

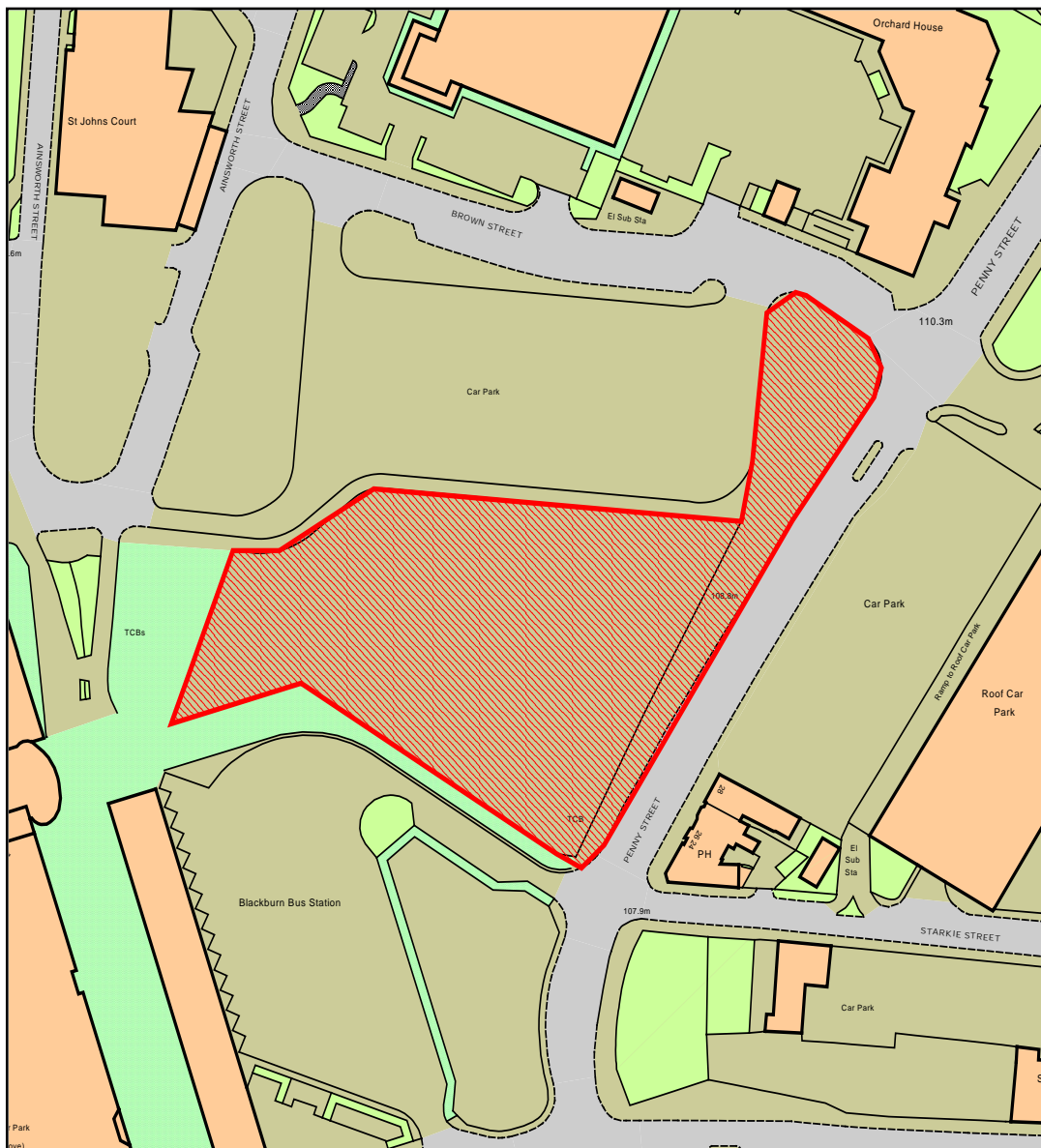
Proposed development: Full Planning Application for development of land at Brown Street / Penny Street to provide a temporary area of hardstanding for events and overspill car parking. Works to include site clearance, earthworks surfacing and footpath improvements.

