

Appendix 4b 5 OCTOBER 2023

**THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
AND
THE ACQUISITION OF LAND ACT 1981**

**THE BLACKPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL
(MULTIVERSITY)
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2023**

STATEMENT OF REASONS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This document is the Statement of Reasons of Blackpool Borough Council ('the Council') for the making of a compulsory purchase order entitled The Blackpool Borough Council (Multiversity) Compulsory Purchase Order 2023 ('the Order'). The Order is made pursuant to Section 226(1) (a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 99 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This Statement of Reasons has been prepared in compliance with section 12 of the Department for Levelling-Up Housing and Communities Guidance on Compulsory purchase process and The Crichel Down Rules.
- 1.2. In this Statement of Reasons the land included within the Order is referred to as 'the Order Land'. It is approximately 1.16ha adjacent to the south-eastern boundary of the Central Business District. For ease of reference it is described simply as the "Multiversity Development".
- 1.3. The Order has been made by the Council to facilitate the assembly of all of the land and interests necessary to deliver a teaching & learning campus regeneration scheme on the Order Land.
- 1.4. The Order land within the area covered is 1.16ha. To the immediate north of the Order Land, is the Central Business District.
- 1.5. The Council has used public funds to consolidate land ownership in the Order Land but has not yet succeeded in acquiring all the land and interests required to deliver the Multiversity Development.
- 1.6. The Council has used public funds to consolidate land ownership in the Order Land but has not yet succeeded in acquiring all the land and interests required to deliver the Multiversity Development.
- 1.7. The Multiversity Development will complement the existing developments within the Talbot Gateway and will establish the start of a University standard Campus in the heart of Blackpool, and build upon the existing regeneration already achieved in the adjacent areas.
- 1.8. Outline Planning Permission will be applied for in Autumn 2023 (with all matters reserved for future approval) for a new higher education-led mixed use development across severable plots comprising a new education campus (Use Class F1(a)) including for potential ancillary Café/ Restaurant Use (Class E(b)) and commercial office/ research and development floor-space (Use Class E(g)), creation of new public realm and associated landscaping, highway works and other associated works, following demolition of the existing buildings/ structures.
- 1.9. Negotiations with the parties who have an interest in the Order Land have been undertaken where possible and are continuing with a view to achieving the voluntary

acquisition of all the interests in the Order Land which need to be acquired. To date it has not been possible to acquire all these interests and the Council is satisfied that there is a compelling case in the public interest for resorting to powers of compulsory acquisition as otherwise the comprehensive redevelopment will not be able to be completed within a reasonable timeframe, if at all.

- 1.10. Section 226(1)(a) of the 1990 Act, empowers the Council to request the Secretary of State to authorise the acquisition of land in its area if the authority thinks that the acquisition will facilitate the carrying out of development, re-development or improvement on or in relation to the land which is likely to contribute to the achievement of the promotion of the economic, and social and environmental well-being of their area

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ORDER LAND

The Order Land and the Surrounding Area

- 2.1. The Order Land covers some 1.16 hectares adjacent to the Central Business District and is bounded by George Street to the north, Cookson St to the west. Milbourne Street to the south and Grosvenor Street to the east. The location of this is shown on Plan 1 in the context of the surrounding area.
- 2.2. The area to the north of the Order Land forms part of the Central Business District which has undergone phased redevelopment of which phase 1 is complete and consists of multi storey car park, new council offices and Sainsbury supermarket. Phase 2 is currently underway and will deliver a new hotel together with tram terminal and undercover link to Blackpool North Railway Station, revised access to Bank Street car park with easier access to the station. Phase 3 is to the west and is also underway being developed as an office for the Civil Service.
- 2.3. The Order Land is extremely accessible. Blackpool North Railway station and the tram terminal interchange are less than 250 metres from the site. Within the same distance are main bus services which link throughout Blackpool.
- 2.4. Major investments have already taken place in the Central Business District (Talbot Gateway) with a new Sainsbury's supermarket & petrol filling station, office complex occupied by Blackpool Council and Slater and Gordon, with retail units on the ground floor and refurbished multi-storey car park with restaurant and fitness centre on the ground floor. Work has been completed on the demolition of the old Wilko's building which is being replaced by a tram terminal interchange with Blackpool North Railway Station and a new 143 bedroom 4 star hotel complemented by Marco Pierre White's New York Italian Restaurant and small retail units.
- 2.5. Negotiations with the parties who have an interest in the Order Land have been undertaken where possible and are continuing with a view to achieving the voluntary acquisition of all the interests in the Order Land which need to be acquired. To date it

has not been possible to acquire all these interests and the Council is satisfied that there is a compelling case in the public interest for resorting to powers of compulsory acquisition as otherwise the comprehensive redevelopment will not be able to be completed within a reasonable timeframe, if at all.

2.6. Section 226(1)(a) of the 1990 Act, as amended by section 99 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, empowers the Council to request the Secretary of State to authorise the acquisition of land in its area if the authority thinks that the acquisition will facilitate the carrying out of development, re-development or improvement on or in relation to the land which is likely to contribute to the achievement of the promotion of the economic, and social and environmental well-being of their area.

2.7. Approximately 30% of the Order land is already owned by the Council including recently acquired property purchased by agreement and the forecourts of Cookson Street. The remaining buildings are predominantly residential terraced properties with mixed retail and residential use on Cookson Street.

2.8. The Order Land contains 70 plots:

- 13 on the southern side of George Street (5-29) odd;
- 19 plots including forecourts on the eastern side of Cookson Street (20-46) even,
- 12 plots on the northern side of Milbourne Street (6B-24) even,
- 2 plots, on the western side of Grosvenor Street.
- There are also 24 plots on the northern (6-26) even & southern (11-33) odd, side of Charles Street which is in the middle of the Order Land.

2.9. The properties are mostly 2 storey Victorian houses which are used as residential properties either as single dwellings or as flats. The properties on the eastern side of Cookson Street are also substantially 2 storey Victorian houses converted to retail units with storage or flats above.

Historical Development of the Site

2.10. The character of the area has broadly remained the same since Victorian times. Over time some of the houses have been changed into small retail units, with living accommodation above. Under the Blackpool improvement Act 1920, the Council, between 1936 and 1960 had acquired the forecourts to a number of properties in Cookson Street for the widening of Cookson Street. Since making Cookson Street one way it has enabled a number a parking bays to be installed.

