

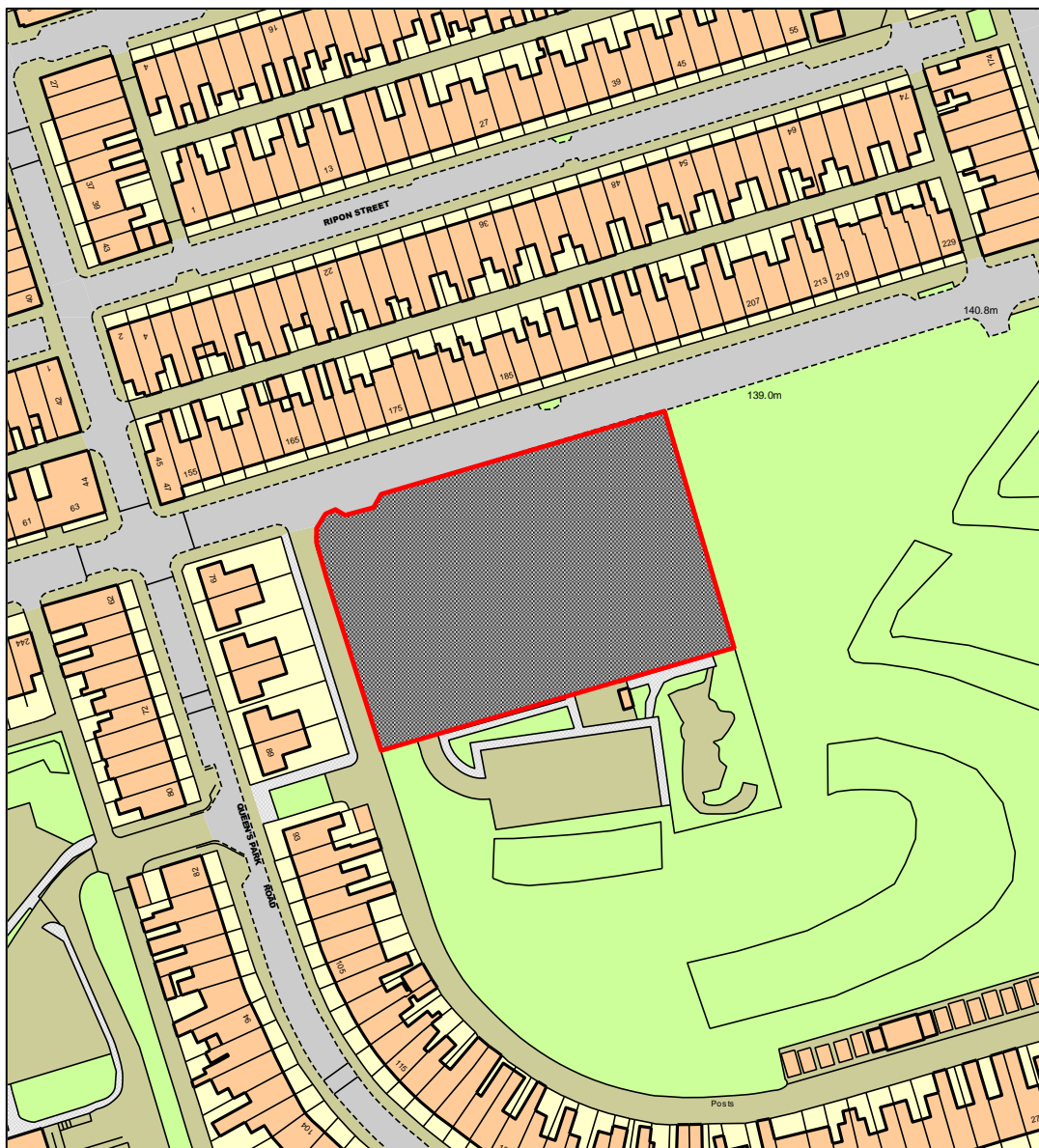
Proposed Development: Erection of 3 No. single storey extensions, new entrance canopy and internal reconfigurations

Site Address: Audley and Queens Park Children's Centre/Audley and Queens Park Neighbourhood Learning Centre, Pringle Street, Blackburn, BB1 1SF

Applicant: Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Ward: Audley and Queens Park

**Councillor Altaf Patel
Councillor Ehsan Raja
Councillor Salim Sidat MBE**



1.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

1.1 The proposed developments are 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 proposed development has been publicised through letters to residents and occupants of the nearest 29 adjacent properties on 03rd October 2023. In addition, a site notice was displayed on 05th October 2023. No public comments have been received for the application so far. Should any comments be received ahead of the meeting they will be presented as part of a committee update report.

