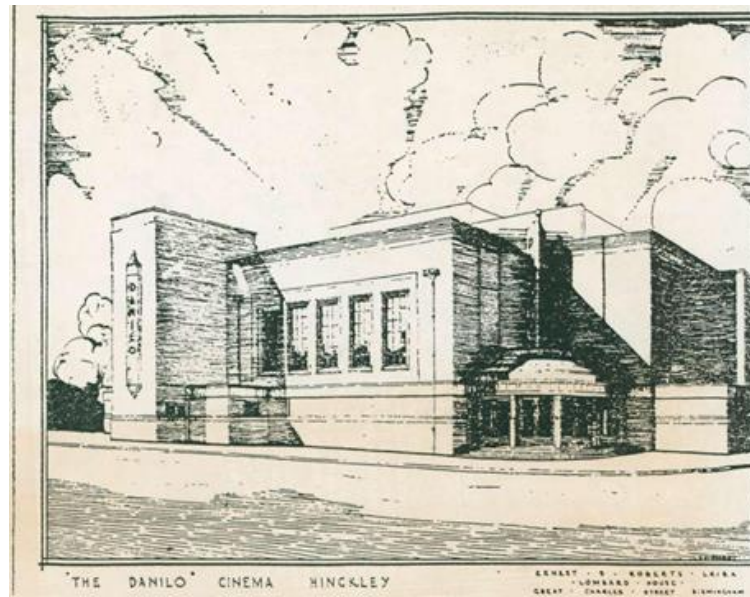


Fig 14: Architect's publicity drawing 1937 marking the opening of the Danilo Cinema (Cinema Theatre Association archive by kind permission of CTA)

The cinema traded as the Danilo until 1970 when it was taken over and renamed as the Essoldo. In 1972 it was bought by Classic cinemas and renamed again and converted to a 3-screen house in 1973 later renamed the Cannon. The cinema closed in 1994 and despite a campaign to reopen it changed use to a sports and entertainment bar in 1998 before closing and becoming vacant from 2004 to the present.

Circa 1970

Two of a set of Aerofilms photographs of Hinckley dated circa 1970¹⁹ by ROLLR (copyright protected) show the cinema from the north-west and south-west. They show details of the roof, rooftop plant and parapets. The brick corbel on the stair or lift tower fronting Trinity Lane still supports a vertical sign.

Planning History

The HBBC website shows applications since 1985 some of these are for minor development such as signs. A certificate of lawful use was granted in 1995 (HBBC reference 95/00513/CLU) for family and leisure use. This followed closure as a cinema in 1994. An application for change of use to a public house with a dance floor was submitted but withdrawn in 2001 ((01/00758/COU). A more significant proposal in 2016 for complete demolition and redevelopment for mixed uses including 29 flats (16/00503/FUL) did not proceed.

¹⁹ ROLLR catalogue number DE8810/272

Conclusion

The trajectory of the site is fairly simple. From open countryside in the late 18th century the site remained unbuilt on as development spread northwards from the town centre around it until sometime between 1903 and 1924. Then a short-lived hosiery factory building occupied part of the site followed by a cinema filling most of the plot. The cinema was subject to minor alterations and additions and to changes in its use after closing in 1994.

6. The setting of the former cinema

The setting of a heritage asset is defined as:

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.²⁰

Setting is not defined entirely in visual terms but visual factors are inevitably important. The former cinema is a key component in the inter-war group of buildings around Bond Street Circus referred to in section 4 above. As such it is prominently visible looking south-west along Upper Bond Street. From Lower Bond Street the former cinema is hidden by the curve in the road alignment and does not affect the character and appearance of the Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Area or the settings of 30 Bond Street, the former Atkins factory or the Great Meeting. (The last building is anyway hidden from the street behind Atkins.)



Fig 15: Former Danilo cinema from Upper Bond Street

²⁰ NPPF 2021 op cit Annex 2 Glossary p 71

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Fig 16: Bond Street Circus from Hollycroft with the former cinema just out of shot on the right



Fig 17: View from Hollycroft towards Bond Street Circus with the former cinema obliquely visible on the right

Within the Hollycroft Conservation Area the former cinema and the Holly Bush PH are on opposite sides of Bond Street Circus and works to the cinema may therefore affect the setting of the Holly Bush. The view looking south-eastwards along Hollycroft toward the Holly Bush PH is noted in the conservation area appraisal as a view to be protected but the cinema is seen only obliquely in this view forming a framing element rather than a terminal feature.