**Site address:
Land at Brown Street / Penny Street
Blackburn**

Applicant: Blackburn with Darwen Brough Council

Ward: Shear Brow

**Councillor Hussain Akhtar
Councillor Suleman Khonat
Councillor Shiraj Vali**



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 creation of a temporary robust hardstanding area for town centre events as well as providing further car parking capacity, to supplement the existing adjacent car park and the overall town centre car parking capacity. Beyond the expiration of the temporary use of the site, it is envisaged that the land will host a main town centre use or uses, such as retail, leisure, offices and hotels.
- 2.2 The application site currently hosts occasional events, such as the annual February Funfair. Ground conditions thereafter are often wet and muddy and generally unsuitable for safe and practical use. Accordingly, the Council seeks to reprioritise the land into an area that can be used to host town centre events on a more robust surface that will allow for the safe movement of foot traffic by efficiently removing surface water from the area. When there are no events ongoing, the area will be used as an overflow car park to the adjacent Brown Street car park; an offer that will help offset the parking that will be lost following the impending demolition of the Thwaites building which currently provides a significant number of parking spaces.
- 2.3 The new parking area will create circa 120 spaces, set out at a minimum 2.4m by 5m and 12 mobility or parent / child spaces, at a minimum 3.6m by 5m; in accordance with the Council's adopted car parking standards. The car park will operate on a pay and display basis and will be set out in accordance with a design that maximises the amount of spaces to be provided and provides appropriate internal circulation. Access / exit will be at a barrier controlled point from the existing Brown Street car park, access to which is previously established from Brown Street and exit onto Ainsworth Street. The area will not be individually signed, instead being reliant on signage serving the existing Brown Street car park. The boundary footway to the east will be resurfaced to provide a suitable and safe walking surface.
- 2.4 The site will be drained using traditional drainage runs and a gully system to a connection point in the Council's highway drainage network.
- 2.5 The key issues to be addressed in assessment of the proposal are:
- Principle of the development
 - Highway impact
 - Design
- 2.6 Careful consideration has been applied to the temporary nature of the proposal as an appropriate interim use of the site, pending its longer term redevelopment. The overall design of the proposal, in consultation with the Council's Highways and Drainage consultees, is considered to secure a scheme that provides for safe and efficient movement of highway users, including pedestrians. Accordingly, it is considered to support the Council's

Core Strategy and Town Centre Strategy objectives, as well as achieving compliance with relevant national and Local Plan Part 2 policies.

3 RATIONALE

3.3 Site and Surroundings

3.1.1 The application site comprises an area of undeveloped land formed of granular ex-site material, consisting of 0.70 hectares in area. It lies immediately to the north of Blackburn Bus Station, within Blackburn Town Centre and is bound by Brown Street temporary car park to the north; Ainsworth Street to the west and Penny Street to the east. The site which is currently vacant formerly accommodated a temporary bus station, until the permanent Blackburn Bus Station was constructed. Historically, prior to the introduction of the bus station, the site formed part of the Blackburn indoor market confines.

3.1.2 The land is owned wholly by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.

3.2 Proposed Development

3.2.1 Planning permission is sought for the formation of a hardstanding area to cater for large events and to provide overspill car parking from the adjacent Brown Street public car park.

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 Darwen 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
- Cs13 – Environmental Strategy
- CS16 – Form and Design of New Development
- 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 10 – Accessibility and Transport
- Policy 11 – Design
- Policy 26 – Town Centres – a Framework for Development
- Policy 28 – Development Opportunities

3.4 Other Material Planning Considerations

3.4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework).

Section 4 of The Framework sets out the rationale of promoting sustainable transport. Paragraph 40 states that: Local Authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking in town centres so that is convenient, safe and secure, including appropriate provision for motorcycles.

