

Proposed development: Full Planning Application for proposed entrance works to Darwen Market Hall / annex building.

**Site address:
Darwen Six Day Market
Croft Street
Darwen
BB3 1BH**

Applicant: Blackburn with Darwen Council

Ward: Sunnyhurst

**Councillor Dave Smith
Councillor Brian Taylor
Councillor Pete Hollings**



1.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

1.1 APPROVE – Subject to conditions set out in paragraph 4.1 of this report.

2.0 KEY ISSUES/SUMMARY OF PLANNING BALANCE

- 2.1. The proposal will see the installation of a new fully glazed curtain walling system with automated door to the existing secondary entrance to Darwen Market Hall, which sits within the annex building adjacent to the Town Hall. The building accommodates market facilities and a roof level car park. The parapet wall to the car park which sits above the entrance is proposed to be over clad in faience panels, locally produced by 'Darwen Terracotta and Faience'. It is noteworthy that Darwen is renowned for being one of only a handful of places in the world for making faience.
- 2.2 The proposal will reinforce the presence of the entrance, appearing as a modern and vibrant alteration contrasting with the historic Victorian context of the adjoining Town Hall and complementing the public realm area proposed for the space formally occupied by the 3 Day Market Building, which was recently demolished.
- 2.3 The key issues to be addressed in assessment of the proposal are:
- Principle of the development
 - Heritage impact of the development, which sits within the Darwen Town Centre Conservation Area.
 - Design
- 2.4 Careful consideration has been applied to the design of the proposal, in consultation with the Council's appointed Conservation Officer, in order to present a scheme sympathetic to the area, thereby ensuring the sustainability and enhancement of the Conservation Area setting and the wider Town Centre. The proposal is considered to support the Council's Core Strategy, Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan (2013-2018) objectives, as well as achieving compliance with relevant national, Local Plan Part 2 policies and the Darwen Town Centre Conservation Area Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

3.0 RATIONALE

3.1 Site and Surroundings

- 3.1.1 The application site is located in the heart of Darwen Town Centre. The entrance building is a leftover detail from the demolition of the hexagonal 3 Day Market that requires enhancement. It adjoins the Town Hall at its eastern flank and fronts the space formally occupied by the Market; a space that is subject to the ongoing design preparation of a new public realm, by Capita Landscape Architects, to create a new civic square. This will be subject to a separate application for discharge of condition to consider proposed hard and soft landscaping relative to the permission granted for the demolition of the 3

Day Market Hall (ref. 10/17/0774). The proposed new annex entrance forms part of the overall scheme of enhancement works.

- 3.1.2 The annex building was erected circa early 1960's and was considered at the time to be a contemporary addition to the traditional Victorian Darwin Town Hall. The Town Hall, despite its historical significance is not listed but lies within the Darwin Town Centre Conservation Area. The annex is now viewed as an unsympathetic addition, within the Victorian context, which fails to either sustain or enhance the Conservation Area. The demolition of the 3 Day Market and covered walkway has resulted in parts of the annex building becoming external features whereas they were originally internal.

3.2 Proposed Development

- 3.2.1 Planning permission is sought for a new glazed curtain walling system and automated door. Overcladding of the existing concrete wall of the roof level car park is also proposed, in a locally produced faience material, which will incorporate a geometric pattern representative of motifs that are featured on the steel structure of the Victorian Market Hall; as set out in the submitted drawings.

3.3 Development Plan

- 3.3.1 In accordance with s.38 (6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the application is to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.3.2 The Development Plan comprises the Core Strategy, the adopted Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies and the Darwin Town Centre Conservation Area SPD. In determining the current proposal the following are considered to be the most relevant policies:

3.3.3 Core Strategy

- CS1 – A Targeted Growth Strategy
- CS11 – Facilities and Services
- CS16 – Form and Design of New Development
- CS17 – Built and Cultural Heritage
- CS22 – Accessibility Strategy

3.3.4 Local Plan Part 2

- Policy 1 – The Urban Boundary
- Policy 7 – Sustainable and Viable Development
- Policy 8 – Development and People
- Policy 9 – Development and the Environment
- Policy 11 – Design
- Policy 39 – Heritage

3.3.5 Darwen Town Centre Conservation Area SPD (2013).

This document provides targeted advice to ensure high quality new development within Darwen Town Centre. It explains that the site historically *“would have had an open market and stalls are still evident in the retaining wall below Railway Road”*. It highlights the 3 Day Market as a *“negative building”* in terms of design, quality and its contribution to the townscape and states that it *“detracts from the square as it obscures the unique form of the space and vistas of Holker House and the Wesleyan Chapel”*. The SPD also promotes opportunities to *“address existing buildings that erode character and quality, encourage re-use of vacant and underused buildings and enhance the public realm with appropriate materials”*

3.4 Other Material Planning Considerations

3.4.1 Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan (2013 – 2018)

This document emphasises the need to improve the town centre offer and make the most of the quality assets that Darwen has. It also aspires to make the 3 Day Market more inviting and desirable.

3.4.2 The Pennine Lancashire Heritage Investment Strategy 2015 – 2020.

3.4.3 National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework).

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking. For decision taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay (paragraph14).

Paragraph 23 sets out the presumption towards ensuring the vitality of town centres and paragraph 131 sets out the approach to decision making concerning heritage assets.

3.5 Assessment

3.5.1 In assessing the application there are a number of material considerations that need to be taken into account, as follows:

3.5.2 Principle and compliance with heritage objectives / character and appearance.

The council's appointed heritage consultee has been fully involved in pre-application discussion in support of the application.

3.5.3 The overall design of the building is simple, consisting of glazed elevations and a faience fascia to the front. It does not physically impact upon the Victorian building that it adjoins and will be seen as a contrast between the traditional and the contemporary. Faience is a form of glazed terracotta and is associated with buildings of the art nouveau, art deco and post-modern periods. Whilst Darwen is recognised as principally a Pennine sandstone town, faience and terracotta are visible as a secondary or decorative material.

As an ornamental and relatively small detail, it is considered to reinforce the underlying character and appearance of the Victorian Market Hall and wider conservation area setting. The final colour of the faience is yet to be decided. Accordingly, it is recommended that an appropriately worded condition is applied to secure detail of colour prior to the commencement of development.

- 3.5.4 The proposal will serve to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, in compliance with the design and heritage objectives of Local Plan Policies 11 and 39; the Darwen Town Centre SPD and The Framework.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 **Approve** – subject to conditions which relate to the following matters:
- Commencement of development within 3 years
 - Prior to commencement of the development submission of colour detail of the faience cladding.
 - Development to be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings.

5.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 5.1 The following planning application relates to the application site.
- 10/17/0774: Demolition of the 3 Day Market Hall.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 Heritage / Conservation Officer
No objection.

7.0 CONTACT OFFICER: Nick Blackledge, Planner – Development Management.

8.0 DATE PREPARED: 27th February 2018.