

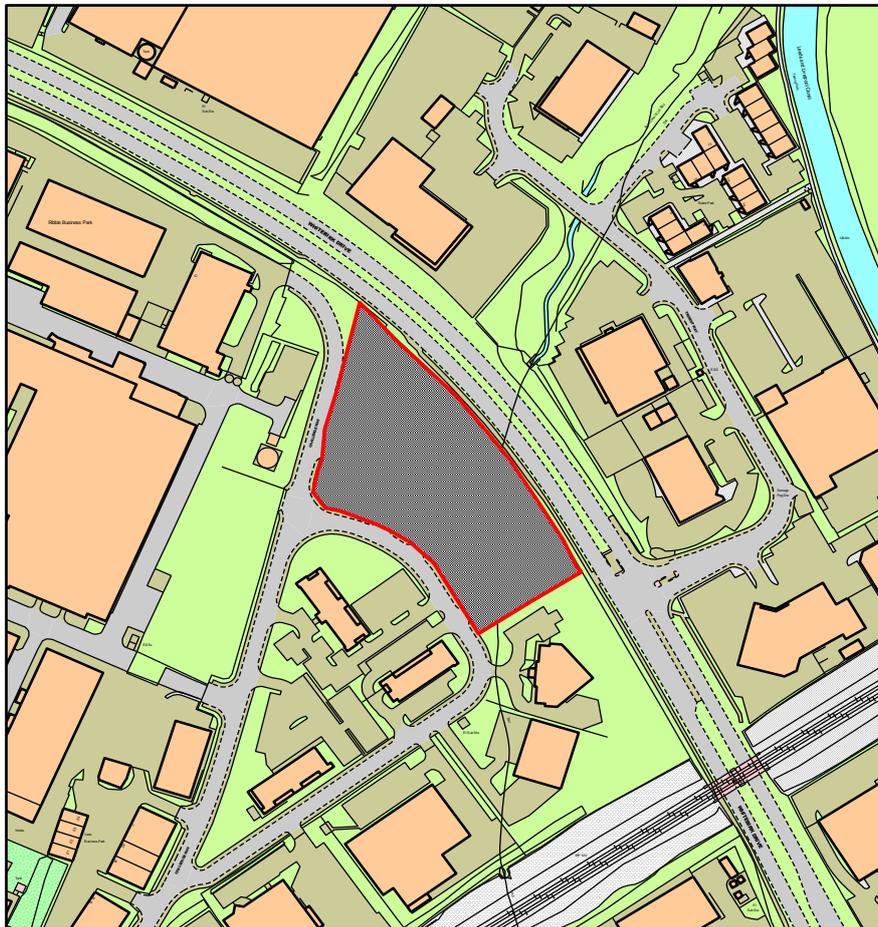
Proposed development: Installation single Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) to consist of one single ASPH within an enclosure, adjoining plant house and additional landscaping to north boundary

Site address: Blackburn Technology Management Centre, 2 Challenge Way, Blackburn, BB1 5QB

Applicant: Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Ward: Little Harwood and Whitebirk

**Councillor Pat McFall
Councillor Abdul Patel
Councillor Mustafa Ali Desia**



1.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

1.1 The proposed development is recommended to be granted planning permission, subject to the conditions detailed in Section 5.

2.0 KEY ISSUES/SUMMARY OF PLANNING BALANCE

2.1 This application is presented to the Planning and Highways Committee, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, and given the fact that Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council is the Applicant. No objections have been raised insofar from consultees. The proposed development has been publicised through the posting of a Site Notice and no public comments have been received.

2.2 The Council's Development Plan supports new renewable energy developments and associated works, provided they constitute sustainable development, and accord with the Development Plan when taken as a whole. The proposal would deliver sustainable energy provision for the Technology Management Centre in the form of an Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs), which extract the heat from the atmosphere and utilise it to heat air or water.

2.3 On balance, the proposal would be satisfactory from a technical point of view, with all issues having been addressed through the application process, or capable of being controlled or mitigated through appropriately worded planning conditions.

2.4 The key issues to be addressed in determining this application are;

- Design and assessing visual amenity impacts;
- Assessing the potential for residential amenity impacts;
- Assessing the potential for highways and parking impacts;

3.0 RATIONALE

3.1 Site and Surroundings

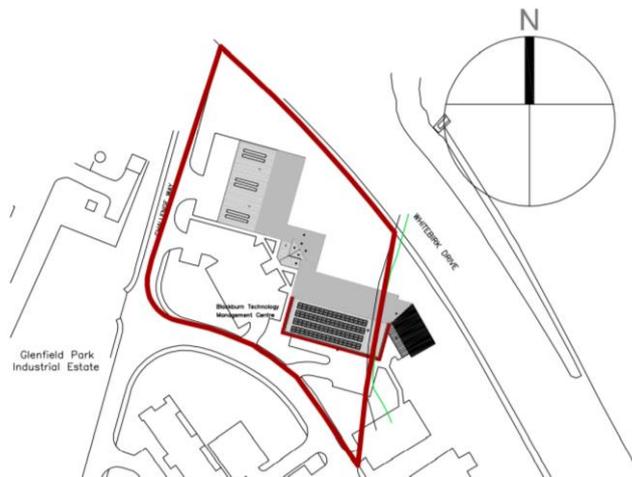
3.1.1 The application site is a Council owned building that is used for supporting small companies. The site is positioned within the Glenfield Business Park, an allocated Primary Employment Area, and the settlement of Blackburn. The site also staggers the boroughs of Blackburn with Darwen and Hyndburn. Commercial buildings surround the site to two sides with Whitebirk Drive binding the north and east site boundaries.