Fig 18: View along Trinity Lane towards Bond Street Circus with the lift / stair tower on the right side of the street

Looking north-eastwards along Trinity Lane from outside the conservation areas the stair /lift tower is prominent in the view but the bulk of the building is set back behind it. The large side elevation of the cinema is prominently visible across the open area left by the demolition of the hosiery factory on proceeding towards Bond Street. In views from Manor Street, again outside the conservation area, the plain rear elevation of the cinema is prominently visible.

7. Summary of heritage significance

HEAN 12²¹ sets out three categories of heritage values which have been used to structure this analysis. The sum of an asset's heritage values is the heritage significance of the asset. Significance is not the same as designation: designation represents only one point on the spectrum of significance.

Archaeological value

The Historic Environment Record search shows scattered archaeological evidence within a 750m radius of the former cinema but not on the site itself. The site has been developed twice and is unlikely to hold further undisturbed archaeological evidence.

Architectural and artistic value

The former Danilo cinema is a good example of a 1930s cinema and of the work of Ernest Roberts. It's overall configuration and some of its decorative features echo other cinema architecture of the time. But it is not as elaborate or accomplished a design, either in three-dimensional form or decoration, as many other contemporary cinema buildings. The former cinema occupies a pivotal position in the street scene of the Bond Street Circus and in the inter-war set piece around it.

Historical value

The former cinema is evidence of changing tastes in leisure and trends in urban development over its, nearly 90-year life. It is a key feature in a distinctive inter-war district developed following the purchase of land from the Atkins family.

Overview

The site holds little, if any, archaeological value. It has moderate architectural and artistic and historical value. Overall its significance is moderate.

²¹ Historic England HEAN 12 op cit

PART B: HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

I. The proposal

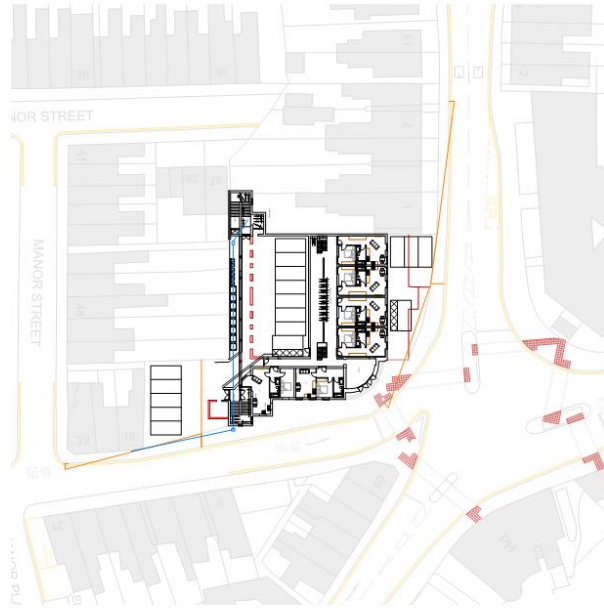


Fig 19: Proposed site plan (reproduced by kind permission of Design to Construct Ltd)

It is proposed to convert the former cinema to residential use comprising 36x one-bedroomed flats. The elevation to Hollycroft will be rebuilt on a line set back from the present elevation of the building and the units will fit into the new volume. The part of the roof nearest Trinity Lane will be raised by about 1 metre. This will facilitate a third residential floor within the volume of the building. The interior will be subdivided but, as the building is not listed this is not material to the consideration of the proposal. Space created on the Hollycroft frontage, land within the curtilage on Trinity Lane and the existing open area on Trinity Lane (once the cinema car park), will be used for parking providing a total of 17 spaces.

The quarter-dome corner entrance will be retained. The main external changes, apart from those noted in the previous paragraph, will be the insertion of windows on four floors. Two-light windows will be inserted into the five existing window openings on the Trinity Lane elevation and additional ground and third floor windows will be introduced on that elevation. The rebuilt elevation to Hollycroft will have two sets of four panels each with two windows of the standard two-light pattern. As on the elevation to Trinity Lane windows will be introduced on the ground floor below a decorative brick band continued from the Trinity Lane elevation and, on the third floor, above a corbelled brick cornice also echoing the elevation to Trinity Lane. Simpler single-light windows with soldier-brick lintels will be introduced on the north-west facing rear elevation. These will light common access corridors. The south-east facing side elevation will remain unchanged apart from the addition of the third floor.

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The proposal is shown on Design to Construct Ltd drawings 23/848/01-08.

