

Design & Access Statement

Change of use from Class E to use Class E and Class C3

**46 Castle Street,
Hinckley,
Leicestershire,
LE10 1DB**

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 As stated in National Planning Policy Framework, applications for planning permission should provide a written statement setting out the design principles which have been adopted in relation to the site and its wider context.
- 1.2 SKM Architects have been commissioned to submit a planning application for a change of use from Class E to use Class E and Class C3, located at 46 Castle Street, Hinchley, Leicestershire, LE10 1DB.
- 1.3 The proposal will include the creation of three first floor flats and a proposed first floor rear extension.
- 1.4 This statement has been prepared to identify and explore any risks/impacts to potential occupants and the neighbouring properties explaining how they will be mitigated. It is to demonstrate that the proposed development is acceptable, taking into account heritage assets and other material considerations.
- 1.5 The site is located within the Hinckley Town Centre Conservation Area. It is surrounded by a mixture of commercial and retail units, restaurants, and cafes. The property fronts Castle Street and has direct access to the rear of the site via Stockwell Head. (Fig.1-2)
- 1.6 The existing building consists of shop Class E(a) retail at ground floor level. The first floor serves as storage space for the space below.
- 1.7 The following design guidance and documents have been referred to in the production of this statement and has informed the design to its proposed solution:
 - Communities and Local Government: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – July 2021. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>)
 - Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard – March 2015. (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1012976/160519_Nationally_Described_Space_Standard.pdf)
 - Planning Portal – Change of Use – Planning Permission – June 2021 (https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200130/common_projects/9/change_of_use/2)

- Planning Portal – Change of Use – Planning Permission – June 2021
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- Core Strategy (2009): https://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/downloads/file/487/core_strategy_adopted_document
 - o Policy 1: Development in Hinckley
 - o Policy 15: Affordable Housing
 - o Policy 16: Housing Density, Mix and Design
- Hinckley Town Centre AAP (2011): https://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/downloads/file/2283/hinckley_town_centre_area_action_plan-adopted_march_2011
 - o Policy 4: Britannia Centre/Castle Street Strategic Development Area
- Site Allocations and development Management Policies (SADMP) Development Plan (2016) (SADMP): https://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/downloads/file/5295/site_allocations_and_development_management_policies_dpd_-_adopted_july_2016
 - o Policy DM1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 - o Policy DM3: Infrastructure and Delivery
 - o Policy DM7: Preventing Pollution and Flooding
 - o Policy DM10: Development and Design
 - o Policy DM11: Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment
 - o Policy DM12: Heritage Assets
 - o Policy DM18: Vehicle Parking Standards
 - o Policy DM22: Vitalising District, Local and Neighbourhood Centres

2.0 Site, Surroundings, Context and Character

- 2.1 The area surrounding the site has been explored to derive the wider context in terms of the relationships between the mass, building precedents, views, and vistas as well as pedestrian access, public transport links of the immediate vicinity and the general townscape.
- 2.2 The footprint of the site measures approximately 155 sqm. It currently caters a use class E retail shop on the ground floor, with use class E storage spaces on the first floor.
- 2.3 The existing building is located in Hinckley Town Centre and directly fronts Castle Street. Castle street is a pedestrianised main street in the town centre and contains a diverse mixture of independent stores and national retail outlets.

- 2.4 The existing building is a two storey property with large shop front across most of the width of the ground floor and rendered facing wall to the front. The rear elevation has red brick facing walls with the first floor being stepped back from a flat roof on the ground floor. (Fig. 3-4)