3. ENABLING POWER

- 3.1. The Council has made the CPO under section 226(1)(a) of the TCPA 1990
- 3.2. Section 226(1a) of the 1990 Act requires a local authority not to exercise its powers under section 226(1)(a) unless the local authority thinks that the proposed development, redevelopment or improvement is likely to contribute to achieving the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area.
- 3.3. The CPO scheme will deliver multiple economic, social and environmental benefits by delivering flagship, carbon- neutral in operation, education campus in Blackpool's Talbot Gateway Central Business District (CBD). The project will enable Blackpool and the Fylde College to replace their ageing and unsuitable out-of-town centre facilities with world-class state-of-the-art facilities in the heart of Blackpool town centre. This will be adjacent to the major new town regeneration projects, including the forthcoming Civil Service Hub, and the transport interchange at Blackpool North station greatly increasing accessibility not only from across the Fylde Coast but to the wider North West region.
- 3.4. Blackpool's Multiversity Campus will act as a beacon to promote higher-level skills, engage employers in curriculum co-design and change perceptions of the town. The Multiversity will increase the College's capacity to offer more than 70 individual courses expanding the College's HEI offer and potential student cohort.
- 3.5. The site will provide a cutting-edge response to local, regional, and national priorities, raising the College's profile regionally. New courses will be developed with Lancaster University, targeting high-level skills growth, including a focus on automation, mobility, artificial intelligence, data, population ageing and sustainability. The Multiversity will become an established part of Lancashire's higher education landscape, encouraging new learners to engage in upskilling and bringing new technical and professional learning opportunities to the town, leading to higher productivity and greater prosperity for residents.
- 3.6. Siting the Multiversity in this location will create a new institutional asset in an iconic building that will help promote Blackpool's renaissance, and will dramatically increase town centre footfall and vibrancy year-round
- 3.7. The Council therefore consider that the proposed Multiversity Development in principle aligns with the Blackpool Development Plan, the revised National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) and the updated Blackpool Town Centre Strategy (May 2022) and will bring substantial improvements to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the adjacent Talbot Gateway area and the wider town centre. The Council, therefore, regards the completion of the Development as an imperative and has resolved to use its compulsory purchase powers in order to assist

with the assembly of the final land and interests required to achieve this objective within a reasonable timeframe.

4. THE COUNCIL'S PURPOSE IN MAKING THE ORDER

- 4.1. The purpose of the CPO is to acquire a clear title to the CPO land in order to facilitate the redevelopment and improvement of the CPO land, to benefit the social, economic and environmental conditions of Blackpool.
- 4.2. The ageing infrastructure on the Park Road campus is no longer fit to meet the demands of 21st century educational provision which are much better provided for in a town centre location, close to facilities and a transport hub which will also complement the other activities underway to regenerate Blackpool Town Centre.
- 4.3. Blackpool & Fylde College have entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Council setting out the key parts of the proposed move from their Park Road Campus to the Multiversity. (Appendix xx)
- 4.4. The Multiversity will provide c.10,750 sq. metre of accommodation which will accommodate up to c3000 students)
- 4.5. The Multiversity will be delivered through a partnership involving Blackpool Council and Blackpool and the Fylde College in association with Lancaster University. A Memorandum of understanding between Blackpool & Fylde College and the Council set forward the requirements of the new Multiversity. It will be a unique proposition, providing a cutting-edge response to local, regional, and national priorities, designed to accommodate up to 3000 learners. Key benefits include:
 - Improving skills and opportunities – The investment in a new, high-quality, purpose-built educational facility will provide an unrivalled learning environment, encouraging more learners to choose to continue with their education in Blackpool. A tailored curriculum, catering for needs of employers in order to fill skills gaps across the Fylde Coast, means the Multiversity, by virtue of what is taught there, will link directly to employment opportunities.
 - Supporting town centre regeneration – The development of the Multiversity adjacent to the town centre will complement other major developments, including the developments at Talbot Gateway, the extension to the Houndshell Shopping Centre and the new Winter Gardens Conference and Exhibition Centre, in providing year-round footfall into the town centre, reducing the impacts of seasonality.
 - Built environment uplift – The Multiversity's development will provide uplift to an area that has not previously benefitted from significant investment, improving the built environment significantly, and supporting the creation of high-quality, pedestrianised, public open space.

- The overall project to deliver the Multiversity is underpinned by six key project objectives:
 - Injection of a new life to the heart of Blackpool;
 - Embed holistically into the town centre;
 - Allow people to up-skill through life through enabling more people to gain higher level qualifications each year;
 - Raise the college profile in the town and beyond;
 - Create an iconic building that sings Blackpool; and
 - Increased footfall in the town centre to encourage regeneration

5. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE CPO

- 5.1. There is a compelling case in the public interest to justify the making of the CPO in order to deliver the CPO scheme. The Acquiring Authority has a clear plan on how the land will be used which includes a proposal for a much needed Multiversity Campus to support the College and the local community.
- 5.2. The scheme is funded. Blackpool Council is in receipt of an allocation of funding from the Department for Housing, Levelling Up and Communities (DHLUC) for the acquisition of land and site preparation (£9m Town Deal) and Levelling-Up Fund monies towards the construction costs (£40m).
- 5.3. The balance of the funding will be via a Blackpool Council loan of £16m to be Prudentially Borrowed and repaid by the College via a lease, the terms of which are in the process of being finalised.
- 5.4. A £65m world-class university experience is proposed, facilitating higher level upskilling, reskilling and lifelong learning. The scheme is based in the Town-centre, close to the train station and tram interchange, while freeing up the existing College site for residential development. The new build will be carbon neutral in operation.
- 5.5. The Order Land is made up of 70 separate plots. Details of the Council's attempts to acquire the land by negotiation are provided in section 8 below. The Council have been negotiating with Order Land owners since 2022. It has now reached the position where Compulsory acquisition of all the outstanding interests in the Order Land is required to enable the Council and Blackpool & Fylde College, to fulfil the requirement for the new facility. The Council is of the firm view that the exercise of its compulsory purchase powers is both appropriate and necessary in order to assemble the land required to deliver redevelopment of the Order Land. The Order Land comprises a number of interests in third party ownership which are required in order to successfully deliver the Development and which the Council does not foresee

being able to acquire by way of private agreement within a reasonable timescale, if at all. The CPO is a genuine last resort.

- 5.6. In pursuing this CPO the Council has carefully considered the balance to be struck between individual rights and the wider public interest. Regard has been given, in particular, to the provisions of Article 1 of the First Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights (First Protocol). The Acquiring Authority has also given regard to Articles 6 and 8 of the First Protocol.
- 5.7. A CPO should only be made where there is a compelling case in the public interest which sufficiently justifies interfering with rights of those with an interest in the land affected.
- 5.8. In respect of human rights, regard should be had in each case in particular to the provisions of Article 1, the right to peaceful enjoyment of your possessions, Article 6, the right to a fair and public hearing and Article 8, the right to respect for private and family life, of the First Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights.
- 5.9. In relation to Article 1 whilst owners will be deprived of their property if the CPO is confirmed and implemented, this will be done in accordance with the law and they will receive appropriate compensation for their interest. Further, the right under Article 1 is qualified rather than absolute as it permits the deprivation of an individual's possessions where it is in the public interest.
- 5.10. Therefore, there must be a balancing exercise between the public interest and the individual's rights whereby the Council must be able to show that the interference with an individual's rights by the making of a CPO is necessary and proportionate.
- 5.11. The CPO proposal was subject to a publically available report to the Council's Executive Committee in February 2023. Consultation on the CPO scheme will also take place through the statutory framework of a planning application.
- 5.12. All those affected by the CPO have been notified and given the opportunity to object and to be heard at a public inquiry before a decision is made on whether or not the CPO should be confirmed. A right of legal challenge exists to this process in accordance with section 23 of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981. Any dispute as to compensation payable will be determined by the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber).
- 5.13. The CPO has been made pursuant to section 226(1)(a) of the TCPA 1990 which authorises the Council to acquire land compulsorily in the circumstances set out in article 8(2) of the First Protocol.
- 5.14. The Council is satisfied for the reasons set out below that the CPO can lawfully be made.