2.3 The Council's development plan supports new community developments and associated works, provided they constitute sustainable development and accord with the development plan when taken as a whole.

2.4 The proposed developments involve the erection of 3 single-storey extensions to the community building. A new entrance canopy is also proposed to the east elevation alongside slight roof alterations. The extensions would be implemented in conjunction with a number of internal reconfigurations to improve the facilities of the building.

2.5 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.

2.6 The key issues to be addressed in determining this application are as follows;

- Establishing the principle of development
- Green Infrastructure
- Design and visual amenity
- Parking provision
- Land contamination

3.0 RATIONALE

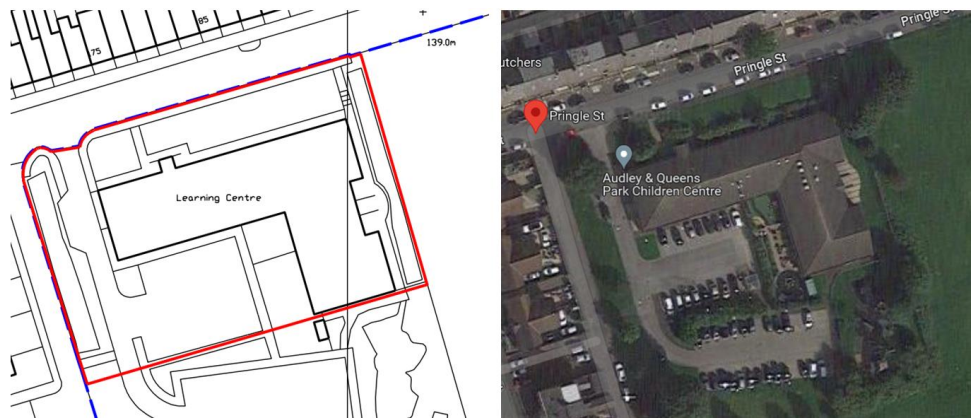
3.1 Site and Surroundings

3.1.1 The application site is a single-storey community building that is positioned within the settlement of Blackburn. It forms part of the Queen's Park Road Green Infrastructure (GI) allocation. Dwellings surround to two sides with open land positioned to the south and east. The building mostly has red brick elevations, grey concrete roofing tiles and brown uPVC doors and windows.

The wider site contains landscaped areas with two carparks positioned to the south of the building.

- 3.1.2 Audley and Queens Park Children's Centre provides early education for children aged between 2 - 4 years' old. The Children's Centre opens from Monday to Friday during school term time only. It has an ancillary café and library. In 2019, the Centre had capacity for up to 77 children, but operated over capacity with around 100 children on roll. Due to the existing over-capacity and the forecasted growth in demand for places, it has been deemed necessary to expand and enhance the facility to meet the needs of the local community.

Figure One – Location Plan and Satellite Image



3.2 Proposed Development

- 3.2.1 As detailed above, the proposed development involves the erection of 3 single-storey extensions and a new entrance canopy in conjunction with a number of internal reconfigurations. This application specifically relates to the Children's Centre, which is located within the eastern portion of the building.
- 3.2.2 The larger of the extensions would infill an area off the south and west elevations. It would have a footprint of circa 85 square metres and a flat roof 3.2m in height. A roof lantern would be installed centrally and its elevations would be externally finished with dark grey and red bricks. A flexible youth space would be provided within. A number of light pipes would also be inserted into the south and west roofslopes.

Figure Two – Proposed South and West Elevations



3.2.3 The two smaller extensions are proposed from the east elevation. They would have footprints of circa 11 square metres and flat roofs 3.2m in height. Dark grey and red bricks would also be used to externally finish the extensions. Together with the new canopy, the two extensions would provide a new entrance point, meeting room and extended receptions areas. The proposed development seeks the addition of circa 100sqm of new floorspace.