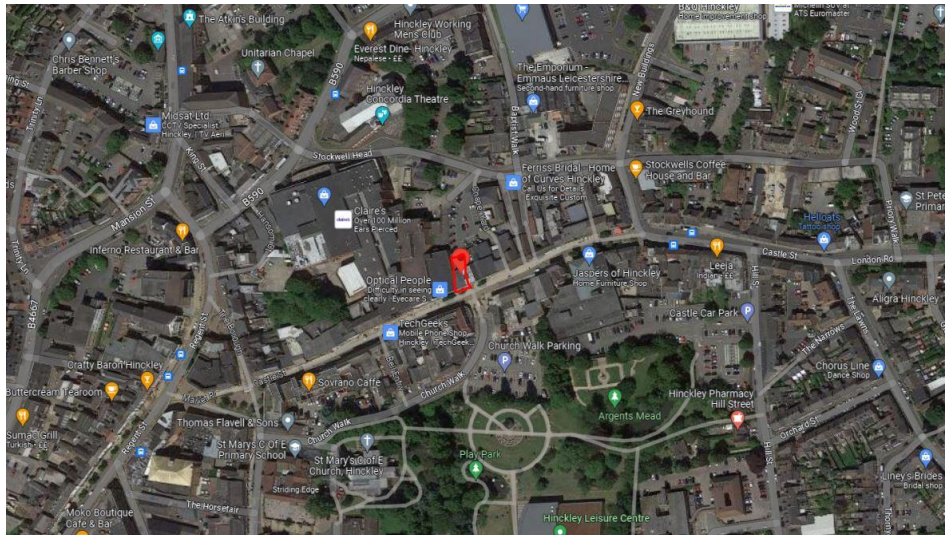


Figure 1 – wider site context

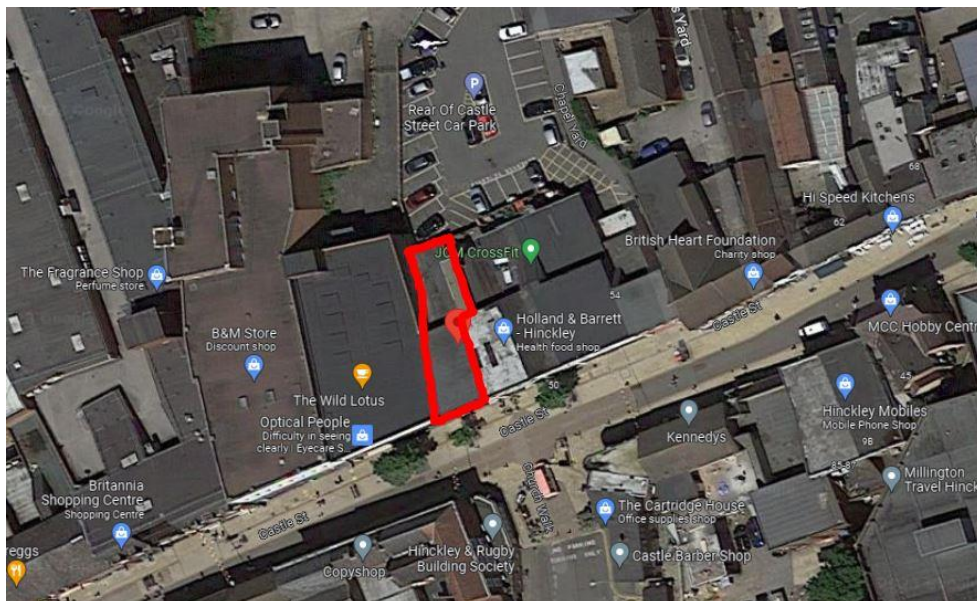


Figure 2- Site Location



Figure 3 – site front elevation



Figure 4 – site rear elevation

- 2.5 With Castle Street being pedestrianised the site is primarily accessible by foot, with public transport being approximately a five minute walk away from the site. Buses serving this area include 6,6a,6b, 7,7a, 8 which are operated by Arriva midlands. Services 148 and 158 are operated by Sapphire buses.

