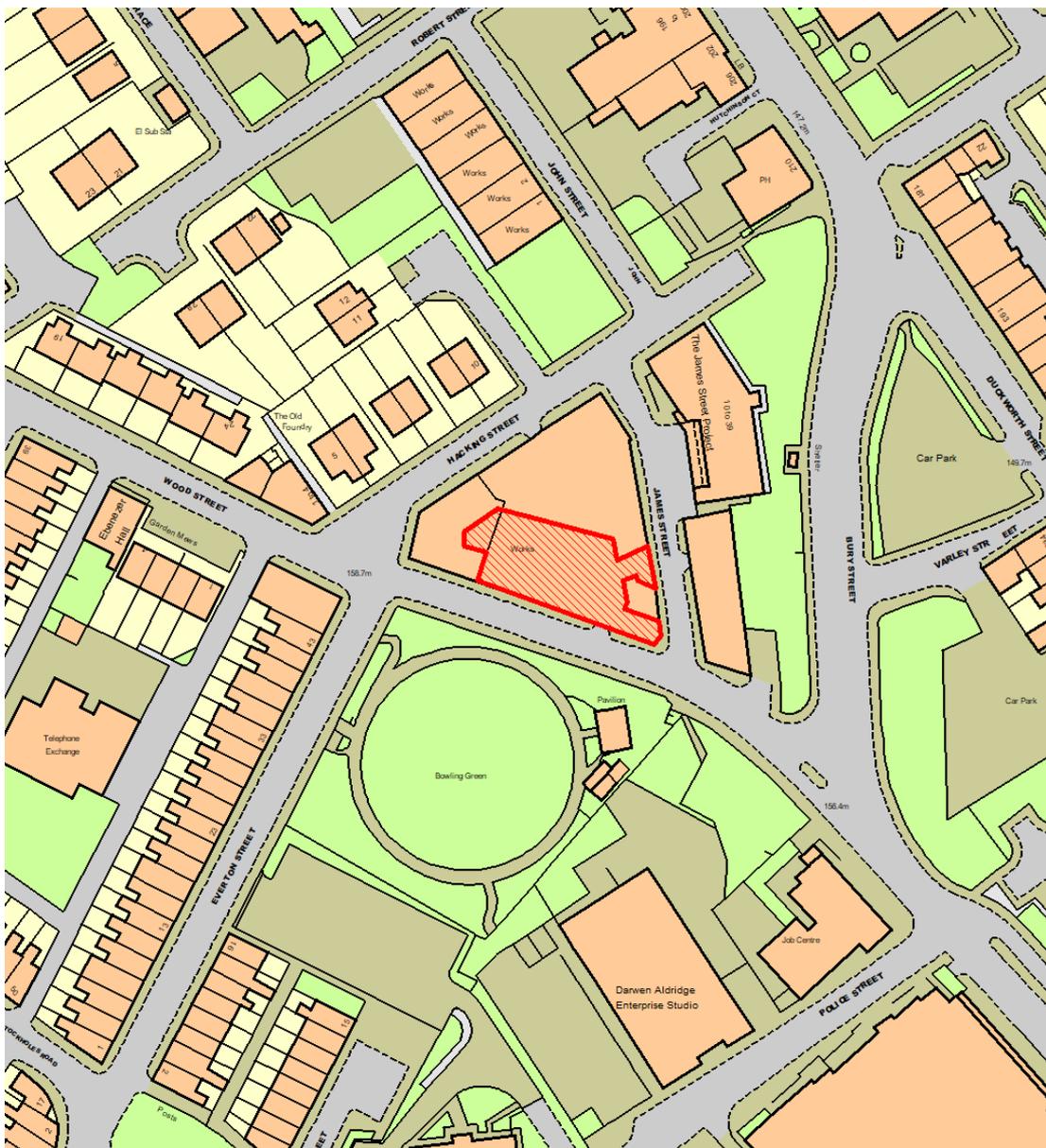


Proposed development: Full Planning Application for Change of use from warehouse/distribution (use class B8) to Children's play centre (use class E[d]) with external alterations.

