

Proposed Development: Proposed installation of a temporary classroom block within the school grounds to provide additional capacity for up to 3 years

Site Address: Newfield School, Old Bank Lane, Blackburn, BB1 2PW

Applicant: Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Wards: Audley and Queens Park
Blackburn South East

Councillor Altaf Patel
Councillor Tony Humphrys
Councillor Ehsan Raja
Councillor Salim Sidat
Councillor Vicky McGurk
Councillor James Shorrock



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

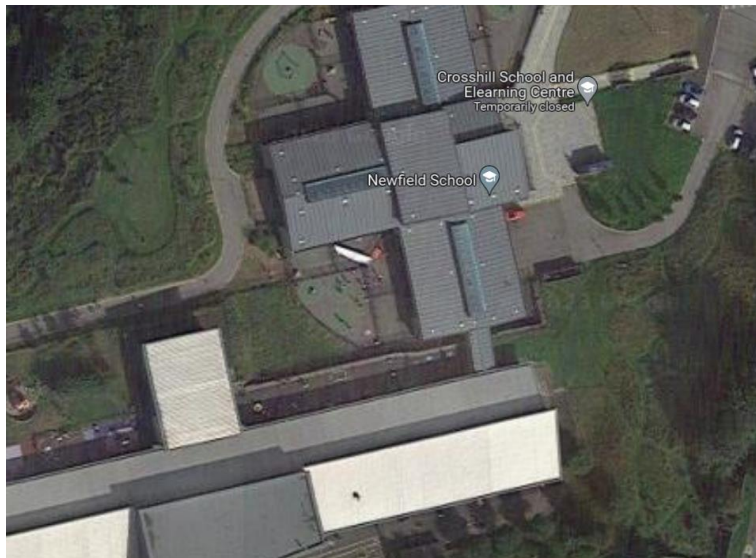
- 2.1 This application is presented to the Planning and Highways Committee, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, and given that the application has been made on behalf of the Council.
- 2.2 The residents of 11 adjacent properties were notified by letter on 26th June 2023. 2 site notices were also displayed adjacent to the site entrance on 28th June 2023. No public comments have been received for the application so far. Should any comments be received ahead of the committee meeting they will be presented as part of an update report.
- 2.3 The Council's development plan supports new educational developments and associated works, provided they constitute sustainable development and accord with the development plan when taken as a whole.
- 2.4 The proposals involve the installation of a temporary classroom block within the school grounds to provide alternate capacity for up to 3 years. On balance, the proposals 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.
- 2.5 The key issues to be addressed in determining this application are follows;
- Establishing the principle of development
 - Assessing visual amenity impacts
 - Assessing parking provisions
 - Assessing drainage provisions
 - Ensuring land contamination does not pose a risk to site users

3.0 RATIONALE

3.1 Site and Surroundings

- 3.1.1 The application site is a school located within the settlement of Blackburn. The site comprises of two large interconnected buildings alongside landscaped areas, playgrounds and car parks. Commercial land uses surround to the south with a car park to the west, dwellings to the north and a leisure centre to the east. The existing school building is modern in its design with a corrugated metal roof and elevations finished in a range of materials and colours.

Figure One – Satellite Image of the Site



3.2 Proposed Development

- 3.3 As detailed above, this application involves the temporary installation of a classroom block. The block would be positioned adjacent to the main buildings. Two classrooms would be provided within alongside toilets and storerooms. The block would have a footprint of circa 144 square metres and a flat roof 3m in height. It would have grey steel walls, a rubberised roof and grey aluminium doors and windows. An access ramp would be installed to the east elevation.

Figure Two – Proposed Site Plan



- 3.4 The proposed block would be in place for a period of up to 3 years, from September 2023 until September 2026. The temporary classrooms would offer a learning environment of similar quality as that found within the existing teaching spaces. The approach of erecting a temporary classroom has been pursued specifically to meet a short-term need whilst the Council focuses on the permanent enlargement of the existing school buildings, which is expected to commence in early 2024.

3.5 Case Officer Site Photos



3.6 Development Plan

3.6.1 Core Strategy (2011):

- Policy CS11: Facilities and Services

3.6.2 Local Plan Part 2 (2015):

- Policy 1: The Urban Boundary
- Policy 7: Sustainable and Viable Development
- Policy 9: Development and the Environment
- Policy 10: Accessibility and Transport
- Policy 11: Design

3.6.3 BwD Parking Standards (2014)

- Primary and Secondary Schools: 1 car space per classroom/activity area

4.0 **ASSESSMENT**

4.1 Principle of Development

4.1.1 The site is located within the defined urban boundary, which are identified as the preferred locations for all new development by Policy 1. Regarding educational developments, Policy CS11 states that range and quality of public services and facilities will be expanded and enhanced; in particular, in accessible locations. The site benefits from such a position and the proposed development is therefore acceptable in principle, in accordance with Policies CS11 and 1.

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 Green Infrastructure (GI)

4.2.1 The site is partly located with the Queen's Park GI allocation. Policy 9 states that development involving the partial loss of land identified as GI will not be permitted unless the development can be accommodated without the loss of the function of the open space. Given that the development would only temporarily cover a small part of the allocation, no harmful impacts would be caused for its overall function.