Figure One – Satellite image of the site



3.1.2 The site covers an area of circa 2.6 acres. It comprises of central building with car parking areas to the south and west and landscaped areas to all sides. Vehicle access is gained from the west off Challenge Way. The host building is distinctly commercial in its style with red brick and metal clad elevations, a metal clad roof, and white uPVC doors and windows.

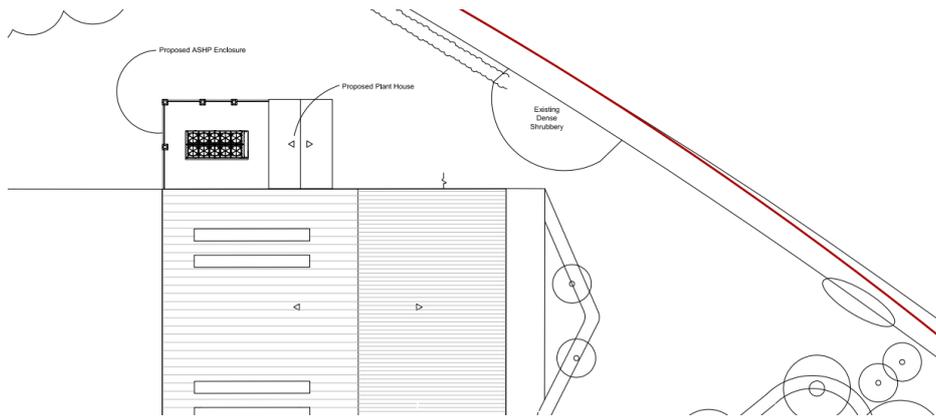
Figure Two – Location Plan showing the extent of the site and access points



3.2 Proposed Development

3.2.1 This planning application involves the siting of a single ASHPs unit with associated plant house adjoining the building. A timber-panelled enclosure supported by brick piers would enclose the unit. The proposed location is shown below in Figure Three. The unit is described as an Air Cooled Heat Pump with scroll compressors within the information submitted.

Figure Three – Site Plan showing the location and size of the proposal

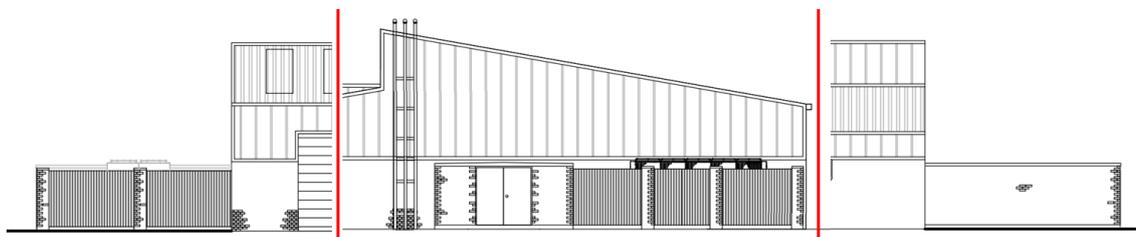


3.2.2 The proposed unit would have a length of 4.9m, a depth of 2.3m, and a height of 2.5m. It would have a power coated steel external construction. The plant house would have a footprint of circa 33 square meters. It would have brick elevations and a flat EPDM roofing system. Steel access doors would also be installed to the north elevation for maintenance reasons. An indicative image and proposed elevation plans for the ASHP unit and plant house are shown below in Figures Four and Five.

Figure Four – Indicative Image of the proposed ASHP unit



Figure Five – Proposed Elevation Plans



3.3 Case Officer Site Photos



3.4 Development Plan

3.4.1 Local Plan Part 2 (adopted December 2015):

- Policy 7: Sustainable and Viable Development
- Policy 8: Development and People
- Policy 10: Accessibility and Transport
- Policy 11: Design
- Policy 36: Climate Change

4.0 **ASSESSMENT**

4.1 Principle of Development

4.1.1 Policy 36 allows for the development of small-scale renewable or sustainable energy schemes, including heating schemes. The proposal would allow the carbon footprint and energy bills of the premises to be reduced through the harbouring of atmospheric heat within the building. The proposed development is therefore acceptable in principle and in accordance with Policy 36.