Site address: Warehouse at Hacking Street, Darwen, BB3 1AL

Applicant: Darwen Bars and Leisure

**Ward: Darwen West Councillors: Dave Smith,
Stephanie Brookfield
Brian Taylor**



1.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

1.1 APPROVE – subject to the conditions set out within section 4 of this report

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, following a Chair referral due to the high public interest in the case, comments from the local ward councillor, and receipt of objections. The public objections are set out at section 9 of this report.

2.2 The proposal is considered to secure a viable use for a redundant building in accordance with the National Planning policy Framework's stated aims of achieving sustainable development and meeting service needs of local communities. The proposal is also satisfactory from a technical point of view, with all issues relative to the assessment having been addressed through the application, or capable of being controlled or mitigated through suitably worded planning conditions.

3.0 RATIONALE

3.1 Site and Surroundings

3.1.1 The proposal relates to a vacant commercial premises positioned on the periphery of Darwen Town Centre. The premises form part of a larger single building that contains other businesses and occupies the block surrounded by Wood Street, Hacking Street and James Street. The application unit physically fronts Wood Street, with a pedestrian and vehicular access at ground floor, the first floor incorporates a series of window openings.

3.1.2 The immediate area around the site is mixed in character. Commercial premises occupy the remainder of the building, as well as on the opposite side of James Street. Residential uses dominate the wider locality to the west. To the east lies Darwen Town Centre, with associated retail and commercial uses along with public car parks and civic spaces.



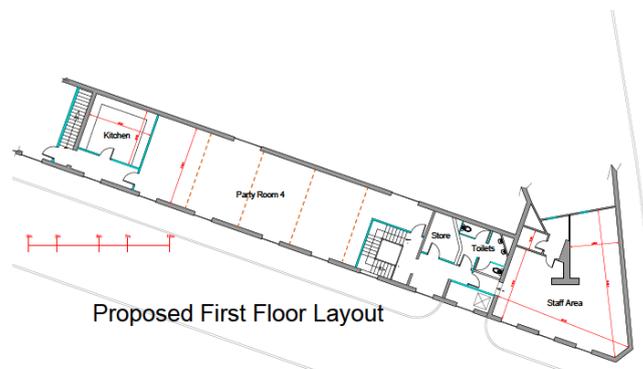
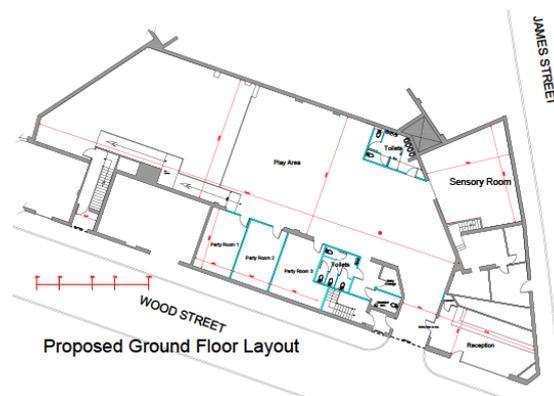
Location Plan

3.2 Proposed Development

3.2.1 Following clarification from the initial submission, planning approval is sought for a change of use of the premises from a warehouse/distribution use (use class B8) to a children's play centre (use class E[d]). The proposal also details alterations to the Wood Street façade to provide for a new pedestrian entrance and emergency exit.

3.2.2 The applicant has provided a 'business plan' that provides the following detail regarding the intended children's play centre use;

- Use to operate 7 days a week, from 10am to 6pm
- Target audience children aged from 4 to 12 years (children under 10 to be accompanied by an adult)
- 3 types of admission; general admission, party bookings and classes
- 3no. individual party rooms and a sensory room accessed from main open play area.
- Kitchen facility to serve hot drinks and snacks to parents and children using the centre. Buffet food served to party bookings.
- Maximum capacity of 60 children.



