



Hinckley Town Centre

The Sorting Office - change of use

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**Design & Access
Statement**

25-69 PT3- DAS

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Preamble

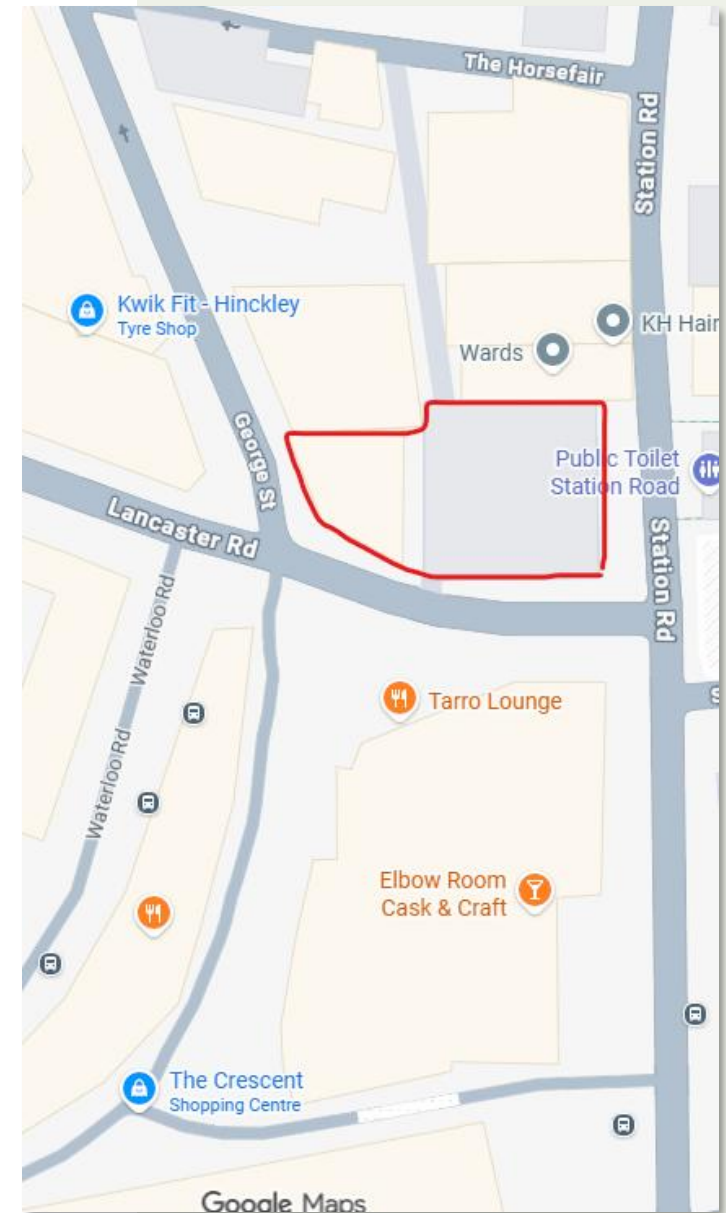
This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Hayward Architects to accompany the submission for Full Planning approval for the change of use of the old sorting office at 22 Station Road, Hinckley Town Centre.

This statement is additional material which describes how the proposed development responds to its setting, as is relevant to the planning process as described in the *National Design Guide* and is to be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings.

Please note that the applicant has appointed qualified and experienced architects to undertake the design of this development.

If the planning service should feel that the proposal is not compliant with national or local planning policies, please provide details of the specific policy and explain how this policy is being breached.

This will enable the design team to co-ordinate a full and appropriate response which accommodates all of the factors which inform good design, alongside those which are pertinent to the planning system.



Project Description

This application relates to the third part of a wider development, which seeks to bring a cluster of historic buildings in Hinckley town centre back into everyday use and consequently secure their long-term future and maintenance.

