A RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY ON 1.25 Ha OF COUNCIL OWNED LAND

LAND AT TOWER ROAD, BLACKBURN, BB2 5LE

SEPTEMBER 2018
Contents

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

Land at Tower Road,
Blackburn,
BB2 5LE

1. The Opportunity
2. Site location and context
3. Site description
4. Development Vision
5. Indicative development proposals
6. Planning and design considerations (See Appendix G)
7. Surveys and reports
8. Other information

Appendix A – Council Ownership Plan
Appendix B – Tower Road Tender Instructions
Appendix C – Conditions of Sale
Appendix D – Offer Form
Appendix E – Certificates
Appendix F – Envelope Label
Appendix G - Outline Planning Permission decision notice 10_17_1378 23-02-2018
1 The Opportunity

Outline Planning Consent has been granted by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, which permits the site to be redeveloped for up to 30 new homes, designed around an attractively landscaped setting, at the gateway to Witton Country Park.

A residential development opportunity with retained and improved green infrastructure extending to 1.25 ha (3.09 acres) on Council owned land.

With outline planning consent in place, the Council (as land owner) now wishes to market and sell the site to a developer, who will then prepare detailed proposals and make a reserved matters application which meet the requirements of the planning conditions. A high quality scheme is required, including retention (and /or) improvement of open space at the site.

The developer will also be expected to engage with Natural England to obtain an appropriate bat license for the demolition of the decommissioned care home, as recent surveys have revealed contains roosting bats.

Plans for the buildings demolition and the site’s redevelopment will include implementation of mitigation measures that are designed to protect bats and to improve the site’s biodiversity.

Figure 1: The aerial photo above identifies the site and the existing decommissioned care home, which is now vacant and earmarked for demolition.
The site is owned by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council and located at Tower Road, Fenisciffe, Blackburn BB2 5LE, Lancashire.

Located in the Borough of Blackburn with Darwen, Lancashire, Blackburn West the site is found within a very desirable suburban location on the edge of the Green Belt and Witton Country Park.

Blackburn West has an overall population of 58,339 residents and is a sustainable location, with convenient access to the national motorway and train network.

Estimates suggest that it is shorter than a 15 minute drive to Cuerden / Junction 29 (M6) and Junction 9 (M61) for Manchester and only 3.3 kilometres to Junction 4 (M65) at Earcroft.

The area is close to popular local neighbourhoods including Fenisciffe, Feniscowles and Cherry Tree.

The area is well served by local schools and shops including:

- A new state of the art Academy school (Witton Park Academy);
- St Bedes RC Highschool
- 6 local Primary Schools;

Preston Old Road also has a number of convenience stores as well as hot food takeaways, pubs and other essential facilities.

The nearest retail parade is within 0.5 km of the site.

Most spectacularly, the site adjoins Witton Country Park giving access to over 480 acres of countryside that is liberally peppered with pretty picnic spots, walks, nature trails and cycle routes.

Figure 2: Site Context Aerial Map
Tower Road is located to the west of Blackburn town centre and served directly off the A674, Preston Old Road which forms the main route into Blackburn from the west.

Hillcrest Road adjoins this running south to Geddes Street, which then joins the A674 in close proximity to the site.

The A674 connects to junction 3 of the M65 to the south west of the subject site, and to Blackburn town centre approximately 3 km to the north east.

The site is roughly rectangular and is quite well defined on the ground defined by existing roads to the north and east and by existing housing to the south. To the west, is a short, steep embankment of trees and scrubland forming the boundary to Witton Park. This part of the park forms part of a Biological Heritage Site and the popular Pleasington playing fields.

Within the site is an existing vacant building (found at the southerly corner). The building has been left standing vacant for a number of years and is now surplus to requirements. The former care home has been earmarked for demolition to allow for redevelopment with high quality housing.

Developers should note that bats have been recorded at the site and need to be fully considered as part of the demolition and redevelopment plans. Further information is provided in Section 6 (Planning and Design Considerations) of this document.

A row of garages is located to the rear of Hillcrest Road.

ii. Tower Road
Homes are located to the north of Tower Road including four or five bungalows to the western end of the road (adjacent the park gates) with some larger detached dwellings to the east. Tower Road is generously wide with ample space for parking along the unrestricted carriageway.

iii. Geddes Street
Three or four properties are located at the western end of Geddes Street with one property backing on to the development site. The garden is enclosed by a large (1.8m high) steel palisade fence.