Figure Three – Proposed East Elevation



3.2.4 The internal configurations would allow for the provision of further flexible spaces, a workshop, improved prayer room facilities, an office suite and additional seating areas. The premises will continue to operate in line with the existing opening hours of the facility. The Centre currently employs 16 members of childcare staff. The introduction of the Inspire Motivate Overcome (IMO) Charity to the site is expected to increase the number of employees and children attending site.

Figure Four – Proposed Floor Plan



3.3 Case Officer Site Photos



3.4 Development Plan

3.4.1 Core Strategy (2011):

- Policy CS11: Facilities and Services

3.4.2 Local Plan Part 2 (2015):

- 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

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. Policy CS11 states that the range and quality of public services and facilities will be expanded and enhanced; in particular, at accessible locations. The site benefits from such a position. Furthermore, BwD Children's Services are supportive of the proposals. 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 As detailed above, the site is located within the Queen's Park Road 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.

4.2.2 Given that the development would only cover a small part of the allocation, no harmful impacts would be caused for its overall function. As proposed, the development is thus 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 community building that is a standalone feature within the streetscene. 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 extensions would appear relatively small-scale when related to the massing of the existing building. Flat roofs would be used, which would appear at odds with the main pitched roof. However, the form of the extensions would not appear unacceptably out of place given the utilitarian style of the existing building. The proposed canopy would also appear as a proportionate and unimposing structure once built.

4.3.3 Grey bricks are proposed for the majority of the elevations with feature bands of red bricks also proposed. The use of such materials would differentiate the age of the extensions from that of the main building alongside providing a certain level of visual interest. Moreover, the style of the proposed doors and windows would match those of the existing building.

4.3.4 A condition is recommended to ensure the development is implemented in accordance with the submitted materials details. 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 Residential Amenity

4.4.1 Dwellings surround to two sides and safeguarding the amenities of those neighbours is an important material planning consideration. Policy 8 states that all development proposals should secure a satisfactory level of amenity for surrounding occupants in relation to noise, vibration, odour, light, dust, other pollution or nuisance, privacy/overlooking, and the general relationship between buildings.

4.4.2 Owing to ample separation, the proposed extensions would not appear overbearing or cause any adverse privacy implications for the closest neighbours. The development would not intensify usage of the site to a level

that would be harmful to the aural amenities of neighbours. Furthermore, no additional measures are necessary to control the construction phase of the development when the relatively small-scale nature of the extensions is taken into account. As proposed, the development is thus acceptable with reference to residential amenity, in accordance with the relevant requirements of Policy 8.

4.5 Parking Provision

4.5.1 The site has two relatively large carparks to the south of the building, which provide in excess of 40 spaces. Policy 10 requires all development proposals to not prejudice road safety or the safe, efficient and convenient movement of all highways users. Adequate parking provision and servicing arrangements should also be provisioned in support of new development.

4.5.2 The proposed extensions would not result in the loss of any existing off-street vehicle parking facilities. The proposals would have the potential to increase the capacity of the site, and therefore parking requirements. That said, the existing carparks are adequately sized to accommodate any additional parking requirements associated with the development. On that basis, the proposed development is acceptable with reference to parking provision, in accordance with the relevant requirements of Policy 10.

4.6 Land Contamination

4.6.1 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.

4.6.2 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.

4.7 Summary

4.7.1 This application involves the erection of 3 No. single storey extensions, a new entrance canopy and internal reconfigurations. Subject to appropriate conditions, the proposed development would be acceptable on all the relevant planning grounds, in accordance with the policies detailed in Section 3.4.

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, 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 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 (P501), P1200, P1201, P2000, P2100, P3000, P3050, P3100 and P3200.

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

- 5.3 All the external construction 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).

- 5.4 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 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 6.1 10/03/0278 – Phase 2 - Surestart Building (Early Learning Centre) with car park – Approved, with conditions – July 2003.
- 6.2 10/02/0559 – Access Point Building for educational use with car park, entrance and exit – Approved, with conditions – October 2002.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 BwD Children’s Services – No objections.
- 7.2 BwD Public Protection – No objections. Should the application be approved, a condition should be imposed regarding unexpectedly encountering land contamination during redevelopment works.
- 7.3 BwD Drainage – No objections.
- 7.4 BwD Property Services – No objections.
- 7.5 Ward Cllrs – No objections.
- 7.6 No public responses received

8.0 CONTACT OFFICER: Christian Barton – Planning Officer

9.0 DATE PREPARED: 03rd November 2023

10.0 SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS – none received.