4.1.2 In accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development detailed in the Framework, and Policy 7, development proposals should proceed without delay, unless impacts which significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal are identified; subject to assessment of the following matters;

4.2 Design and Visual Amenity

- 4.2.1 In general terms, Policy 11 requires development proposals to represent a good standard of design through demonstrating an understanding of the sites wider context, and making a positive contribution to visual amenity.
- 4.2.2 As detailed above, the wider site is distinctly commercial in its nature and the host building is irregular in its form. The proposed ASHP unit and plant house would adjoin to the north elevation of the building and would appear prominent as an architectural addition. Materials are proposed for the plant house that would complement the appearance of the host building. That part of the proposal does not warrant any significant concerns from a design perspective.
- 4.3 Timber panels are proposed enclosing the ASHP unit that would appear at odds with the appearance of the host building. That said, given the nature of the proposal, it is essential that removable panels are installed for maintenance reasons and the size of the enclosure is dictated from manufacturers ventilation requirements. In addition, the use of brick piers to support the panels would ensure a certain level of visual consistency is maintained with the host building.
- 4.4 The submitted proposed site plan shows a native species hedgerow planted on the north boundary of the site, adjacent to Whitebirk Drive. Currently mature vegetation defines that boundary in areas yet there are gaps in the planting and the proposal would occupy a relatively prominent position from public vantage points to the north. On that basis, a condition is recommended to ensure the supplementary landscaping shown on the submitted plan is provided prior to the development being brought into use.
- 4.5 Subject to compliance with that condition, the proposed development would be acceptable in visual design terms, in accordance with Policy 11.

4.6 Residential Amenity

- 4.6.1 Policy 8 states that all development proposals should secure a satisfactory level of amenity for surrounding occupants with reference to noise, vibrations, nuisances, and the relationship between buildings. As detailed above, the site is positioned within an exclusively commercial area and there are no residential occupants to consider within a close proximity.
- 4.6.2 In addition, BwD Public Protection have raised no objections to the proposal on residential amenity grounds. As proposed, the development is therefore acceptable in relation to residential amenity, in accordance with Policy 8.

4.7 Highways and Parking

- 4.7.1 Policy 10 outlines a general requirement for development proposals to not prejudice road safety, or the safe and convenient movement of all highway users. The proposal would be installed within areas of the site that currently provide no parking or a vehicle service function. They would not compromise parking availability or the manouvering of vehicles within the site in any way.

As proposed, the development is therefore acceptable in relation to highways and parking, in accordance with Policy 10.

4.8 Summary

- 4.8.1 This application involves the installation of an ASHP with an associated brick built plant house and wider works.
- 4.8.2 Subject to appropriate conditions, the proposed development would be acceptable on all the relevant planning grounds, and in accordance with the policies detailed in Section 3.4.
- 4.8.3 Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Subject to appropriate conditions, the proposal would be acceptable in principle, and in terms of design and visual amenity, residential amenity, and highways and parking. The development therefore complies with the development plan. There is a positive presumption in favour of approving the development and there are no material reasons to object to the application.

5.0 **RECOMMENDATION:**

That delegated authority is given to the Strategic Director of Place to approve planning permission, subject to the following conditions;

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this planning permission.

REASON: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Unless explicitly required by condition within this consent, the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the proposals as detailed on drawings: Location Plan (1:2500), BTMC CAP – 00 – ZZ – DR – BS – 2002 – Revision P2, and BTMC CAP – 00 – ZZ – DR – BS – 2001 – Revision P1.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to clarify which plans are relevant to the consent.

3. The external materials to be used for the construction of the development hereby approved shall be as stated on the application form and approved drawings and those materials shall not be varied unless first being agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: Those materials are appropriate for the development and site, in the interests of visual amenity, and to comply with the requirements of Policy 11 of the Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Local Plan Part 2 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (Adopted 2015).

4. The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use unless and until, the landscaping details shown on the approved plan 'BTMC CAP – 00 – ZZ – DR – BS – 2002 – Revision P2' have been implemented. Those details shall be implemented in their entirety within the first available planting season following the commencement of any works relating the development on site. Any tree/shrub or other planting that is lost, felled, removed, uprooted, dead, dying or diseased or is substantially damaged within a period of five years thereafter shall be replaced with a specimen of similar species and size, during the first available planting season following the date of loss or damage.

REASON: To ensure screening is provided for the development, in the interests of visual amenity, and to comply with the requirements of Policy 11 of the Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Local Plan Part 2 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (Adopted 2015).

6.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 6.1 10/93/1166 – Technology Management Centre – Approve with Conditions – September 1993.
- 6.2 10/21/0564 – Installation of Solar Photo Voltaic (SPV) arrays to South facing roof slope – Approved by the Planning and Highways Committee, with conditions – August 2021.
- 6.3 10/21/0194 – Installation single Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) to consist of one single ASPH within an enclosure, adjoining plant house and additional landscaping to north boundary – Approved by the Planning and Highways Committee, with conditions – September 2021.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 BwD Public Protection – No objections. The main potential issue with these ASHP is noise and the use is commercial with only other commercial uses in the area. There is a significant road to front meaning the ambient noise in the area is already high. The impact in noise terms is likely to be very low.
- 7.2 BwD Property Services – No objections.
- 7.3 Hyndburn Borough Council
- 7.4 Ward Cllrs

8.0 CONTACT OFFICER: Christian Barton – Planning Officer

9.0 DATE PREPARED: 05th October 2021