5.15. The Council considers that the many benefits that the redevelopment of the CPO land will bring to the area (as outlined in Section X provide a compelling case in the public interest for the use of compulsory purchase powers and outweigh the impact on the existing owners of the CPO land. In these circumstances, the compulsory acquisition of the CPO land will not conflict with Article 8 of the First Protocol.

5.16. Bearing these factors in mind, together with the high quality development which the Order is seeking to deliver and the key role the development will play in improving the educational offer in Blackpool, the Council considers that there is a compelling case in the public interest in support of the exercise of its powers of compulsory acquisition in relation to the Order Land and that the use of such powers is proportionate to the ends being pursued.

5.17. Given all of the above the use of a CPO is a last resort to redevelop and improve the Site.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1. The principal relevant planning policies are set out below:

Adopted Development Plan:

6.2. The Blackpool Development Plan comprises Part 1: Core Strategy, which was adopted by the Council in January 2106 and the Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies adopted February 2023.

Core Strategy (January 2016):

6.3. The Blackpool Core Strategy is a key planning document, which sets out where new development should be located to meet Blackpool's future needs.

6.4. The vision in the Core Strategy includes the aspirations for Blackpool by 2027 to be *'..... the principal centre for business, culture and education on the Fylde coast...;.....Blackpool Town Centre is the thriving heart of the resort core and provides an important sub-regional retail, cultural and business centre for Fylde Coast residents.; As the main economic centre of the Fylde Coast, Blackpool has a diverse and prosperous economy with a thriving culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship. It retains a strong educational offer supporting a skilled and educated workforce encouraging aspiration and ambition.....'*

Four goals underpin the vision supported by a number of strategic objectives including of particular relevance to this proposal:

→ **Goal 1: Sustainable regeneration, diversification and growth:**

Objective 1: ensuring a balanced approach to regeneration and growth with sustainable development which meets the needs of Blackpool's people now and in the future.

Objective 4: Enable easier and sustainable journeys within Blackpool and the Fylde coast by integrating transport systems and promoting sustainable modes of transport.

→ **Goal 2: Strengthen community wellbeing to create sustainable communities and reduce inequalities in Blackpool's most deprived areas:**

Objective 8: Develop sustainable and safer neighbourhoods that are socially cohesive and well connected to jobs, shops, local community services including health and education, culture and leisure facilities;

Objective 12: Increase access to quality education facilities to improve educational achievement, skills and aspirations.

→ **Goal 3: Regeneration of the Town Centre, resort core and inner areas to address economic, social and physical decline.**

6.5. The Core Strategy Spatial Vision and the four overarching goals, which underpin the vision support **a dual strategy focus on Regeneration and Supporting Growth** to deliver the change required in the town and to meet the needs of Blackpool's people now and in the future. This dual focus is set out in **Policy CS1: Strategic Location of Development** with Blackpool's future growth development and investment focused on inner area regeneration, which includes Blackpool Town Centre and the inner area neighbourhoods. Paragraph 4.3 of the supporting text highlights that this regeneration is crucial to strengthening the town's economy and addressing decline and deprivation through targeting investment.

6.6. A key objective of the Core Strategy is to diversify the economy to strengthen economic prosperity through supporting new business growth and secure sustainable investment that will provide jobs. Equally, improving the skills profile is a priority to help to encourage new and expanding businesses to invest in the area.

6.7. **Policy CS3: Economic Development and Employment** supports sustainable economic development and the focus of part 2 of the policy is specifically on developing and delivering an effective skills agenda to ensure local people have the necessary skills, improved aspiration and opportunities to move into work; as well as securing inward investment opportunities and nurturing and supporting responsible entrepreneurship by facilitating a culture of enterprise and a place to start up businesses.

6.8. The supporting text to policy CS3 at paragraph 5.46 specifically references Blackpool's Further Education and Higher Education presence highlighting that these providers have a key role in ensuring local people are well equipped to meet the skills requirements of future job opportunities to successfully improve Blackpool's unemployment and economic activity rates.

- 6.9. Sustainable design and construction and the use of renewable and low carbon energy are key to achieving a reduction in carbon emissions. **Policy CS10** aims to mitigate the impact of climate change, minimise carbon emissions and ensure buildings are energy efficient. Part 4 of the policy requires all new non-residential development over 1000m² to achieve BREEAM 'very good'.
- 6.10. The Council recognise that sustainable communities contribute to a better quality of life for existing and future residents and this is achieved in part through the promotion of social cohesion and inclusion; the strengthening of economic prosperity and enhancement of the natural and built environment. The focus of **Policy CS12: Sustainable Neighbourhoods** is to ensure that future development and investment contributes to delivering sustainable communities, focusing regeneration and improvement in a number of identified priority neighbourhoods including in the inner area.
- 6.11. Supporting text to Policy CS12 at paragraph 6.13 states that *'it is vital that new development contributes to achieving more sustainable communities across Blackpool as a whole but particularly that development and investment takes place to improve the quality of the built and natural environment and to address the economic and social issues evident in these areas'*.
- 6.12. The Core Strategy under **Chapter 6: Strengthening Community Wellbeing** recognises that access to quality educational facilities is integral to raising the educational achievement; and improved provision and access to quality public services has a direct positive effect on the health and well-being of residents. **Policy CS15: Health and Education** at part 4 directly supports development that enables the provision of high quality new and improved educational facilities. This includes at point 4a. ***'The expansion, modernisation and enhancement of Blackpool's higher and further education facilities, working closely with the relevant establishments'***. In particular, paragraph 6.42 of the supporting text to policy CS15 recognises the important sub regional role of Blackpool and the Fylde College and that additional education facilities are located in close proximity to the residential communities they serve. To ensure future provision is located in the most sustainable and accessible locations the paragraph also states that facilities should be appropriately located in accordance with their scale and catchment.
- 6.13. In addition supporting text paragraph 6.46 to **Policy CS12** specifically states that *'Education is vital to the regeneration of Blackpool, to equip children, young people and adults with the necessary qualifications and skills to compete in the developing labour market. An uplift in Blackpool's level of educational attainment and skills at all levels is seen as essential to enhance the opportunities for the town's children and young people, and to support inward investment and Blackpool's longer term prosperity.'*

6.14. Blackpool Town Centre is the main retail and service centre in the Fylde Coast sub-region and is identified in the overarching spatial strategy as a key focus for economic growth, development and investment. Three town centre strategic sites are identified including the Central Business District (also known as Talbot Gateway Policy CS19), The Winter Gardens (Policy CS18) and The Leisure Quarter (rebranded as Blackpool Central – Policy CS20). The overarching policy framework in the Core Strategy for the town centre is to drive economic growth to strengthen its vitality and viability and its important sub-regional centre role on the Fylde Coast and within Lancashire.

Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (2012 – 2027)

6.15. The Local Plan Part 2 was adopted by Full Council on 22 February 2023 and sets out detailed development management policies, which will need to be taken into account in developing the detailed proposals for submission of the Multiversity application.

National Planning Policy Framework July 2021 (NPPF21)

6.16. The National Planning Policy Framework was updated in July 2021 and provides a framework for the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England and how they are supposed to be applied. Key changes in the 2021 revisions include an increased focus on design quality; firmer wording on protecting and enhancing the environment and improving biodiversity; the important contributions of trees in new development; and promoting a sustainable pattern of development.

6.17. NPPF21 Chapter 6 relates to building a strong competitive economy and paragraph 81 states that planning policy and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt and that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity taking into account local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

6.18. Chapter 7 is concerned with ensuring the vitality of town centres and paragraph 86 highlights the need to support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities by taking a positive approach to their growth management and adaptation.

6.19. Chapter 8 of NPPF12 is concerned with promoting healthy and safe communities and paragraph 95 states that local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to development that will widen educational choice. Paragraph 96 reiterates this proactive approach to ensure the faster delivery of public service infrastructure including further education colleges.

6.20. Chapter 9 sets out the Government's guidance on promoting sustainable transport including opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport (paragraph 104 and 112a) refer). Paragraph 105 states that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offer a genuine choice of transport modes.

6.21. Chapter 12 provides guidance on achieving well designed places and Government considers that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Paragraph 134 makes it clear that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

7. OTHER RELEVANT COUNCIL STRATEGIES

Blackpool Town Centre Strategy Update May 2022

7.1. An updated Blackpool Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan was approved in May 2022. This updated strategy reflects the substantial investment and the new and emerging challenges at a national and local level including Blackpool's Climate Change Emergency Declaration 2019 and the impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic. The work undertaken in creating the refreshed Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan resulted in an updated vision for the town centre:

Blackpool Town Centre: A Place Where you Belong:

"By 2040, Blackpool Town Centre is an attractive and vibrant place within Britain's favourite resort. Offering a year-round, high quality experience for residents, visitors and workers from all walks of life.

Blackpool Town Centre embraces and builds on its culture and heritage, is forward looking and joyful, with the healthy mix of credibility, nostalgia and fun that is unique to Blackpool."

7.2. The Vision is underpinned by 6 key objectives including 'Work & Learn' which sees the town centre fostering learning and providing opportunities for work from small start-ups to big businesses. Six 'Priority Intervention Areas' are also identified and of particular relevance are the priorities related to 'Public Realm', 'Zoning and Districts' and 'Community'.

Alignment of the Proposal with the Policy Framework

7.3. The following section sets out how the Multiversity proposal aligns with key policy in the Blackpool Development Plan; NPPF21; and the updated Town Centre Strategy.

- 7.4. In relation to policy in the Core Strategy, the proposal in the first instance aligns with the spatial focus and the strategic location of development as set out in **Policy CS1**. The proposal is a major regeneration project located within the inner area of Blackpool immediately adjacent to Blackpool Town Centre. Regeneration through new investment in the inner area neighbourhoods and Town Centre is considered crucial to strengthening the economy and addressing decline and deprivation.
- 7.5. The proximity of the proposal site to the Town Centre, which is a major transport hub for the Borough, the wider Fylde Coast and Lancashire beyond, means that the location of the proposal maximises the opportunity to use public transport to access the facility. Not only do numerous bus routes from across the borough and beyond converge on Town Centre but, the site is also only 350m from the major railway station at Blackpool North which is linked to the new tramway interchange on Talbot Road. This interchange provides improved tram access to the heart of the town centre from Fleetwood in Wyre Borough in the north to Starr Gate on Blackpool's southern boundary with Fylde Borough. This aligns with **Goal 1 and Objective 4** in enabling easier and more sustainable journeys to be made within Blackpool and the Fylde Coast and promoting sustainable modes of transport.
- 7.6. The Multiversity will bring an expanded student body into the town centre with the new campus supporting around 3,600 students, in addition to providing a variety of employment opportunities. These students and employees will provide additional activity and spend which will contribute to enhancing the vitality and viability of the town centre boosting local businesses and supporting regeneration. This directly aligns with **Goal 3** of the Core Strategy and the key aims of **Policy CS4: Retail and Other Town Centre Uses** and **CS17: Blackpool Town Centre and Resort Core**, which promote town centre regeneration.
- 7.7. The UCB is responding to local, regional and national employment and business priorities through a high quality, dedicated and distinctive technical and professional curriculum, co-created with employers and in partnership with Lancaster University. In doing so, the UCB will support high level skills growth increasing the number of students with higher level technical and professional skills and reaching out to those who need to re-skill or up-skill as well as providing prestigious post-18 progression routes.
- 7.8. This approach directly aligns with Core Strategy **Policy CS3**, point 2, by improving employment opportunities through an effective re-skilling and up-skilling agenda raising aspiration and assisting in diversifying the economy and aligning with Policy CS15 point 4 in delivering a modernised and enhanced higher and further education facility helping to deliver the **Core Strategy Vision** and **achieve Goal 1 and Objective 3**, as well as **Goal 2, Objective 12** by increasing access to quality educational facilities and improving educational achievement, skills and aspirations. The proposal will also support the delivery of the Central Business District (CBD) (Talbot Gateway) **Policy CS19**, the key aim of which is to drive business

development in the town centre. The proposal will provide educational support as well as a reskilled/upskilled workforce to support local businesses.

7.9. The proposal site is also located within the priority neighbourhood area of Talbot and Brunswick which is listed in Core Strategy Policy **CS12: Sustainable Neighbourhoods** under point 2.a. where the focus for such neighbourhoods is on regeneration and investment. Whilst Policy CS12 has a focus on housing, the overall thrust of the policy is around regeneration and improvement to address the economic and social issues with the aim of delivering sustainable communities in priority neighbourhoods. This includes the strengthening of economic prosperity and the enhancement of the built and natural environment. The development of the Multiversity site will not only provide a prestigious quality development enhancing the built and natural environment within this inner area neighbourhood but will provide job opportunities for local residents aligning with the overall aspirations of inner area regeneration and Policy CS12 and in doing so assist in delivering Core Strategy **Goals 2 and 3**.

7.10. In addition to the above, the Multiversity building is to be built in accordance with national design guidance and codes (refer to paragraph 7.11 below) and to at least BREEAM standard 'Very Good'. The latter goes beyond the requirements of Core Strategy Policy CS10, which requires all non-residential development over 1000m² to meet a standard of 'Very Good'.

7.11. In terms of the **National Planning Policy Framework (2023)**, it is considered that the proposal aligns with this revised guidance in terms of sustainable development, in particular the economic and social objectives of the framework, by supporting local and regional economic priorities to grow a competitive economy; and support local communities' health and well-being through providing educational and job opportunities. The proposal is also in a highly accessible location, promoting the use of sustainable transport, which supports the aims of Chapter 9; through increased footfall and expenditure the proposal will contribute to improving the vitality of Blackpool Town Centre supporting the aims of government guidance in Chapter 7; delivering a proposal designed in accordance with national design guidance and codes aligns with Chapter 12.