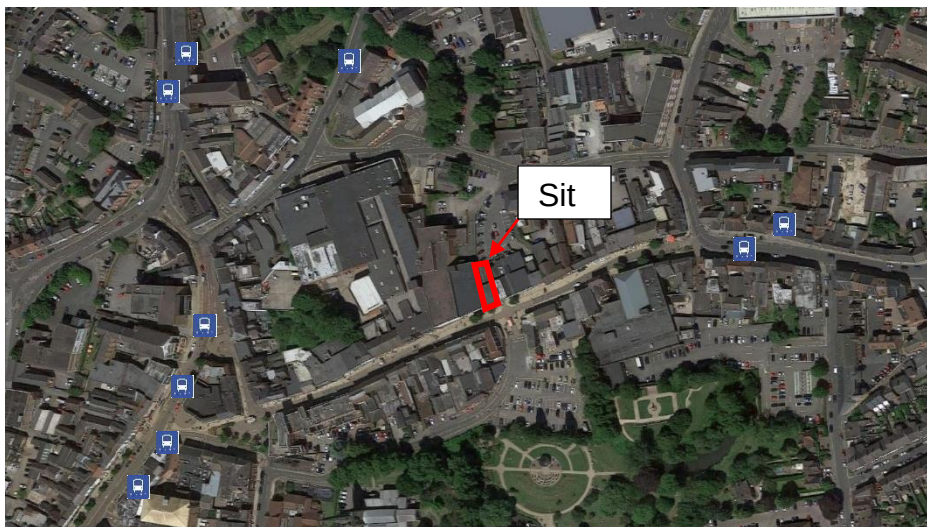


Figure 5 – Bus stops around the site

- 2.6 Hinckley town centre has rail and bus linkages. The current bus station is located within the town centre whilst Hinckley Railway Station is located off Hawley Road, approximately 600m south of Hinckley town centre, resulting in poor connections. The station is situated on the main Leicester to Birmingham train line.

3.0 Heritage assessment

3.1 In 1986 Hinckley Town Centre was designated a conservation area, which is centred on Castle Street, Regent Street.(Fig 6)

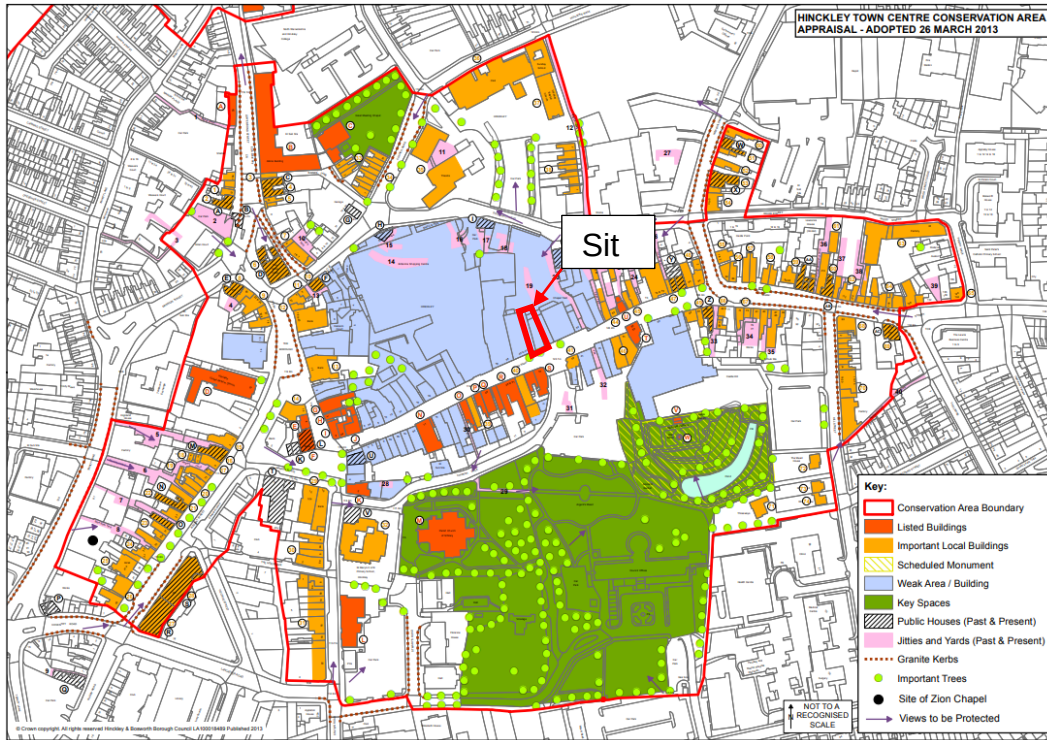


Figure 6 – Hinckley Town Centre Conservation area map

3.2 Figure 6 shows that the site is not a listed building and is considered a weak area/building. With this being brought to attention, the heritage implications of the proposal are key in considerations. Hence any external alterations should not significantly alter or harm the vitality of the Hinckley Town Centre by proposing materials that will match the existing or similar approved.

4.0 Environmental, Social & Economical Implications

- 4.1 The site is located within Hinckley Town Centre. The area is well served by public amenities and public transport.
- 4.2 The appearance of the building from castle street would be largely unaffected by the development, except for the central window on the first floor is to be bricked up. With the ground floor of the property to remain the same.
- 4.3 As there are several bus stops in immediate vicinity to the site (fig. 5), this proposal will promote the use of the well-connected public transport links and aims to encourage sustainable travel.
- 4.4 Policy 4 of the Hinckley Town Centre AAP seeks to improve the retail offering along Castle Street. As the proposal is for a mixed use whereby the existing retail use of the existing property is to be maintained on the ground floor. Additionally the upper floor of the existing building purely served as storage space for the below retail space, Therefore the retail floorspace along Castle Street will remain the same.
- 4.5 The residential development is supported by policy DM22 of the SADMP as it can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres through increased activity and natural surveillance.