The site is naturally divided into 4 distinct parts with different historic uses and very different architectural styles. These are to be developed under 4 separate planning applications and with a phased approach, (the order of which is yet to be ascertained)

This application is for Part 3 – The old sorting office

The former post office building (Parts 1+2) was constructed in Hinckley town centre in 1902 and designed by the Architect for Provincial Post Office: William Thomas Oldrieve.

A sorting office was added to the side in the mid twentieth century (Part 3) and a further ancillary building at an unknown date (part 4). The post office counter ceased trading in 2015 with the sorting office continuing until 2023. The buildings have been vacant ever since. The entire site has been purchased in full by the applicant (Investment Street Ltd)

Part 1



Part 2



Part 3



Part 4



Part 3

Part three of the development is the element of the old sorting office facing Lancaster Road. This was originally a parking area for post office vehicles at ground floor and the sorting office itself was at first floor as is evidenced by the chute connecting the two floors. This proposal is for the change of use of the whole building from sui generis to Class E. It will then be offered for private rent as two self-contained commercial units.

The site sits on the edge of the Hinckley Town Centre conservation area and is attached to the old post office which is classed as an important local building however, the sorting office itself has little architectural merit.

The only proposed external changes are to the Lancaster Road elevation where new glazed frontages are proposed in place of the existing roller shutter doors. The interior is to be generally updated to current standards of utility and decor.

The side elevation to the alleyway will not be changed.

The existing vehicular access will be closed which will be an improvement in pedestrian safety as the vehicular access is currently located in an area with heavy footfall due to the location of the zebra crossing linking the town centre to The Crescent shopping area



Proposal

Context

Please see the Heritage Statement for a detailed description of the context and a photographic record of the surrounding buildings.

Station Road was for the most part developed at the turn of the twentieth century and displays a distinctly Edwardian character. Lancaster Road has a more modern appearance with buildings dating from the 1930's to the present day

The old sorting office is a large building with a 1960's appearance which presents a mostly blank façade to the street. The insertion of glazing in place of the existing roller shutters will both improve the buildings appearance and provide an active street frontage in this prominent, town centre location.

The first floor is characterised by a strip of horizontal windows sitting just below the roof. We do not propose to alter these as part of this application.

The creation of new glazed frontages is appropriate to the town centre location and ties in well with the aesthetic of the shop and restaurant frontages in The Crescent.

Built Form

This proposal does not seek to affect the built form of the street in a material way, it does however bring back the usefulness of a building which sits in a prominent space within the overall built form of Hinckley Town centre.

As a result, this proposal offers a tangible benefit to Built Form

Movement

This proposal does not offer any new or changed movement networks, it does however sit on an already active pedestrian route between the historic retail area of Castle Street and the newer shopping centre at The Crescent.

To enhance this building is to enhance the experience of walking around Hinckley town centre

Nature

This proposal does not have the opportunity to have either a positive or negative effect on nature

Public Spaces

This proposal does not offer any new or changed public spaces.

It does however sit immediately adjacent to a well used public thoroughfare, abutting the back of pavement.

Uses

This application seeks to change the use of the existing building from sui generis to class E, this will open the building up for a variety of different uses such as retail, professional services, indoor sport and fitness, health services, day care and pre-school childcare all of which are suitable uses for a town centre location.

Homes and Buildings

N/A

Resources

N/A

Lifespan

This proposal is the opportunity to bring this building back to life and prevent dereliction.

High streets around the country are struggling to survive, against very real challenges and it is doubly important that opportunities to rescue and restore historic retail units are embraced.

Access

The access points both face Lancaster Road. Part M compliant Level access for disabled users will be provided where possible

Summary

- This proposal is for the change of use of the old sorting office on Lancaster Road, Hinckley
- The unit will be split into two, ground floor and first floor
- It is the third part of a broader application incorporating the entirety of the old post office site
- It is not listed but does sit within the Hinckley Town Centre conservation area
- The proposed new frontage will bring interest to a currently blank elevation
- The replacement of the unsightly roller shutters with a modern glazed frontage will serve to uplift the street scene and improve the conservation area as a whole.



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