Proposed Floor Plans

3.3 Development Plan

3.3.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 requires that applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.3.2 The 'Development Plan' comprises the adopted Core Strategy DPD (2011) and adopted Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and the Development Management Policies (2015). The following policies are considered relevant in assessment of the proposed development;

3.3.3 Core Strategy

- Policy CS1 – A Targeted Growth Strategy
- Policy CS11 – Facilities and Services
- Policy 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 10 – Accessibility and Transport
- Policy 11 - Design

3.4 Other Material Planning Considerations

3.4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021)

The Framework sets out the government's aims and objectives against which planning policy and decision making should be considered. The following sections of the Framework are considered relevant to assessment of the proposal:

- Section 2: Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 8: Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities
- Section 9: Promoting Sustainable Transport

3.5 Assessment

3.5.1 Principle of Development:

Policy 1 of the Local Plan and CS1 of the Core Strategy identifies the preferred location for all new development to be within the defined Urban Boundary, which the site is situated within.

3.5.2 Policy CS11: Facilities and Services advises that the range and quality of public services and facilities will be expanded and enhanced, in particular, in the following locations; (i) The town centres of Blackburn and Darwen; (ii) Neighbourhood shopping centres; (iii) Existing key public buildings/facilities;

and (iv) Other accessible locations. The proposal is identified as being consistent with point (iv) given the proximity to Darwen Town Centre.

3.5.3 Section 8 of the NPPF also supports the principle of the development. At paragraph 93 a requirement to “provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs” through planning policies and decision making is set out. The proposed children’s play use, whilst not an essential facility, is considered to be an important facility for the local community.

3.5.4 Highways:

Core Strategy Policy 22: Accessibility Strategy and Local Plan Policy 10: Accessibility and Transport, aim to ensure that new developments provide appropriate provision for access, car parking and servicing so as to ensure the safe, efficient and convenient movement of all highway users is not prejudiced. That position is supplemented by the Framework, which at paragraph 111 states; “Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe”.

3.5.5 The public objections received, which can be viewed at section 9 of this report, are primarily based on highway related concerns. Specifically, the lack of dedicated parking for the development, the existing pressures upon on-street provision in the locality and the associated impact upon highway safety that would result. All objections were received prior to the reconsultation following receipt of further/amended details on the 21st June 2022.

3.5.6 The initial submission identified the existing use of the building as operating within class B2, whilst the proposed use was sui generis. Following review of the site’s planning history and discussion with the Council’s business rates team and applicant’s agent it was agreed that the description should be modified to identify the outgoing use as B8 warehouse and distribution and the incoming use as class E[d] development. Assessment proceeds on that basis.

3.5.7 The applicant’s submission identifies that there is no dedicated off-street provision to be provided, instead there is a reliance upon on-street provision and public car parking in the locality. The application building has a gross floor space of 866m². When applying the Council’s adopted parking standards the outgoing B8 use generates a parking need of 8 spaces, based on a requirement of 1 space per 100m². The incoming use would generate a need for 35 spaces, based on a requirement of 1 space per 25m² (NB: D2 parking standard used, as new class E[d] not yet added to adopted parking standards). The overall effect is a shortfall of 27 spaces against the guideline figure.

3.5.8 The public objections assert that the shortfall of parking cannot be met on-street without potentially severe highway impacts resulting. The applicant considers there is adequate capacity on-street and through the use of nearby

public car parks to meet the needs of the business, without adversely affecting highway safety.

3.5.9 The site lies on the periphery of Darwen Town Centre. The road network surrounding the site is characterised by a mix of unrestricted on-street provision and double yellow line restrictions. Other businesses operating from Hacking Street and James Street and users of the Everton Street Bowling Club are reliant upon the available on-street provision, as are residents living on Hacking Street and Everton Street. Two public car parks at Varley Street and Duckworth Street are within 70m of the application site and allow unlimited stay.



Google maps showing application site and public car parks on Varley Street.

3.5.10 The Council's highways team have advised that the site's sustainable location on the periphery of Darwen Town Centre offers advantages given the short walk to public transport linkages and good access for walking and cycling. The location also provides opportunity for linked trips to be made.