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

The site is allocated as a 'Development Opportunity'. Policy 28 sets out the preferred use or uses as retail, leisure, offices and hotels. It is recognised that the site will, in the longer term, be redeveloped in accordance with these principles. As a proposal to introduce an interim use in the meantime, to an otherwise primarily vacant site, it is considered to appropriately contribute to the viability and vitality of the town centre. The principle of the proposal is, therefore, supported as compliant with the Council's town centre growth objectives as set out in Policies 26 and 28.

3.5.3 Impact on Highway Safety

In March 2016 a supporting Transport Statement was produced for the aforementioned adjoining Brown Street car park. Due to the proximity of the two sites, it is considered that the statements conclusions can broadly be applied to the current proposal. Notwithstanding the additional number of spaces the scheme provides for, the impact on the surrounding highway network is considered to be negligible in the context of the town centre. Moreover, the impending loss of circa 237 car parking spaces as a result of the demolition of Thwaites Brewery offsets the impact of the proposal.

3.5.4 Vehicular access into the car park will be taken from the Brown Street car park. No new access / exit points are proposed into the surrounding highway network. The pedestrian access path from Brown Street car park through the existing footpath will include an uncontrolled crossing with tactile surfacing. This footway will connect into the footway on Penny Street and Ainsworth Street; ensuring appropriate pedestrian accessibility.

- 3.5.5 The 132 spaces provided, including 12 mobility or parent / child spaces together with circulation space are appropriate for the scale of the site, in accordance with the Council's adopted car parking standards.
- 3.5.6 At peak times, queues will form within the application site and Brown Street car park, rather than on the surrounding highway.
- 3.5.7 The proposed barrier system at the access / exit point of the application site will be height restricted with lockable arms at low and high levels which will allow zero restricted height or full admittance.
- 3.5.8 The location of the site is considered to be highly sustainable, accessible via a choice of non-car modes and will support the Council's sustainable transport objectives by balancing existing and future car parking demand alongside other sustainable transport measures. The Transport Statement for the Brown Street car park provides details of an emergent sustainable Travel Plan for the area.
- 3.5.9 In the absence of any adverse highways or transport impacts, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy 10 of the Local Plan Part 2 and The Framework.

3.5.10 Amenity

The proposal presents no amenity concerns, in the context of the town centre setting. No additional lighting columns are to be provided and no significant impact on air quality will arise.

3.5.11 Drainage

The site lies within an area identified as Flood Zone 2 and a culvert runs through its centre in north to south direction. A Flood Risk Assessment was undertaken for the Brown Street car park, which also informs the current proposal. The site is summarised as being at an overall low risk of flooding. Moreover, there are no reported historical flood records for the area.

3.5.12 Design / Character and Appearance

The hardstanding respects the wider context of the area and is appropriate within the town centre setting. It will provide a more suitable surface than the current wet and boggy conditions that create an adverse visual impact. Moreover, the landscaping at the perimeter edges of the bus station and along Penny Street will be retained.

3.5.13 Summary

This report assesses the planning application for the proposed hardstanding and car park use. In considering the proposal, a wide range of material considerations have been taken into account to inform a balanced recommendation.

4 RECOMMENDATION

4.1 Approve – subject to conditions which relate to the following matters:

- Implementation within 3 years of the date of approval.
- The approved use shall cease within 3 years after the date of this permission.
- Development to be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings.

5 PLANNING HISTORY

5.1 The following planning applications relate to the application site:

- 10/16/0391: Temporary use of land as a Car Park with provision of lighting columns.

6 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 Highways

See update

6.2 Drainage

See update

6.3 Environment Agency

No objection.

6.4 Public consultation has taken place by means of displaying 3 Site Notices displayed. No written representations have been received in response.

7 CONTACT OFFICER: Nick Blackledge, Planner - Development Management.

8 DATE PREPARED: 2nd March 2018.