7.12. Whilst the Multiversity site does not lie within the town centre boundary, as defined on the Local Plan Policies Map (2023), it does lie immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary along Cookson St. and the proposal will clearly support the aims and objectives of the updated Blackpool Town Centre Strategy (May 2022), in particular the **'Work and Learn'** key objective. This objective is concerned with fostering learning and providing opportunities for work from small start-ups to big businesses. By providing a dedicated; educational facility that will cater specifically for local business needs in its curriculum and strengthen business/education collaboration to improve productivity and retention of higher skilled individuals, the proposal will directly assist in delivering this key 'Work and Learn' objective. The

proposal will also support key priority intervention areas in the Town Centre Strategy in terms of key deliverables related to public realm, visual appearance, investment, skills and employability, diversity, equity, inclusion and civic pride.

Conclusion:

7.13. Taking in to account the assessment in section 3 above, it is considered that the proposal for a Multiversity on the site at George Street, Grosvenor Street, Milbourne Street and Cookson Street, in principle aligns with policy set out in the Blackpool Development Plan specifically key Policy CS1, CS3, CS10, CS12 and CS15. The proposal also indirectly assists in the implementation of the aims of Policy CS4, CS17 and CS19. In doing so, the proposal will directly assist in delivering the Core Strategy Vision and Goals 1, 2 and 3 and Objectives 1, 4, 8 and 12.

7.14. The proposal is promoting sustainable development and design, which aligns with the national planning policy framework as set out in NPPF21.

7.15. The proposal will support the delivery of the updated Blackpool Town Centre Strategy (May 2022) Vision and key Objectives, Priority Interventions and Deliverables.

8. LAND ASSEMBLY AND NEGOTIATIONS

8.1. The Council has engaged extensively with the owners of the CPO land. The following progress on negotiations/acquisitions to date has been made.

Location: George Street

Property	Acquisition Status
A	Initial discussion/contact.
B	Initial discussion/contact.
C	Initial discussion/contact.
D	No response.
E	Agreed/with solicitors.
F	Initial discussion/contact.
G	Initial discussion/contact.
H	Initial discussion/contact.
I	Initial discussion/contact.
J	Completed.
K	Detailed negotiation.
L	Initial discussion/contact.

Property	Acquisition Status
M	Initial discussion/contact.

Location: Cookson Street

Property Ref	Acquisition Status
A	Initial discussion/contact
B	Agreed.
C	Agreed.
D	Initial discussion/contact.
E	Initial discussion/Agreed.
F	Initial discussion/contact.
G	Initial discussion/contact.
H	Detailed negotiation.
I	No response.
J	Initial discussion/contact.
K	Detailed negotiation
L	Agreed/with solicitors.
M	Initial discussion/contact.

Location: Forecourts between 20/46 Cookson Street

- a) Forecourt outside 20/ 32 Cookson Street acquired by Council and registered at Land registry as part of LAN90634.
- b) Land Adjacent to 32 Cookson Street was acquired by the Council and registered at Land registry as LAN1013683.
- c) Forecourts outside 34/ 38 Cookson Street acquired by Council and registered at Land Registry as LAN 90759.
- d) Forecourts outside 40 Cookson Street acquired by Council
- e) Forecourts outside 42/ 46 Cookson Street acquired by Council and registered at Land Registry as LAN 90759.

Location: Milbourne Street

Property Ref	Acquisition Status
A	Completed
B	Detailed negotiation.
C	Detailed negotiation.
D	Initial discussion/contact.
E	Initial discussion/contact.
F	Initial discussion/contact.
G	Initial discussion/contact.
H	Initial discussion/contact.
I	No response.
J	Agreed.
K	Agreed.
L	Completed.

Location: Grosvenor Street

Property Ref	Acquisition Status
A	Detailed negotiation.
B	Initial discussion/contact.

Location: Charles Street

Property Ref	Acquisition Status
A	Initial discussion/contact.
B	Detailed negotiation.
C	Detailed negotiation.
D	Detailed negotiation.
E	Initial discussion/contact.
F	Completed.
G	Agreed/with solicitors.
H	Completed.
I	Detailed negotiation.
J	Detailed negotiation.

Property Ref	Acquisition Status
K	Completed.
L	Agreed/with solicitors.
M	Detailed negotiation.
N	Completed.
O	Detailed negotiation.
P	Detailed negotiation.
Q	Detailed negotiation.
R	No response – demolished building.
S	Detailed negotiation.
T	Initial discussion/contact.
U	Completed.
V	Completed.
W	Completed.
X	Initial discussion/contact.

8.2. In resolving to exercise its powers of compulsory acquisition, the Council has considered the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Guidance on Compulsory Purchase process and The Crichel Down Rules which in paragraph 2 of the General Overview states (amongst other things) as follows:

"The confirming authority will expect the acquiring authority to demonstrate that they have taken reasonable steps to acquire all of the land and rights included in the Order by agreement. Compulsory purchase is intended as a last resort to secure the assembly of all the land needed for the implementation of projects. However, if an acquiring authority waits for negotiations to break down before starting the compulsory purchase process, valuable time will be lost. Therefore, depending on when the land is required, it may often be sensible, given the amount of time required to complete the compulsory purchase process, for the acquiring authority to:

- *plan a compulsory purchase timetable as a contingency measure;*
- *and*
- *initiate formal procedures*

This will also help to make the seriousness of the authority's intentions clear from the outset, which in turn might encourage those whose land is affected to enter more readily into meaningful negotiations."

8.3. The Council intends to retain the freehold of land prior to development being completed. In this respect the Council has proactively been negotiating and acquiring properties within the Order site.

- 8.4. The Council has sought, and will continue to seek, to acquire all of the third party interests in the Order Land through negotiation. The Council's surveyors have been active in pursuing and progressing these negotiations and to date good progress has been made with a number of successful acquisitions/relocations already agreed, many of which have been completed and some of which are in the process of being implemented. However, whilst discussions are continuing with the outstanding owners and occupiers that remain within the Order Land it is now unlikely that agreement will be reached with all interested parties within a reasonable timescale.
- 8.5. It is hoped that the commencement and progression of the compulsory purchase process will assist in negotiations and provide an element of further certainty for both the Council and outstanding owners and occupiers upon which the Order will ultimately impact. The Council remains committed to agreeing the voluntary acquisition of all outstanding interests in the Order Land and, in the interests of speed and goodwill, will consider the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution techniques, wherever appropriate, to settle any disputes which might arise. Should anyone affected by the Order have any queries with regard to the acquisition of their interest or any other aspect arising out of the making of the Order, they may find it useful to contact; Nick Hill No 1 Bickerstaffe Square Blackpool, FY1 3AH Telephone 07342077826 or email nick.hill@blackpool.gov.uk, or Infusion Telephone 01253 477477 - please ask for Infusion or email infusion@blackpool.gov.uk.
- 8.6. The Council have endeavoured to visit parties affected by the Order to assess their requirements. In appropriate cases this could include assistance with relocation. The Council's contact for queries on the Order is Neil Mackey, No 1 Bickerstaffe Square Blackpool, FY1 3AH; telephone 01253 477 411 or neil.mackey@blackpool.gov.uk.
- 8.7. Efforts were made initially in August 2022 to contact freehold and leasehold owner occupiers to inform them of the Council's interest in acquiring their property for the Multiversity project and start voluntary negotiations. Following on from this in September 2022 all parties received correspondence providing general information on the scheme and providing points of contact at the council. At the end of 2022 all legal interests received an initial offer letter from the Council, which encouraged owners to get in contact and start a dialogue with the Growth and Prosperity team.
- 8.8. Update letters were sent to all residents affected by the Multiversity project in early March 2023 by the Infusion team, this invited residents to attend a drop-in engagement session. Whilst owners that had not formally engaged in negotiations received an additional letter that provided transparency on the project and an invitation to attend a face-to-face appointment in April 2023.
- 8.9. To engage with impacted residents across the proposed multiversity site, Infusion hosted a drop-in engagement session on 14th March, which allowed residents to come and ask questions and engage face to face with Council staff.