3.5.11 The objectors have sought to identify the lack of available parking through the submission of Google Street images. Asserting these are representative of the on-street situation on a typical day, rather than photographs supplied by the applicant. That position must be tempered, however, as an inspection of the Google images provided by the objector shows they are images captured between May 2009 and June 2018. Thus they too may not accurately represent the current on-street situation.

3.5.12 The case officer has visited the site and surrounding area 6 times between February and July 2022, at differing times of the working day. The observations are that James Street can be heavily parked given the active businesses adjoining the road. The on-street spaces along Wood Street, which face the site, have never been fully occupied when visits have occurred. Similarly, the on-street spaces on the southern side of Hacking Street are commonly available.

- 3.5.13 In addition to the areas discussed by the objectors, Members should also note that the eastern side of Everton Street contains no parking restrictions for much of its length and would be available for users of the play centre. Observations during site visits is that this area is rarely parked upon during the working week. It is acknowledged this position could differ at the weekend or evenings when the Everton Street Bowling Club is in use.
- 3.5.14 Notwithstanding the on-street availability, the application site is identified as being within 70m of two free public car parks at Duckworth Street and Varley Street. Again these areas have been observed on multiple occasions during the assessment of the application. Commonly neither has more than 50% occupation.
- 3.5.15 On balance, the Highways team have agreed that the identified parking shortfall could be accommodated through a combination of on-street capacity and use of the public car parking facilities. In forming that position weight has been attached to the applicant's submission that the maximum number of children would be restricted to 60 – this element could be conditioned. Weight has also been attached to the proposed hours, which could also be conditioned, which serve to ensure that the on-street parking will not be in use into the evening when the residents of Hacking Street and Everton Street are likely to be at home. Finally, weight has also been attached to the removal of conflicts associated with the potential operation of a B8 warehouse/distribution use that would be likely to increase the movement of larger delivery vehicles and given the restricted access to the building be likely to involve some degree of loading and unloading from the highway.
- 3.5.16 In summary, the highways team offer no objection subject to the suggested conditions set out above. Advising; *“To conclude, we take into account the lack of parking, however we acknowledging the accessibility of the site, and public car parks nearby. This together with the management and control of the facility, with the number of children not exceeding 60 at any one time. We would on balance offer no objections to the application...”*.
- 3.5.17 Design/Appearance: Policies CS16 and Policy 11 requires all new development to present a good standard of design, demonstrating an understanding of the wider context and making a positive contribution to the local area.
- 3.5.18 The proposal includes alterations to the Wood Street façade to provide for a new entrance/reception area and emergency exit, as per the image below.



3.5.19 It is noted that the location of the new 'shop front' is consistent with the position of a previous opening, which is illustrated by the use of different walling material (see following image). Further, the alteration is considered to harmonise effectively with the host building and be consistent with the character and appearance of the locality. Accordingly compliance with Policies CS16 and 11 is achieved.



Image showing position of new frontage.

3.5.20 Residential Amenity: Policy 8, amongst other considerations, requires that a satisfactory level of amenity and safety is secured for surrounding uses and for occupants or users of the development itself; with reference to noise, vibration, odour, light, dust, other pollution or nuisance, privacy / overlooking, and the relationship between buildings.

3.5.21 Given the relationship with surrounding uses and the nature of the proposed use, the internal operations of the building would be unlikely to adversely affect residential amenity due to the relative distances to the nearest dwellings. Similarly, given the proposed hours of operation of 10am to 6pm (7 days a week) it is also unlikely that the associated comings and goings of users will erode residential amenity standards as the use will not operate in the evening.

3.5.22 The Council's Head of Public Protection has suggested an hours restriction of 9 am to 8pm, Monday to Saturday and 10am to 5pm on Sundays and Bank

Holidays. This extends beyond the applicant's suggested hours, save for 1hr less on Sundays. On balance, it is considered appropriate to allow the applicant's suggested hours as the 6pm closing time will help prevent potential for conflict with local residents during the evening, as well avoid parking conflict when the on-street spaces are likely to be in greatest demand from residents.