A row of garages is located to the rear of Hillcrest Road.

i. Hillcrest Road
Includes a row of traditional terraced housing with on street car parking for residents and visitors located on both sides of the street.

Semi-detached homes face the site to the northern end of Hillcrest Road and these accommodate some off street parking within drives and associated garages.

Occasional benches are found at various locations around the perimeter of the space offering views over the open space, Witton Park and beyond.

Existing housing overlooks the site on three sides:

Hillcrest Road

Tower Road
Figure 3: Existing site plan

Legend:

Site boundary - 1.25ha
Existing trees on site
Green space
Buildings to be demolished

Site Areas:

Site boundary - 1.25ha
Site of vacant home for older persons - 0.35ha
Existing green space - 0.9ha
Outline planning consent has been secured by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council with all matters reserved for a residential redevelopment on the land at Tower Road, Feniscliffe. The consent is for up to 30 homes and all other associated required works (including bat mitigation measures).

This also includes the need to demolish the vacant home to enable the site’s redevelopment for housing.

A proportion of the site will remain as open space with provision of bat roosting points (to meet the requirements of Natural England).

Further investment in the landscape will be required to protect and enhance the amenity value and quality of any lost green space.

Improving the quality of the green infrastructure will strengthen the character of the existing neighbourhood which is to be considered under the reserved matters application.

The large existing building (a two storey brick building with a pitched roof) will be demolished and replaced by a dispersed arrangement of detached and semi-detached homes, that will be designed to be more in keeping with the scale and massing of the surrounding neighbourhood.

The successful purchaser will be responsible for undertaking a pre-planning consultation event with local residents at a time and place stipulated by the council which is to be agreed.

The large existing building (a two storey brick building with a pitched roof) will be demolished and replaced by a dispersed arrangement of detached and semi-detached homes, that will be designed to be more in keeping with the scale and massing of the surrounding neighbourhood.

The successful purchaser will be responsible for undertaking a pre-planning consultation event with local residents at a time and place stipulated by the council which is to be agreed.
The indicative plans below illustrate the potential distribution of development and open space at the site for a scheme of up to 30 new homes.

The indicative layouts show how the site could be successfully developed for housing, which overlooks a retained and improved high quality open space.

The key principles advocated in the design approach, illustrated in the indicative development plans, aim to achieve:

- Additional green infrastructure and improvements to areas of low grade open space;
- Attractive and safe streets (with ample parking for new and existing residents and visitors);
- Re-use of existing access points with a potential new access point off Tower Road also identified and;
- Sustainable solutions for drainage and best practice with regards to sustainable development.

![Figure 5: Alternate Option Plan](image1)

![Figure 6: Preferred Option Plan (30 homes)](image2)
The planning reference for the outline planning approval is 10/17/1378 with an expiry date of the 23rd February 2021 (See Appendix G).

A formal pre-application meeting is recommended where the Council’s planning and advisory team will be made available to answer any questions, provide appropriate challenge and respond to any specific development proposals tabled. At this point, the following plans will be required as a minimum from the developer:

- Site plans, landscaping details, and open space proposals
- Floor plans, elevations and roof plans
- Site sections
- Design and access statement (detailed update)
- Drainage scheme
- Planning statement
- Transport statement
- Flood risk assessment
- Contaminated land survey

The following matters as listed below are seen as important design and planning considerations:

- Amount
- Appearance
- Bat protection measures
- Bio-diversity and ecology
- Landscape and loss of existing green space
- Vehicular and transport links
- Car Parking
- Pedestrian and Cycle Access
- Public Transport
- S106

For more information please see over leaf.
The scheme should include new high quality housing with approximately 23 homes per gross Ha appearing an acceptable density. Based upon the site dimensions, this will allow for construction of up to 30 dwellings.

The appearance of the new homes will respect the design principles set out in the Council’s residential design guide. They will be designed to reflect the local vernacular and use materials, which suit local conditions and traditions.

Robust mitigation proposals to protect the bat species present on site will need to be agreed with the relevant authorities. All relevant conditions are to be discharged prior to demolition of the decommissioned care home. Implementation of mitigation measures to compensate for the loss of the bat roost that is present within the existing building will need to be undertaken once agreed with Natural England in accordance with the principles of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 as amended.

Beyond the presence of bats, an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey inspection (April 2014) confirmed that there are no habitats of principal importance on the site, which comprises: amenity grassland, introduced shrubs, scattered trees (such as Cherry, Beech, Whitebeam and birch) with the site edged by surrounding scrub and woodland. The update 2017 Habitat Survey re-confirmed this.