- 8.10. The meeting was followed up with a letter in April, outlining more information on the Home-Loss Payment and to thank residents for attending the drop-in session. Subsequently, Infusion have been reaching out to tenants, asking for their contact details to be shared by those tenants who are engaged to other tenants that have not made with the council. To date, Infusion have communicated, sign-posted and provided information for more than 50 households, and been in touch with support organisations as and when needed.
- 8.11. In August 2023, legal services provided clarity to tenants in properties where the owner had agreed the sale of the property. Informing them on the qualification of Home-Loss Payments and the timescales involved with receiving their compensation.
- 8.12. Bearing these factors in mind, together with the high quality development which the Order is seeking to deliver and the key role the development will play in improving the commercial offer in Blackpool, the Council considers that there is a compelling case in the public interest in support of the exercise of its powers of compulsory acquisition in relation to the Order Land and that the use of such powers is proportionate to the ends being pursued.

9. DELIVERABILITY

Delivery:

- 9.1. Blackpool & Fylde College have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with a view to later entering into an Agreement with Blackpool Council to take a lease of the premises. In this respect it will be Blackpool Council delivering the project.

Funding:

- 9.2. Under the Town Investment Plan, Blackpool Council secured funding for seven projects including £9m for the site acquisition and clearance. Sufficient funds have been allocated for the acquisition (and the Council has underwritten any overspend on the acquisitions should this become necessary through a related budget, either by negotiation, or with the Council using its Compulsory Purchase Powers
- 9.3. In addition the Council secured £40 million from DHLUC through the Levelling Up Fund Round 2 (LUF) for construction of the Multiversity towards the estimated £65m total cost of the project comprising £9m Town Deal, £40m LUF and £16m from the Blackpool and Fylde College to be prudentially borrowed by the Council and paid back by the College.
- 9.4. The Council will adopt the same method of delivery as it has within Talbot Gateway Development in that the Council will retain freehold ownership of the lands required for the development and will grant a lease of the premises to Blackpool & Fylde College for them to deliver education at the Multiversity in Blackpool.

9.5. The grants provided under the Town Deal and Levelling Up Fund will contribute to offsetting the total cost of the scheme for which prudential borrowing will be undertaken on the balance and the agreed rent and capital contribution from the College will be sufficient to meet the annual cost of the prudential borrowing.

Consultation and Engagement:

9.6. The engagement with owners and occupiers has been widely successful, with 63 of 72 legal interests having engaged with the Council. All occupiers and owners have received written letters from initial contact in August 2022 and a further update in September 2022 updating all parties of the scheme and providing points of contact for any queries/questions.

9.7. Letters were sent to all residents affected by the Multiversity project in early March 2023 by the Infusion team, which invited residents to attend a drop-in engagement session. Owners who had not engaged received an additional letter that provided clarity on the project, details on the help available and an invitation by the Growth and Prosperity team to attend face-to-face appointments in April 2023, allowing property owners to discuss specific requirements including property values, in person.

9.8. The appointments with owners were attended by seven owners across two days. Owners who were offered alternative appointments were arranged separately to meet with the Growth and Prosperity team.

9.9. As part of ongoing work to engage affected residents across the proposed multiversity site, Infusion hosted a drop-in engagement session, held at Blackpool Fylde College (being adjacent to the proposed site), which allowed residents to come and ask questions and engage directly with Council staff. This was held on 14th March and was attended by over 20 households. Topics covered concern around timelines, relationships with landlords and the availability of suitable alternative accommodation.

9.10. The meeting was followed up with a letter in April, outlining more information on the Home Loss Payment and to thank residents for attending the drop-in session. Since then Infusion have been reaching out to tenants, asking for their contact details and for Infusions details to be shared as appropriate with tenants who have not made contact. Infusion have communicated, sign-posted and provided information for more than 50 households, and been in touch with support organisations when required.

9.11. Formal offer letters have been sent out to owners, which includes a breakdown of the offer and is split into; market value, disturbance and Home Loss Payments. It also stipulates that owners are entitled to appoint a surveyor to act on their behalf.

9.12. As referenced in section 39, Infusion and legal services have provided numerous correspondence letters to tenants in relation Home Loss Payments and disturbance for moving costs. The letter from legal services outlines the compensation payable to tenants is subject to a qualifying criteria as set out in the Land Compensation Act 1973.

9.13. A schedule of the principal letters delivered to landlords, owner occupiers and tenants is as follows:

Annex A - example letter sent to the owners of properties

Annex B - letter delivered to all properties on 20th September 2020

Annex C- letter delivered to all properties on 7th March 2023 (to all residents)

Annex D - letter delivered to all properties on 7th March 2023 (to property owners)

Annex E - offer letter format

Annex F - letter to all tenants – outlining info on home loss payments

9.14. Further consultation will take on the planning application once submitted

Relocations:

9.15. The Council is acutely aware that the regeneration of the Order Land will inevitably involve disruption to those living and working in the area. However, the Council is of the view that the use of compulsory purchase powers in this matter is proportionate.

9.16. There is a mixture of residential and commercial interests in the Order Land. The Council has made considerable efforts to contact and, wherever possible, met each interested party face-to-face to identify their relocation requirements and to discuss their options. The level of engagement with each individual has been determined by the needs and wishes of the parties but has included: helping to identify suitable alternatives, and tailoring completion dates to enable relocations.

9.17. A significant number of acquisitions have already taken place and some are on-going. Council officers have provided their contact details and remain open to requests for information and engagement.

9.18. Negotiations are taking place with the relevant owners] and where possible, they are making their own arrangement for relocation without needing Council assistance

9.19. Notwithstanding this, the Council is satisfied that the purpose for which it is seeking to make the Order - to secure the much-needed redevelopment of the Order Land and the continuance of the Talbot Gateway Redevelopment - provides sufficient justification for the interference with the human rights of those affected by the

proposals. Full details of the relevant human rights considerations involved in the making of the Order are set out in section 13 below. In recognition of the concerns of those affected by the proposals, the Council will continue to ensure that their relocation takes place in a co-ordinated and tailored manner.

10. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 10.1. An Equality Analysis screening process was undertaken as part of the business case for the Multiversity to assess the impact on protected groups of the making of the CPO and the implementation of the CPO scheme, in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- 10.2. The outcome of the screening process was that the impact of the development proposals were overwhelmingly positive. In respect of the CPO the Council recognises the challenges and disruption that can come from acquiring people's homes and for this reason representatives of the Council's Infusion Team (who are separate from those negotiating on property acquisitions, have taken extensive measures to engage with all the residents & owners of property in the CPO area to determine if they have any particular or specific needs or requirements that they need assistance with and this will continue throughout the CPO process
- 10.3. This will be monitored and reviewed throughout the CPO process to ensure that any future impact can be measured and mitigated against as necessary. This will be monitored and reviewed throughout the CPO process to ensure that any future impact can be measured and mitigated against as necessary.

11. HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1. Section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 prohibits public authorities from acting in a way which is incompatible with rights protected by the European Convention on Human Rights ("ECHR"/ "the Convention"). The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Guidance on Compulsory purchase process and The Crichton Down Rules states that a compulsory purchase order should only be made where there is a compelling case in the public interest. The guidance makes it clear that an acquiring authority should be sure that the purposes for which the compulsory purchase order is made justify interfering with the human rights of those with an interest in the land affected
- 11.2. In making this assessment, an acquiring authority should have regard, in particular, to the provisions of Article 1 of the First Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights and, in the case of a dwelling, Article 8 of the Convention.
- 11.3. Article 1 of the First Protocol, Article 6 and Article 8 of the Convention are summarised and considered below:

Article 1 of the First Protocol states:

"...Every natural or legal person is entitled to peaceful enjoyment of his possessions" and "no one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by the law and by the general principles of international law..."

11.4. Whilst occupiers and owners in the Order Land will be deprived of their property if the Order is confirmed, this will be done in accordance with the law. As indicated above, extensive efforts will be made to relocate all residential and commercial tenants through the offices of Blackpool Coastal Housing and Blackpool Unlimited. The Order is being pursued in the public interest as required by Article 1 of the First Protocol. The public benefits associated with the Scheme are set out earlier in this Statement of Reasons.

11.5. In light of the above, the Council considers that the Order will strike a fair balance between the public interest in the implementation of the Scheme and those private rights which will be affected by the Order.

Article 6 of the Convention provides:

"..In determining his civil rights and obligations...everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law..."

11.6. Extensive dialogue has been undertaken with all those parties affected by the Order either through correspondence or conversations and negotiations. The Talbot Gateway area has been extensively publicised and consultation has taken place with the communities and parties that will be affected by the Order. All those affected by the Order will be notified, will have the right to make representations and/or objections to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and to be heard at a public inquiry. It has been held that the statutory processes and associated right for those affected to pursue remedies in the High Court, where relevant, are compliant with Article 6.

Article 8 of the Convention provides that:

"(1) Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence. (2) There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and necessary in a democratic society in the interest of...the economic well being of the country..."

11.7. The Order has been made pursuant to section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 99 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which authorises the Acquiring Authority to acquire land compulsorily subject to following the procedures in the Acquisition of Land Act

1981. The Council believes, for the reasons set out in this Statement that the proposals will facilitate the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement in relation to the Order Land which is likely to contribute to the achievement of the promotion of the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the area. Consequently, the Council considers that there is a compelling case in the public interest that the Order Land be acquired in order to achieve the public benefits outlined in this Statement of Reasons. If the Secretary of State agrees with the Council that there is a compelling case in the public interest, he may confirm the Order. If the Order is confirmed, compensation may be claimed by persons whose interests in land have been acquired or whose possession of land has been disturbed. In the circumstances, if the Order is confirmed, the compulsory acquisition of the Order Lands will not conflict with Article 8 of the Convention.

11.8. The Council considers that such interferences as may occur with the pursuance of the Order are in accordance with the law, pursue a legitimate aim, namely the economic wellbeing of the town and/or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others, and are proportionate having regard to the public benefits that the Scheme will bring which will, in turn, benefit the social economic and environmental well-being of the town.

11.9. Those directly affected by the Order will be entitled to compensation proportionate to any losses that they may incur as a result of their acquisition. Compensation will be payable in accordance with the Compulsory Purchase Code, assessed on the basis of the market value of the property interest acquired, disturbance and statutory loss payment. The Council will also pay the reasonable surveying and legal fees incurred by those affected. The Compulsory Purchase Code has been held to be compliant with Articles 8 of the Convention and Article 1 of the First Protocol.

11.10. The European Court of Human Rights has recognised in the context of Article 1 of the First Protocol that "...regard must be had to the fair balance that has to be struck between the competing interests of the individual and the community as a whole.." public and private interests are to be taken into account in the exercise of the Council's powers and duties.

11.11. In pursuing the Order, the Council has carefully considered the balance to be struck between the effect of compulsory acquisition on individual rights and the wider public interest in the redevelopment of the Talbot Gateway area. Interference with Convention rights is considered by the Council to be justified here in order to secure the economic regeneration, environmental and public benefits which the proposals will bring.

12. SPECIAL FEATURES AND SPECIAL CATEGORIES OF LAND

12.1. There are no special features on the Order Land and the Order Land does not include any special category of land.

13. EASEMENTS, RIGHTS, ETC

13.1. It is intended that a General Vesting Declaration (GVD) or General Vesting Declarations will be made by the Council in respect of the Order Land in the event that their compulsory purchase powers are confirmed by the Secretary of State. It is also the intention of the Council that all easements, covenants, rights and other interests in the land included in such a GVD shall be acquired/overridden. Any mortgages and rent charges are to be dealt with in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Compulsory Purchase Act 1965.

14. VIEWS OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES

14.1. As referenced earlier, the Government through the Department of Levelling Up, Homes and Communities have identified this as a strategic priority as part of the Government's Levelling-Up agenda through the provision of £9m Town Deal Funding and £40 million Levelling-Up Funding towards the project.

15. COMPULSORY PURCHASE BY NON-MINISTERIAL ACQUIRING AUTHORITIES RULES 1990

15.1. This Statement of Reasons is not intended to be the statement of case under Rule 7 of the Compulsory Purchase (Inquiries Procedure) Rules 2007 and the Council reserves the right to alter or expand it as necessary

16. LIST OF DOCUMENTS

16.1. The following list includes the documents on which this Statement is based and which may be referred to in any Inquiry. All documents are available to view either on the Council's website www.blackpool.gov.uk or can be inspected on request to Blackpool Council offices at No 1 Bickerstaffe Square, Blackpool - telephone number 01253 477477.