3.5.23 The proposal includes a kitchen facility for serving refreshments to parents, as well as offering a buffet facility for the proposed party rooms. In order to mitigate any potential for loss of amenity, the Head of Public protection has recommended that a condition requiring a scheme for the control of cooking odours and fan noise be agreed prior to the use commencing.

3.5.24 Subject to the suggested conditions detailed at section 4 of this report, compliance with the requirements of Policy 8 is achieved.

3.5.25 Other Matters: Members should note that the unit that is the subject of this application has been vacant for approximately 14 years. As such, the proposal represents an opportunity to bring it back in to meaningful use.

3.5.26 The submission indicates that should the proposal be supported it would generate 5 full time and 8 part time jobs.

3.5.27 Summary: This report assesses the full planning application for change of use of the planning unit from use class B8 to class E(d). In considering the proposal, a wide range of material considerations have been taken into account.

3.5.28 The assessment demonstrates that the planning decision must be made in the context of assessing the merits of the proposal balanced against any potential harm that may arise from its implementation. This report finds that the proposal meets the policy requirements of the Blackburn with Darwen Core Strategy, Local Plan Part 2, adopted Supplementary Planning Documents and the National Planning Policy Framework

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE 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:

PCE-Perkins-October-21-Elevations, received 11th Jan 2022
PCE-Perkins-October-21- Proposed First Floor, received 25th Jan 2022
PCE-Perkins-October-21- Proposed Ground Floor, received 20th Jan 2022

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

3. Prior to the use hereby approved commencing, a scheme for the control of cooking odours and fan noise from the premises shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be in accordance with the agreed details.

REASON: To prevent loss of amenity to occupiers of neighbouring premises due to cooking odours and extraction system noise, in accordance with the requirements of Policy 8 of the Blackburn with Darwen Borough Local Plan

4. The use hereby permitted shall only take place between the following hours;

Monday to Sunday - 10am to 6pm

REASON: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining premises and the area generally in accordance with Policy 8 of the Blackburn with Darwen Borough Local Plan Part 2

5. The use of the development hereby approved shall be restricted to a maximum of 60 children at any time.

REASON: Given the restricted parking arrangements and to safeguard highway safety interests, in accordance with the requirements of Policy 10 of the Blackburn with Darwen Borough Local Plan Part 2

6. The premises shall be used as a children's play centre and for no other purpose, including any other purpose in class E[d] of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987 (as amended)

REASON: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining premises and the area generally in accordance with Policies 8 and 10 of the Blackburn with Darwen Borough Local Plan Part 2

5.0 PLANNING HISTORY

10/98/0802 – Change of use of part of factory (B2) to retail/wholesale of carpets (Refused)

10/86/0497 – Rebuilding wall to Wood Street and general improvements (Approved)

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 Public Consultation: 12 neighbouring properties have been individually consulted by letter and a site notice displayed. The consultation process was repeated following the receipt of amended details 13th April 2022 and 21st June 2022. 4 letters of objection have been received, and one comment from local ward councillor.
- 6.2 Public Protection: No objection subject to conditions relating to hours restriction (9am to 8pm Monday to Saturday, 10am to 5pm Sundays and Bank Holidays). Details of kitchen extraction system to be agreed.
- 6.3 Highways:

We have reviewed the additional details received in support of the application. When reviewing the adopted parking standards against the floorarea of 866sqm which is offered, this when measured against the allowance of 1 car space per 25 sqm would generate a parking need of 35 spaces. The outgoing warehousing use would have required an allowance of 8 spaces. The site does not have the capacity to accommodate the required numbers within the curtilage.

The site is surrounded by on street parking bays and is also located on the edge of the town centre. There are two unlimited public car parks in very close proximity to the site. I note from the objectors that there is resistance against the proposal, as it felt the customers of this facility would monopolise the parking bays around the vicinity. I have duly considered, this together with the sustainable location of the site. The facility will be a short walk from very good public and rail transport linkages, and good access for walking and cycling.

Access & Layout

The access to the facility will be taken from Wood Street, utilising existing access points.