5.0 The Proposal

5.1 The Proposed Development

5.1.1 The proposed development at 46 Castle Street is for a change of use application. The application proposed a change of use from Class E(a) retail to mixed use Class E(a) retail and Class C3(a) dwelling houses, by removing the upper floor existing storage to make way for three residential units.

5.2 Use

5.2.1 The existing property is a Class E(a) retail, the upper floor of the existing building serves as storage space for retail space below.

5.2.2 This application proposes a mixed use development whereby the existing retail use of the host building is to be maintained on the ground floor level and introducing three one bedroom flats on the first floor.

5.3 Amount

5.3.1 The proposed scheme is for a first floor rear extension with a total of 3 x 1 bedroom flats- use class C3 residential dwellings.

5.3.2 The proposed first floor extension is to extend over an existing single storey ground floor rear extension which is approximately 11.9 meters

5.3.3 The total site area is around 155 sqm

5.4 Layout

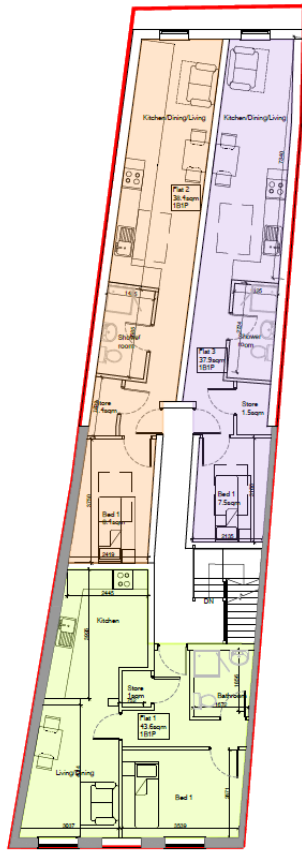
5.4.1 The design of this development proposed scheme is for a first floor rear extension with a total of 3 flats.

5.4.2 All flats are accessed directly from Castle Street.

5.4.3 The ground floor and upper floor flats have separate entrances, both at the front of the property.

5.4.4 All three flats consist of a single bedroom, shower room and an open plan kitchen/living/dining area.

5.4.5 All primary living spaces within the flats have windows and rooflights strategically placed to maximise natural lighting. (Figure 7)



Proposed First Floor Plan

Figure 7 – Proposed First Floor Plan

5.5 Mass

- 5.5.1 The proposed development is an extension over an existing single storey ground floor extension. By virtue of infilling the proposed scheme will not adversely overlook the surround area.
- 5.5.2 The design incorporates a flat roof to prevent any overbearing or overshadowing impacts on the surrounding area. The flat roof also allows for rooflights to gain

Figure 8 – Proposed Site Plan



5.6 Appearance

- 5.6.1 The proposed change of use would not include any alterations to the host buildings elevation fronting castle street. To ground floor the retail element of the host building would remain and there would be no design changes to this element. There will be no effect upon the character or appearance of the conservation area or town centre street scene. Figure 9
- 5.6.2 Flat roof extension to the rear will use materials and fenestration to match the existing.

Figure 9 – Proposed Front Elevation



Figure 10 – Proposed Rear Elevation



5.7 Parking and Access

5.7.1 All three flats can be accessed directly from Castle Street

5.7.2 On the ground floor there are two doors, one for the retail unit that is to remain. The second door will lead upstairs to all the upper floor flats.