4.2.2 A condition is recommended to limit the timeframe of the permission and ensure the land is restored to an acceptable standard following the removal of the development. Such a condition is necessary given the presence of the GI allocation. Subject to compliance with that condition, the proposed development would be acceptable with reference to GI, in accordance with the relevant requirements of Policy 9.

4.3 Design and Visual Amenity

4.3.1 The site is a large educational facility with range of building types within. Policy 11 requires all development proposals to represent a good standard of design through demonstrating an understanding of the site's wider context and making a positive contribution to visual amenity.

4.3.2 The proposed block would be positioned within a concealed location and it would be predominantly screened from the public domain by existing buildings. It would form a freestanding, utilitarian structure, which are not uncommon in the context of educational sites. The materials and finishes proposed are common to such forms of development and the proposals would not cause any unacceptable visual design implications when the nature of the site is taken into account.

4.3.3 A condition is recommended to ensure those materials/finishes are used so that a satisfactory form of development is achieved. Subject to compliance with that condition, the proposed development would be acceptable with reference to design and visual amenity, in accordance with the relevant requirements of Policy 11.

4.4 Parking Provision

4.4.1 The site has a large carpark to the west of the building with further provision positioned to the south. Policy 10 requires all development proposals to not prejudice road safety or the safe, efficient and convenient movement of all highways users. Appropriate provision must also be made for vehicular access, off-street servicing and parking in accordance with the Council's adopted standards.

4.4.2 No additional parking provision is proposed in support of the development. That said, the block will not increase the capacity of the site as it is required to temporarily relocate students in order to allow for improvement works to be carried out to the main school buildings. For that reason, the proposed development is acceptable with reference to parking provision, in accordance with the relevant requirements of Policy 10.

4.5 Land Contamination

4.5.1 The development involves excavations within a public site and land contamination must be assessed on that basis. Policy 8 contains requirements to ensure development proposals on previously developed land can be remediated to a standard that provides a safe environment for users of the development whilst also ensuring contamination is not displaced.

4.5.2 BwD Public Protection has reviewed the merits of the application and no objections have been raised. A condition has been advised to control the potential for contamination to be unexpectedly encountered during redevelopment works, which is recommended to be added. Subject to compliance with that condition, the proposed development would be acceptable with reference to land contamination, in accordance with the relevant requirements of Policies 8.

4.6 Drainage Assessments

4.6.1 The submitted application form states that surface waters would be drained with the use of a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS). The Agent has clarified that that an existing system would be utilised for surface and foul waters with the latter flowing directly into the sewer. Policy 9 requires all development proposals to be served with appropriate drainage systems.

4.6.2 Both BwD Drainage and United Utilities have reviewed the merits of the application. No objections have been raised to the proposed drainage strategy as surface waters would be drained in a sustainable way. Any required drainage connections can be agreed following the planning process. For those reasons, the proposed development is acceptable with reference to drainage assessments, in accordance with the relevant requirements of Policy 9.

4.7 Summary

4.7.1 This application involves the installation of a temporary classroom block within the school grounds to provide additional capacity for up to 3 years. Subject to appropriate conditions, the proposed development would be acceptable on all the relevant planning grounds, in accordance with the policies and guidance note detailed in Section 3.6.

4.7.2 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 Green

Infrastructure, design and visual amenity, parking provision, drainage assessments and land contamination.

- 4.7.3 The proposed 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:

Delegated authority is given to the Strategic Director of Growth and Development and Deputy Chief Executive to approve planning permission, subject to the following conditions;

- 5.1 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.

- 5.2 This permission covers a temporary period alone and the development hereby approved shall be entirely removed on or before 30/09/2026. Prior to its removal, a scheme shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority regarding restoration of the site. The site shall subsequently be restored in accordance with the approved scheme within 12 months of the development being removed.

REASON: In order to ensure the development is not retained indefinitely and the site is adequately restored, in the interests of safeguarding the function of the Green Infrastructure allocation, to comply with the requirements of Policy 9 of the Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Local Plan Part 2, Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (Adopted 2015)

- 5.3 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 (NFS-01-P-01), NFS-01-P-02, NFS-01-P-03 and NFS-01-P-04.

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

- 5.4 All the external materials and finishes to be used for the development hereby approved shall be as stated on the submitted application form and approved drawings.

REASON: In order to ensure a satisfactory form of development is achieved, 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).

- 5.5 Should contamination be encountered unexpectedly during redevelopment of the site, all works should cease, and the Local Planning Authority should be immediately informed in writing. If unacceptable risks are identified, a remedial options appraisal and detailed remediation scheme should be presented, and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter proceed in strict accordance with the agreed details.

REASON: In order to protect the health of future occupiers of the site, prevent the displacement of pollution and any associated environmental impacts, and to comply with the requirements of Policies 8 and 9 of the Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Local Plan Part 2, Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (Adopted 2015).

6.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 6.1 No relevant planning history

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 BwD Public Protection – No objections. Should the application be approved, a condition should be imposed regarding unexpectedly encountering land contamination during redevelopment works.

- 7.2 BwD Drainage – No objections.

- 7.3 United Utilities – It is the applicant's responsibility to investigate and demonstrate the exact relationship between United Utilities' assets and the proposed development.

- 7.4 Ward Cllrs – No objections.

- 7.5 No public responses received

- 8.0 CONTACT OFFICER:** Christian Barton – Planning Officer

- 9.0 DATE PREPARED:** 3rd August 2023

- 10.0 SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS** – none received.