Transport Statement

The accompanying document highlights that no more than 60 children will be allowed access into the building at any one time. The will be managed through a booking in system, and adequate time would be allowed between the 2 hour play session to ensure there is no limited overlap between those arriving and leaving the site.

The accompanying statement also provide clarity on the hours of operation and the use of the party and sensory rooms. It is reported that the rooms if in use will be include the requirement for no more than 60 children in the facility. Please condition.

To conclude, we take into account the lack of parking, however we acknowledging the accessibility of the site, and public car parks nearby. This together with the management and control of the facility, with the number of

children not exceeding 60 at any one time. We would on balance offer no objections to the application. We would however to stem the woes of the objectors, suggest a temporary use of 2 years is applied to monitor the situation.

7.0 CONTACT OFFICER: Martin Kenny, Principal Planner

8.0 DATE PREPARED: 4th August 2022

9.0 SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Objection – Mr T May. Received: 21/02/2022.

About the above application form submitted for a new play Centre in Hacking Street Darwen , i noticed on Part 5 where the question is asked was work started on this project before this application was marked no - However living in Darwen its not hard to work out when work is going on inside a building and the image attached proves they were working on this back in October 2021 -

I also notice they have no parking on the application . The congestion in Darwen around that area is already horrendous - so where is all the extra Traffic going to go with no Parking .

Also noticed in Planning application another play centre is opening soon in Darwen , Is there really the need for another one in such a small town-

Happy days has recently closed due to lack of Business , Covid 19 probably didn't help - wouldn't have been kinder to offer support to such an already existing business rather than this ? doesn't seem right.

Objection – Neil Watson. Received: 22/02/2022.

I think you will have surmised that I've been asked to look at the application for a third party. There is no objection to the principle of development but there are significant concerns about highway impacts. My instruction is that the site was last used by Tagg Wall Coverings. They were a Darwen registered company that were dissolved in 2013. The last pp may have been for a B2 use but the GDO allows a lawful change from B2 to B8 but not the reverse. The evidence is that it was last used for B8.

Please take this as a formal objection to the application. The issue is that the level of parking for the proposed use, using Blackburn's standards, increases from 8 spaces needed for the B8 use to 34 for the Class E use. The site has no off street parking. There is already high demand for on street parking and the nature of the business will be a high turnover of people visiting the facility which will lead to much higher on street parking. The area has a significant amount of areas covered by on street parking restrictions which demonstrates the vulnerability and inadequacies of the area for on street parking.

The impacts of this should in my view (I accept fully that there is an element of planning judgement in this and the validation requirements do not compel submission of one) be the subject of some form of assessment by the applicant. It will be for you to decide if that is required when you re-validate the application.

I will wait for the outcome of your deliberations on this before making further submissions on the issue of highway impacts.

Further Objection – Neil Watson. Received: 18/04/2022.

Planning Application 10/22/0038

**Change of Use of B8 Warehouse and
Distribution Depot to Class E Children's Play Centre**

Dear Mr Kenny

Thank you for the reconsultation on the above planning application. This is a formal objection to the application.

There are no objections to the physical alterations to the building and the actual activities internally are ones that will not be incompatible with the locality. The objection is to the impact that the development would have on car parking and public safety.

The starting point for considering any development is the development plan for the area as required in statute. The Part 2 Local Plan is still extant. Policy 10 states that development will be allowed where it has been demonstrated that *..”road safety and the safe, efficient and convenient use of all highway users.....is not prejudiced.”*

The National Planning Policy Framework (“the Framework”) sets out, at paragraph 111, that development should only be refused if there would be unacceptable impacts on highway safety or the residual impacts on the highway network would be severe. In terms of the latter point the applicant has provided no information on the impact on the highway network. The transport statement focusses solely on car parking so is in itself deficient.

Car parking standards are set out in the Council's 2014 adopted Parking Standards. The standards were set after the introduction of the first Framework (2012) so the standards will be in compliance with the policies of the Framework. This is important as the Framework requires that parking standards take into account (para 107):

- a the accessibility of the development
- b the type, mix and use of the development
- c the availability of and opportunities for public transport
- d local car ownership levels

In other words there should be no allowance outside of the parking standards for matters such as accessibility to public transport as these, in accordance with the Framework, should already have been taken into account in the parking standards.