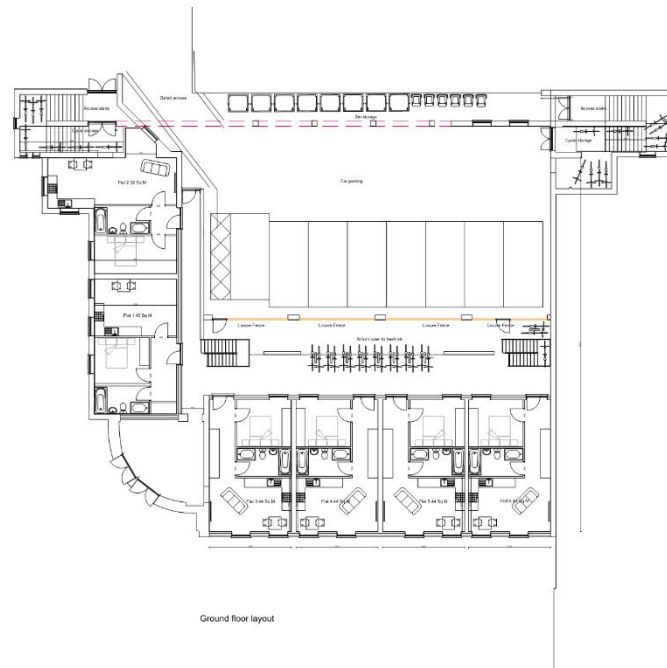


Fig 20: Proposed ground floor layout (Reproduced by kind permission of Design to Construct Ltd)



Fig 21: Proposed elevations (Reproduced by kind permission of Design to Construct Ltd)

2. Impact on the former Danilo Cinema

Much of the impact is inherent in the description of the proposal above. The volume of the former cinema in the street scene of Bond Street Circus will be slightly increased by the extension to the roof. Its relationship to the street frontage to Hollycroft will be changed by the rebuilding and realignment of the north-eastern elevation of the building and the creation of a space for parking within the plot on the Hollycroft frontage.

The introduction of windows will add considerable extra complexity to the external elevations both existing and rebuilt. Setting the windows within brick surrounds will give a consistent new rhythm to the elevations to Trinity Lane and Hollycroft which takes its cue from the existing windows on Trinity Lane. The conservation area appraisal²² refers to a previous extension on the Hollycroft frontage which destroyed the symmetry of the entrance though this is difficult to reconcile with the 1942 OS map (although that map does show other inconsistencies).

The insertion of window openings in the rear (north-west elevation) will affect the simplest of the four existing elevations and will add some complexity to the present mainly blank elevation.

3. Impact on the character and appearance of the Hollycroft and Town Centre Conservation Areas

The long vacancy of the former cinema has attracted interest in complete redevelopment involving the loss of the building in its entirety. This proposal will retain much of the bulk of the building in the street scene and retain its most important decorative features. It will still be a key building within the Bond Street Circus group and will retain its prominence in views from Upper Bond Street.

While the increase in height will somewhat increase the perceived bulk of the building in the street scene parts of the existing roof are already higher than the brick cornice which defines the skyline of the building. The former cinema is a stand-alone building and not part of a group depending on consistent height or design for its unity.

The introduction of new windows will involve the loss of some of the massive quality of the building but will provide more lively, active frontages. The design of the new elevation to Hollycroft combines references to the original design of the building with a viable design for reuse. This elevation will be set back in comparison with the existing elevation of the building.

Because the former cinema is set back from the line of sight looking north from Lower Bond Street the proposal will have no effect on the setting of the Town Centre Conservation Area or on the settings of the former Atkins factory or of 30 Lower Bond Street as grade II listed buildings. The Great Meeting is behind the Atkins factory so impact on its setting is not an issue in this case.

²² HBBC Hollycroft Conservation Area Appraisal op cit paragraph 12.11.

Overall the proposal will preserve the character of the Hollycroft and Town Centre Conservation Areas.

4. Impact on the setting of the Holly Bush PH

At present the Holly Bush is a storey-height lower than the former police station or the former electricity company building. Its lower scale stands in contrast with the bulk of the former cinema. This will remain the case. In views from the Holly Bush the setting back of the elevation to Hollycroft will create a more open and spacious street scene.

The proposal will have a minor effect on the setting of the Holly Bush PH as a grade II listed building but the setting of the listed building will be preserved.

5. Conformity with legislation and policy

Part B Section 3 above has shown that the proposal will preserve the character of the Hollycroft and Town Centre conservation areas and therefore meet the requirement of Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. It will also preserve the setting of the Holly Bush PH as a grade II listed building and therefore meet the requirement of Section 72 of the Act.

In terms of NPPF Policy the proposal does not impact seriously on a key element of special architectural or historic character and therefore does not meet the 'high test' required by National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)²³ for determining substantial harm to significance in the terms of NPPF 201.

The proposal therefore represents less than substantial harm and stands to be assessed under NPPF 202. Case law and guidance in the NPPG on less than substantial harm shows that the term covers a wide spectrum of impacts. The impact on the historic assets identified would be moderate but would nevertheless stand to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. These will be set out in other documentation.

