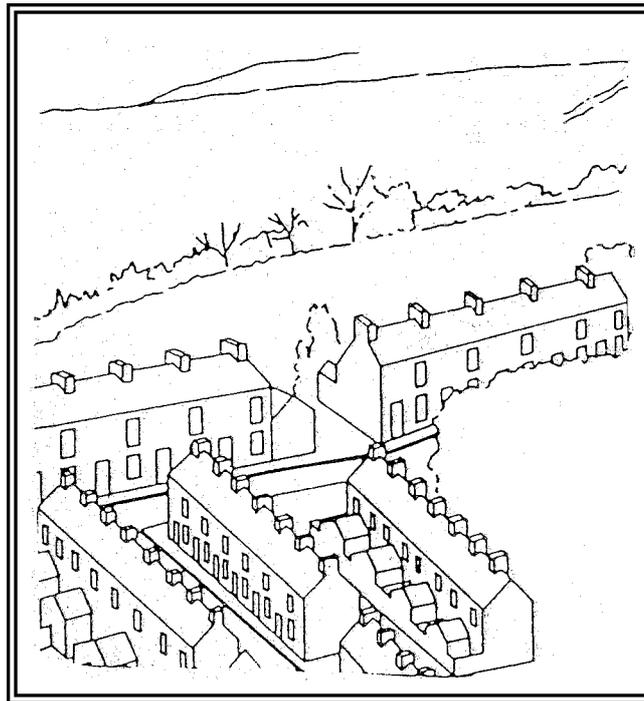




BLACKBURN
with
DARWEN
BOROUGH COUNCIL

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

Community & Other Uses Within Residential Areas



**BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN
BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN**

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

This is one of a series of supplementary planning guidance notes prepared by the Council to raise awareness of good design and to improve the quality of new development.

The following titles are available from the Council's Technical Services Department at Blackburn and Darwen Town Halls.

Residential and Other Related Uses

1. New Residential Development
2. Extensions for Detached and Semi-detached Houses
3. Extensions for Terraced Houses
4. Community and Other Uses within Residential Areas
5. Residential Institutions

Conservation and Design

6. Listed Buildings
7. Conservation Areas
8. Outdoor Advertisements and Signs
9. Shopfront Design and Security
10. Industrial and Warehousing Buildings

Rural Areas

11. Agricultural Buildings
12. The Conversion of Buildings in the Countryside
13. Village Appraisals

Natural Environment

14. Landscaping and Wildlife Habitat Creation
15. Species Protection

COMMUNITY & OTHER USES WITHIN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Most of the Borough's urban area is occupied by Primary Residential Area (as defined in the Local Plan Proposals Map). The Council considers that maintaining the character of residential areas and the standard of amenity within them is of the greatest importance.

The Council accepts that many community and business uses are acceptable in residential areas (Local Plan Policy H2). Indeed, the Council's Greenwatch Strategy encourages services to be located within easy reach of all housing areas and to avoid strict segregation of land uses, it also recognises the need to protect the residential environment. Guidance on resolving potential conflicts between these objectives is therefore necessary. Developers should refer to Policy H11 for proposals for community uses, including places of worship, surgeries and local sports facilities and Policy EC4 for industrial and commercial uses.

Problems most commonly arise in the older and mixed areas of Blackburn and Darwen, where, because of the closely grained nature of the built environment, any adverse effects of non-residential uses are likely to have more immediate impact. These areas also tend to suffer from lower levels of visual and environmental amenity due to the higher density of building, lack of open space and concentration of traffic and parked vehicles. The Council's view is that the following general principles should be followed when considering development proposals within residential areas:

- freedom from unduly intensive or intrusive activities;
- minimal disturbance from noise;
- freedom from other sources of nuisance such as vibration, smell, fumes or dust; and
- freedom from inappropriate levels or types of traffic.

This guidance note sets out guidelines for the following forms of residential development:

- **forms of residential use other than dwellings**
- **places of worship**
- **madressas**
- **local retail and related facilities**
- **industrial and commercial uses**
- **doctors' surgeries**

FORMS OF RESIDENTIAL USE OTHER THAN DWELLINGS

In older residential areas the changing pattern of housing demand may lead to changes in the types of housing required. For example, dwellings for one or two person households may be needed rather than dwellings for large households. Depending on the circumstances these changing needs may be met by conversion and adaptation of the existing stock of houses and other buildings.

The Council's view is that the most appropriate location for more specialised forms of housing provision is within residential areas. However, the difficulties which they can present, for example a greater intensity of use and parking needs, have to be taken into account when assessing proposals.