The adopted parking standards are:

B8 1 car park space per 100sqm.

D2: Other Leisure Facilities 1 space per 25 sqm.

The parking standards also consider the need for mobility parking/parent/child spaces, operational parking and bicycles.

The Council is proceeding with a new Local Plan. The last consultation makes clear that the car parking standards are those adopted in 2014 but that there is a review of these to be carried out. The 2014 remain the adopted standards.

The site forms part of a larger single building that contains other businesses. It sits next to an iron mongers and a 4 storey residential development on James Street. The parking for these two development comprises of one space next to the iron mongers on Wood Street and 4 spaces for the 4 storey residential development.

Attached at Appendix 1 is a screenshot taken from Google. The reason for taking a Google screenshot is to show a random photo of the area. Photos taken by objectors or developers normally will show a situation advantageous to their case. The photographs taken by the applicant in their transport statement are examples of this. They are not representative of a typical day and show the streets bereft of cars. They do not represent a typical situation and show the area without the streets being affected by cars. Anyone visiting the area in a normal day will see that they represent a false picture of what typically occurs in the area.

The photo (App 1) shows that the highway network is not capable of catering for existing businesses with the highway width being restricted due to cars and vehicles parking. It must be noted that in order to allow room enough for vehicles to go down Wood Street vehicles need to mount the pavement and park on the pavement. This is inherently dangerous to users of the pavement and restricts pavement widths forcing anyone in a wheelchair or with a pram etc to walk on the carriageway.

Appendix 2 shows a typical situation on Wood Street. Again commercial vehicles have to park on the pavement to give sufficient width to allow other vehicles to use Wood Street.

Appendix 3 shows the junction of Hacking Street and Wood Street. A business is located directly opposite the junction which is a staggered cross roads. The photo shows the location where on street car parking is being encouraged to occur as per the applicant's submitted plan of available on street parking. Vehicles are being encouraged to park and manoeuvre, carrying children who will visit the proposed venue, on a junction with vehicles approaching from the east along Wood Street being forced to travel on the wrong side of the carriageway due to other parking on Wood Street. The combination of vehicles approaching on the wrong side of the carriageway and manoeuvring to park on the junction would be inimical to highway safety.

The parking requirement of the existing use on the site, using the adopted parking standards, is 6 spaces. There is no available off street parking at the site.

The requirement for parking spaces in the adopted standards for the new development is 25.

According to the adopted parking standards there is a net increase requirement of a further 19 parking spaces.

There is a crown green bowling facility directly opposite the site. It has no off street parking with it and parking is on Wood Street and the surrounding road network.

Comments on the Transport and Planning Statement ("the TPS")

The applicant has submitted the TPS. There are some fundamental issues with this which need to be considered in the planning balance.

The statement indicates that there is a requirement for 5 further spaces. It does not however use the adopted planning standards of the Council. The standards it refers to (1.5 spaces per 2 members of staff and then 1 space per 10 children) are not those of the Council and the source is not referenced. The law requires application to be determined in accordance with the development plan which is the 2014 standards. Any deviation from that must be fully justified. There is no indication in the statement as to why alternative standards to those in the adopted standards should be used. They should be ignored as they are not justified.

The road parking plan shows 32 on street spaces available. It is inaccurate and shows parking 33% higher than is actually available. Spaces 1 and 2 are on double yellow lines. Spaces 10 and 18-22 (Appendix 4) are similarly on double yellow lines. None of these can be used for parking.

The basis for the statement is undermined by its inaccuracies and by its unsupported application of policy. This results in an underestimate of parking need by 416%. This is compounded by a 33% over estimate of available parking.

Other Issues

The applicant indicates that the development is in an accessible location and that people will travel to it by bus and train. As indicated above the parking standards set by Blackburn must have had included in them an assessment of accessibility as otherwise they would not have been compliant with the Framework. The use of the site will be for younger children. Parents will not travel with them on a train or bus as it would be far more convenient to travel by car. Again the adopted parking standards would have taken the use of alternative methods of travel into account so there should not be any reduction in the requirement for parking spaces.