This document demonstrates how the proposal will meet Spatial objective 11 of the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Development Framework Core Strategy and how it will safeguard and regenerate an element of the Borough's distinctive building environment. The proposal will be compatible with the building and its setting and therefore meet the requirements of policy DM10. The presentation of this report also meets the requirements of DM11 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies. This report has also shown how the requirements of Policy DM12 will be met.

In terms of the policies in the Hinckley Town Centre Area Action Plan the proposal will enhance the character of the town centre through heritage-led regeneration.

²³ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government *National Planning Practice Guidance* July 2019 ref ID 18a-018-20190723

REPORT CONCLUSION

Part A of this report has examined and defined the significance of the former Danilo cinema in Trinity Lane Hinckley. Part B has assessed the impact on the significance identified of a proposal to alter and reuse the building for residential use. The report concludes that the proposal would meet relevant requirements in legislation and policy.

Acknowledgements

Design to Construct Limited

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Staff of Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Record Office

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www.hinckleypastpresent.org/thedanilo.htms

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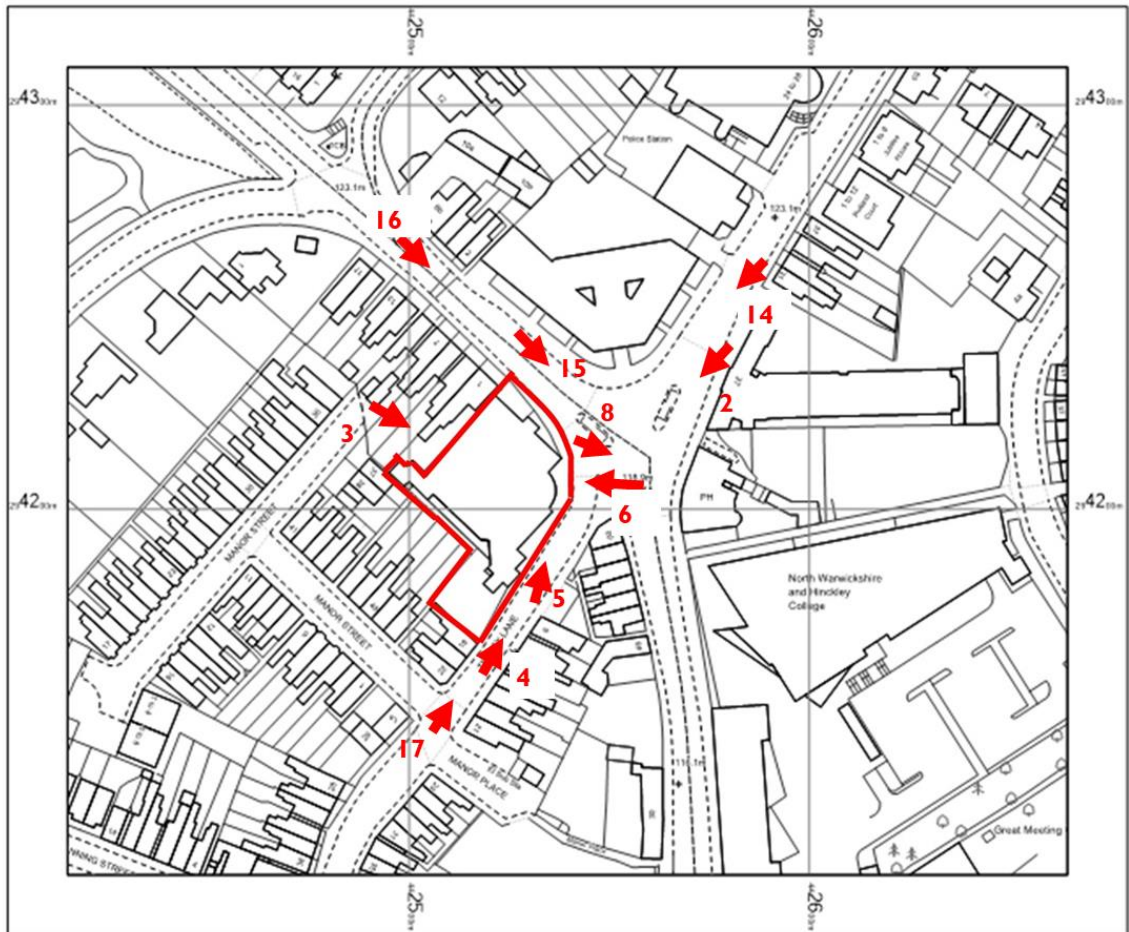


Fig 22 : Key to original external photographs (Reproduced under OS Licence number AC0000805567)

**This document has been researched and written by Michael Taylor
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