5.7.3 For security purposes, the second door will only be accessible by the residents using a key fob.

5.7.4 Residents of the property will be provided with travel packs as on site parking will be unavailable. This will encourage the use of sustainable transport and the use of well-connected networks in owe of high car emission

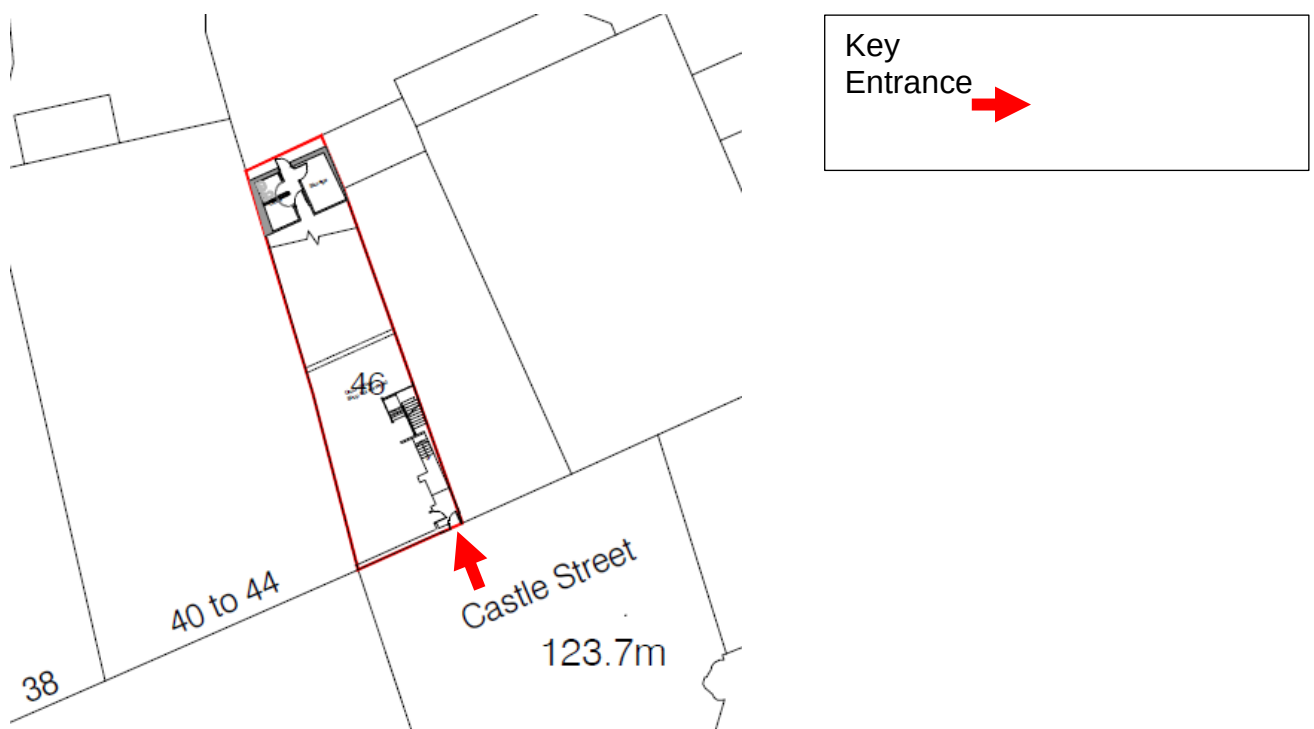


Figure 11 – Site Access

5.8 Waste

- 5.8.1 As this is an existing site there is limited storage space for wheeled bins and there are difficulties to safely present and/or service bins.
- 5.8.2 There is no viable option to provide bins, residents will be provided with purple sacks for non recyclable waste. These bags may be presented every fortnight at the boundary of resident's property with the public highway where they are clearly visible. Residents on this scheme can present up to 6 bags per fortnight. New supplies will be delivered every 16 weeks.
- 5.8.3 For recyclable materials residents may be presented in the blue box (glass, cans, tins, plastics, cartons, foil, and aerosols) and yellow bag (paper and cardboard).

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposal has been designed with consideration of the nearby context. It is also within an area where residential uses on the upper floors of retail premises is encouraged: Policy 4 of the Hinckley Town Centre AAP, Policy DM22 of the SADMP
- 6.2 As the proposed site is located within a pedestrianised area parking on site will be unavailable. However, the scheme encourages sustainable transport and the use of well-connected networks in owe of high car emission. Residents of the property will be [provided with travel packs.
- 6.3 The proposed change of use would be almost entirely internal. The external changes are essentially minimal, with a first floor being added on top of the existing ground floor wing. Given its location and sensitive design it has no significant impact on the appearance or character of the conservation area.
- 6.4 It is concluded that in this proposal the function on the ground floor would remain the same and therefore the building would retain an active frontage to Castle Street. On the upper floors a residential use is proposed which provide

much needed housing in a sustainable location and add to the vitality of the area.