The applicant indicates that there is a good level of public off street parking available. The nearest site is shown on the location plan off Valley Street. That is not a public car park and cannot be considered as one. It is privately owned and can be closed at any point.

There will be some benefits from using a B8 site and not having deliveries and despatches of commercial vehicles. This would be offset to a degree though by the servicing of food and other goods to facilitate the development.

Planning Balance

Notwithstanding the view of the applicant that there will not be parking issues associated with this development it is abundantly clear that the development will lead to a significant level of further on street parking in an area that is already under parking pressure. Existing road users have to walk in the street to avoid parked vehicles, loading and unloading is all on street and this will become worse the more haphazard the parking is in the area.

The applicant indicates that they will limit the impact but the reality is that, as with any business, they will want to maximise the use of the premises and maximise profits. That is perfectly understandable but this does not sit well with limiting on street car parking. The applicant has provided no indication of how they will discourage on street car parking. As this is a fundamental matter to the principle of development it must be considered at this stage and cannot be left for further consideration such as by a condition requiring a future travel plan.

The development will lead to a danger to users of the facility and to other road users. This will be a significant danger.

There will be benefits from the re-use of an existing disused building and economic benefits to the area.

It will not be a new use that is not already available in the Borough so will not provide a facility that is otherwise unavailable so there will be no net benefits to the leisure offer of the Borough.

In effect the planning balance revolves around the economic benefits it will have set against the impacts on highway safety.

Our submission is that the highway impacts will be severe. They will exacerbate an existing problem and make it substantially greater. There will be modest economic benefits of creating up to 6 jobs. These modest benefits would not outweigh the significant and severe problems caused by a major increase in on street parking in an area that has no available off street parking for businesses and which already suffers for a danger to users.

Yours sincerely

Neil Watson BA (Hons), MA, MRTPI

Appendix 1



Appendix 2



Appendix 3



Appendix 4



Objection – Dave Benson. Received: 16/05/2022.

Having just looked at the planning application for a new play centre on Hacking street here in Darwen I would like to raise some concerns regarding parking and the request to remove the Yellow lines surrounding this building and create 25 more parking spaces around the building .

Myself and some local colleagues have discussed this issue , firstly they are saying there will be only 60 children at any one time . ? They have proposed quite a big play area and included 4 party rooms , how can this much space only accommodate 60 children , what about all the adults who also come with the children - 4 party rooms would accommodate at least 60 people , children and adults at one

time so if customers want to go into the play centre where would they park , where could they go if the centre is already full .

My family have attended play centres with our children and attended party's , there are always at least 2 parents per child at partys plus grand parents and family members , well over 10 per party .

The request to remove existing yellow lines is extremely alarming on those roads , there is a school nearby and a health centre at the bottom. The yellow lines were put there for a reason , for safety and our children's safety . Are the children going to come out of the play centre and run out between the cars parked directly outside the building if the yellow lines are removed , this is an accident waiting to happen .

Myself and local people are very worried about this application , there are plenty of other places if they want to open a new play centre in Darwen , having said this one very nice and good one closed down last year in Darwen so why would we need another in a very poor location .

Objection – Dave Benson. Received: 23/05/2022.

Further to my email sent on the 16th May I would still like to register our worries as local residents , regarding application number 10/22/0038 for a New Play Centre .

There has been activity in their building and building work is still going on .

We read from social media (photos Enclosed) his plans are all singing all dancing for the Play Centre , sensory Rooms , 4 party rooms , function Room , toilets and Kitchen ...all for 60 people ?? This makes NO SENSE what so ever and we are under no illusion that this will NOT be the case - A business of this size would not be able to survive on such low numbers so we suggest with all respect the Numbers will never stay at 60 ..

This brings me back to my original email regarding safety and parking in this location for the customers they will need to fill all this space .

We hope local opinion is taken seriously .

Comment – Cllr Brian Taylor. Received: 02/02/2022.

I welcome this application, my only concern is parking around there.