Considerations

Guidelines for the conversion of buildings into **care and nursing homes** are set out in a separate guidance note on Residential Institutions. Developers should also refer to Policy H10 of the Local Plan

Use of sites or buildings for commercial forms of accommodation such as hotels and guest houses will be determined in accordance with Policy TRL3 of the Local Plan.

The Council will determine the conversion of buildings into **flats, bedsits, hostels and multiple occupation** against the following considerations (as set out in Policy H9 of the Local Plan):

- the effect on the amenity of neighbouring properties and the surrounding area;
- the suitability of the building for conversion without the need for substantial extensions;
- compliance with legal standards for conversions such as Building Regulations, the Housing Act, Fire Regulations etc;
- provision of adequate garden or outdoor amenity space;
- provision of adequate off-street parking spaces to the Council's adopted standards. Where the type of tenant is such that car ownership is minimal e.g. student or unemployed, the Council's adopted standards may be reduced; and
- provision of adequate refuse collection facilities.

PLACES OF WORSHIP

Places of worship have traditionally been located in the older housing areas. More recently, changes in demand have come from the newer ethnic population, primarily for mosques. Such facilities were originally established in converted buildings such as cinemas, schools, church halls and groups of terraced houses.

As communities have grown and become established, proposals have tended to be for new or substantially new facilities on a larger scale. Because of the densely developed character of the predominantly terraced areas in which they are situated, such facilities are sometimes unduly close or even physically attached to neighbouring dwellings.

The convenience of a location close to the community has to be balanced against the adverse impacts on a neighbourhood which inevitably arise from a use involving large numbers of people.

Considerations

In the case of conversions and changes of use, the premises should be located so that no undue loss of amenity to neighbouring dwellings results. Acceptable premises are likely to be detached or free-standing. The conversion of terraced dwellings will not be acceptable.

- In the case of newly constructed facilities, the site should be large enough to provide for sufficient space around the building according to its function, size and mass. The building should relate to neighbouring development in a manner which maintains the privacy and amenity of any residential uses. Buildings which are used by large numbers of people require larger areas so that people can move about and disperse safely.
- Provision of off-street car parking areas to the Council's adopted standard of 1 car space per 10 square metres of gross floor space and 1 cycle space per 50 square metres of gross floor space will be required. 10% of all car spaces should be provided to 'mobility standard' (minimum width 3.6 metres). Places of worship are often capable of accommodating large numbers of people. Although many of those attending may come from surrounding residential areas, large numbers of cars in the vicinity at times of attendance are commonplace.
- In the case of large scale facilities, the proximity of the site to traffic routes of an appropriate standard will be a relevant consideration. A site which draws traffic into minor residential streets is unlikely to be acceptable.

MADRESSAS (PLACES OF CHILDREN'S EDUCATION)

These specialised educational facilities provide “after school hours” instruction, usually of a religious nature. They are often located within the residential area from where they draw their pupils. As relatively young children use the facilities it is important that they are conveniently and safely located in relation to the area served.

Hours of use are usually early evenings and Saturday mornings. The number of pupils attending these establishments can be considerable and they are best located where space permits, within or adjacent to mosques.

Considerations:

- The location of a madressa should be at a position conveniently and safely accessible on foot.
- Premises should be of a type that causes no unacceptable effect on the amenities of neighbouring dwellings.
- Terraced properties attached to other dwellings will not be acceptable in most circumstances. Detached, free-standing premises are more likely to be acceptable where no undue loss of amenity would be caused. Conversions from former commercial premises, halls, schools and similar buildings are most likely to be acceptable, subject to satisfactory amenity and highway considerations.
- Compliance with the Council's adopted parking standards of 1 car space per classroom or alternative teaching area and 4 cycle spaces per classroom is required. 10% of all car spaces should be provided to 'mobility standard' (minimum width 3.6 metres). Particular regard should be paid to meeting the needs for dropping off and collection at a safe position in the vicinity.

LOCAL RETAIL AND RELATED FACILITIES

Shops, public houses and hot food uses (and similar facilities providing for local needs) all have implications for the quality and amenity of residential areas. The Council will take account of the prime consideration of amenity and the relationship with local traffic routes when considering such proposals. Proposals for local shops will be determined in accordance with Policy R7 of the Local Plan.

Considerations:

- The proposal should provide for the local needs of residents only.
- The proposal should not affect the vitality and viability of existing retail facilities in other local and neighbourhood centres.
- Conversions of existing properties to shops (Class A1) or Food and Drink (Class A3) uses will be restricted to locations within or adjacent to existing groups of local shops, or in local centres. Single shops which are unrelated to such local groups will only be permitted where there are no existing shopping facilities for the day to day needs of local residents within a reasonable walking distance (defined as about 500 metres).
- Where new build is proposed, the Council will expect provision of off-street servicing and car parking facilities to the Council's adopted standards. These require 1 car space per 20 square metres of gross floor space and 1 cycle space per 200 square metres of gross floor space. 10% of all car spaces should be provided to 'mobility standard' (minimum width 3.6 metres). In cases of change of use or conversion of existing premises, the highway circumstances of the locality, including availability of safe and convenient parking will be taken into account.
- Where residential uses exist in the vicinity, uses which are likely to involve opening later than normal business hours, will only be permitted subject to a condition restricting the hours of opening.

INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL USES

The Council acknowledges that business and industrial uses can be acceptable within residential areas. Indeed, easy accessibility between the home and sources of employment and services can be beneficial.

What is less acceptable is where the close juxtaposition of workshops, industrial uses and warehouses with houses causes unacceptable disturbance through increased traffic, noise or pollution. This is often the case where the density of urban development is greatest, in the inner areas of Blackburn and Darwen where much of the housing consists of small terraced dwellings. In such situations it is likely that many industrial or commercial activities would have unacceptable effects on residential amenity.

Generally, industrial and commercial uses are more acceptable in Established Business and Industrial Areas and Business and Industrial Development Areas, as defined in the Local Plan. In Primary Residential Areas, the emphasis is on protecting residential amenity by restricting new business development to Use Class B1. Proposals for industrial and community uses will be determined in accordance with Local Plan Policy EC4.

Considerations:

- Planning permission will not be granted for the introduction of new industrial or commercial uses in or adjacent to residential areas, where increased traffic, noise, pollution or poor design would unacceptably affect residential amenity.
- Proposals for redevelopment or commercial uses in residential areas will not be approved where unacceptable adverse effects on amenity would be repeated or perpetuated.
- Proposals for extension of industrial or commercial uses in residential areas will be considered, but where serious problems already exist or a significant loss of amenity is likely to result, planning consent will not be granted.
- Every effort will be made to ensure that any potential adverse effects are limited by imposition of appropriate conditions.
- Where planning permission is granted for the introduction, redevelopment or extension of an industrial or commercial use, compliance with the Council's adopted parking standards will be expected. These require 1 car space per 50 square metres of gross floorspace and 1 cycle space per 500 square metres of gross floorspace. 10% of all car spaces should be provided to 'mobility standard' (minimum width 3.6 metres).
- Within Primary Residential Areas, applications for B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Warehousing) uses will be discouraged. B1 uses (Light Industrial and Offices) are generally acceptable in Primary Residential Areas.

DOCTORS' AND DENTISTS' SURGERIES

General Practitioner's surgeries need to be readily accessible from the communities they serve. Many of the patients are likely to be groups lacking in mobility such as the elderly and people with wheelchairs or prams. It is important therefore that convenient and safe pedestrian access is possible. Opening hours are generally limited to the normal working day and early evening and in most cases, it is unlikely that any serious interference with amenity would result from unsociable hours of use.

Surgeries do however have the potential to generate a considerable number of visitors during surgery hours, at a level in excess of that normally expected at premises within residential areas. Some recognition of this potential needs to be made when assessing proposals. Many users also arrive by car and the availability of adequate nearby safe and convenient space for parking without causing nuisance to occupiers of dwellings will be an important consideration.

Considerations:

- Conversion of premises to a general practitioners' surgery within residential areas will in principle be acceptable, subject to a satisfactory relationship with neighbouring dwellings. Mid-terraced properties are unlikely to be acceptable. Premises should be in locations which would not cause undue unacceptable effects on the amenity of neighbouring properties.
- Provision should be made for off-street parking to the Council's adopted standard. This requires 3 car parking spaces per consulting room and 1 cycle space per 3 consulting rooms. 10% of all car spaces should be provided to 'mobility standard' (minimum width 3.6 metres). Where premises are otherwise suitable and off-street parking provision is not possible, the safety and convenience of on-street parking will be important considerations.
- Proposals for new health centres which serve more than a purely local need should, as far as possible, be located within or adjacent to neighbourhood shopping centres. These centres have evolved as the most convenient and accessible locations for people to visit for shopping and other purposes. Health centres will not be permitted in locations with poor access to public transport.

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

Further information is available from:
Development Control Group ☎ (01254) 585638
Forward Planning and Transportation Group ☎ (01254) 585356



BUILDING CONTROL

- Once you have received Planning Approval you will then need to consider obtaining Building Regulation Approval - Can we help?
- ◆ We are happy to give informal pre-submission advice.
 - ◆ We will deal with your plans quickly.
 - ◆ Our approach is flexible and can be tailored to meet your particular requirements
 - ◆ We will provide a same day inspection service.

For more information telephone (01254) 585747