A tree survey report prepared in September 2017 confirms that a number of the trees on site are in poor condition and need to be removed. A plan has been developed identifying the trees on site, their condition and recommendations for treatment.

All surveys can be made available to bidders.
**Landscape and Loss of Existing Green Space**

In securing the approvals, developers will need to adhere to the recommendations within the tree survey and ecological surveys to ensure that any negative biodiversity impacts are avoided/limited following mitigation.

Provision of a landscaping scheme to deliver an enhanced quality of open space on the area of the site shown indicatively in the proposal plan (See Figure 5) will need to be prepared and agreed with the local planning authority to ensure against any loss of existing green infrastructure.

The indicative layout proposals submitted in support of the outline planning application, identify a significant area of existing green infrastructure for retention. There is potential within these areas to introduce positive benefits that will enhance the overall quality of the site’s green infrastructure and amenity value.

This could include for example:
- Replacement tree planting, new seating areas and improved access into Witton Park.
- Improving the setting of the development and enhance local biodiversity through the introduction of a generously landscaped development.

**Vehicular and Transport Links**

The Reserved Matters application will need to be supported by a Transport Statement, which addresses the issue of highways access and transportation.

The current approach subject to further verification is to use one or more of the existing site access points with a further option being explored to access the site off Tower Road with better access to Preston Old Road.

**Car Parking**

Car parking will be provided on site to meet the standards agreed with the Highways Authority. The site is capable of accommodating a range of dwellings, all of which can be allocated space for car parking within the curtilage and in line with the required standards with garages or drives provided. Parking for existing residents should not be affected by the proposals. For example, on street parking spaces can be retained Tower Road and Hillcrest Road with additional bays provided elsewhere.

A resident parking zone is required to be accommodated on site - for up to 15 local resident’s vehicles displaced from the surrounding streets. The parking zone will be built by the developer then adopted and managed by the Council for the benefit of local residents.

**Pedestrian and Cycle Access**

Whilst the application is outline, with all matters reserved, it is clear that the site is well connected for pedestrians and cyclists:
- Witton Park is on the doorstep with many miles of well connected cycle ways and footpaths;
- The Witton Weavers Way – a 30 mile long distance circular route also starts in the park.

**Public Transport**

- The closest rail station is located at Cherry Tree, with trains running to Blackburn, Preston, Blackpool and other local stations.
- Cherry Tree Station is located approximately 0.25 km to the south of the site across the A674.
- Local bus routes and services are accessible from Preston Old Road – which lies approximately 100 meters from the site.

**s106**

Subject to scheme viability any s106 contributions recovered will provide further investment for the wider green network (including Witton Park) with any further contributions made towards affordable housing provision. Bidders should refer to Appendix C - Conditions of sale for further details
A number of studies and documents have been commissioned by the Council to support the preparation of the outline planning application and the site’s disposal through an informal tender process.

These studies are available to bidders and include:

Outline planning application documents comprising:

- Existing site plan
- Supporting Planning design and access statement
- Tree survey, September 2017
- Ecology report, October 2017
- Bats survey report, October 2017
- Demolition method statement
- Asbestos survey, June 2014
- Topographical survey, August 2017
- Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study, August 2017

Further surveys have been undertaken since outline planning was approved including:

- Phase 2 ground investigation and assessment, June 2018
- Extended phase 1 habitat survey and building inspection, July 2018

Access to the above documents can be obtained by contacting the Council.
Other Information

All mains services are believed to be available to this site, however, all prospective purchasers should satisfy themselves as to the exact position of services and any requirements in connection therewith.

Useful contact details:

**MAIN DRAINAGE**
WastewaterDeveloperServices@uuplc.co.uk

**ELECTRICITY**
Electricity North West callum.wall@enwl.co.uk

**WATER**
United Utilities
Local Development Framework Assessor
david.sherratt@uuplc.co.uk

**SITE VIEWING**
The site can be viewed without the need to contact the Council

**PLANNING ADVICE**
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
helen.holland@blackburn.gov.uk

**HIGHWAYS**
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Saf.alam@blackburn.gov.uk

**FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT**
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Drainage Manager
Imran.Munshi@blackburn.gov.uk

For further information on this tender or access to the unique web link for surveys, please use the contact below:

Growth Team
PMOGrowth@blackburn.gov.uk
01254 273915