General Documents:

Blackpool Council Executive reports

EX48/2020 Blackpool Town Deal Heads of Terms, 16 November 2020
EX16/2021 Blackpool Town Deal Update , 22 March 2021
EX63/2021 Blackpool Town Deal Update, 6 December 2021
EX52/2022 Blackpool Town Deal Update, 5 December 2022
EX23/2021 Levelling Up and Community Renewal Fund : 12th April 2021
EX37/2021 Levelling Up Fund Bid : 12th July 2021
EX19/2022 Levelling Up Fund Round 2 : 25th April 2022
EX33/2022 Levelling Up Fund : 5th September 2022

EX35/2022 The Acquisition of Land for the Multiversity : 5th September 2022

EX17-2023 Multiversity and Levelling Up Fund Round 2 : 27th February 2023

National and Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework July 2021

Local Planning Documents

Blackpool Local Plan; Part 1 Core Strategy (2012-2027) January 2016

Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site allocations and Development Management Policies (February 2023)

Talbot Gateway Planning Brief Nov 2006 – not relevant???

Other Local Strategies

Blackpool Town Centre Strategy Update (May 2022)

DRAFT

Plan 1: The Order Land



ANNEX A: EXAMPLE LETTER SENT TO THE OWNERS OF PROPERTIES

DATE: 2nd August 2022

ADDRESS

Ref: XXXX

T: 07342077826

E: nick.hill@blackpool.gov.uk

WITHOUT PREJUDICE SUBJECT TO CONTRACT AND FORMAL COUNCIL APPROVAL

Dear XXXX,

RE: THE FREEHOLD INTEREST IN XXXX STREET, BLACKPOOL, FY1 3DN (THE "PROPERTY"), AS REGISTERED UNDER HM LAND REGISTRY TITLE NUMBER XXXXX

I am writing to inform you that the Council is considering the possibility of purchasing your interest in these premises.

Any offer would be subject to contract, formal council approval, the satisfactory undertaking and review of searches, surveys and all other legal and/or title information necessary to legally undertake such a conveyance.

Also the provision of vacant possession would be required, with the property to be transferred free from any existing tenancies upon completion.

For the avoidance of doubt any offer would be made in respect of the Property only, it does not include the acquisition of any demountable content within the Property or any business operating out of the Property.

I look forward to receiving your thoughts on possible disposal of your legal interest in the above. If you require further information as part of your consideration, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Hill

Acquisition Surveyor

On behalf of Blackpool Council, Growth & Prosperity Division.

ANNEX B : LETTER DELIVERED TO ALL PROPERTIES ON 20TH SEPTEMBER 2020

20th September 2022 (Delivered by hand)

IMPORTANT LETTER TO THE OCCUPIER/OWNER

Ref: Multiversity
T: 07342077826
E: nick.hill@blackpool.gov.uk

**WITHOUT PREJUDICE, SUBJECT TO CONTRACT
AND FORMAL COUNCIL APPROVAL**

Dear Owner/Occupier

**RE: MULTIVERSITY PROJECT:
COOKSON STREET, MILBOURNE STREET, CHARLES STREET, GEORGE STREET, GROSVENOR STREET**

We are aware that Blackpool Gazette recently published a news article in relation to Blackpool Council's potential need to purchase several properties in this area to build new facilities to support the further education of young people.

The Blackpool Gazette published their article as soon as an official council report paper was published on our website on 31st August, which contained proposals for a new Multiversity development (which would also include the relocation of Blackpool & the Fylde College's Park Road campus).

The newspaper story was printed before an official decision was made on Monday 5th September. Only once a decision has been made official are we then in a position to be able to directly contact all affected properties with any information relating to the decision.

We recognise the uncertainty that this may have caused for many living in the area and we wanted to take this opportunity to provide you with accurate information now that we are in a position to be able to do so.

As highlighted above, the reason for the Council needing to purchase properties on this street is to create a new purpose built higher education campus in the town centre which will provide state-of-the-art teaching facilities with degree-level qualifications for Blackpool residents and, therefore, help to further regenerate the town centre to create more opportunities for residents and businesses.

There are a number of steps we are now taking as follows:

1. The decision on 5th September was to seek to buy this property by agreement with the owner. We had already contacted some owners and we are in discussion with them and have already bought some property.
2. We are now writing to all the properties in the area, and whilst it is the owners we would need to

talk to in the first instance, we recognise that if you are a tenant/rent the property then you also need to know what the situation is.

3. As the Council is considering purchasing these premises by agreement with the owner, if you own the premises the Council will write to you directly about discussing a sale if we have not already done so. If you are a tenant and you rent the premises you should speak to your Landlord in the first instance regarding their intentions.

4. For clarity, the Council has not made a formal decision to compulsorily acquire the properties affected but has said that it will review the position if it is unable to make progress on a voluntary basis in a reasonable timescale. If this does happen, people who own or have an interest in the property will be formally notified and will have the right to object to the proposals at that time. There will then be a separate process run by a Government appointed independent inspector to assess the merits of the Council's case and to hear any objections. We cannot give you a firm timescale for this process yet as it will depend on progress with the voluntary acquisitions.

5. Please be aware that careful planning goes into such an exercise and the Council is acutely aware of the impact of this on residents and businesses and the upheaval as a result. The Council will work with residents and businesses and will aim to ensure as smooth a transition as possible and will bring in other Council services as required to ensure you get the correct support. We will also ensure you are provided with sufficient time to find alternative premises.

6. The next step is that where we have not already made contact with the owner of the property we will look to do so to start negotiations with them.

In the meantime, should you have any queries about your property, please feel free to contact Nick Hill who will be happy to explain and discuss this further:

Nick Hill
Acquisitions Surveyor
nick.hill@blackpool.gov.uk
07342077826

If you have any comments or complaints these should be sent to:-
regeneration@blackpool.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,

Growth & Prosperity Team

Blackpool Council

ANNEX C : LETTER TO BE DELIVERED TO ALL PROPERTIES ON 7TH MARCH 2023

7th March 2023 (Delivered by hand)

IMPORTANT LETTER TO ALL RESIDENTS

Ref: Multiversity Residents
T: 01253 477477 – please ask for Infusion
E: infusion@blackpool.gov.uk

Dear Resident,

**HELP FOR RESIDENTS AFFECTED BY THE MULTIVERSITY PROJECT:
COOKSON STREET, MILBOURNE STREET, CHARLES STREET, GEORGE STREET, GROSVENOR STREET**

As you are aware, the Council is working in the area to create a new “Multiversity” campus here in the town centre. As part of the work to transform the area, we have teams who are working with property owners in a small number of key streets where we need to buy properties in order to progress the project.

We know uncertainty about your home can be worrying and we wanted to make sure that you know that we are here to talk to you if you are feeling worried and are not sure how these plans impact on you. You can phone us on (01253) 477477, please ask for Infusion. If someone is not able to take your call when you ring, the customer first team will take your name and number and this will be sent to the team who will ring you back as soon as possible. You can email us at infusion@blackpool.gov.uk.

We know not everyone likes to use email or talk over the phone and sometimes it is easier to talk face to face. We are planning to hold an initial “drop in” event for affected residents on:

**Tuesday 14th March 2023 between 11am and 2pm
Blackpool and the Fylde College, Bickerstaffe House (entrance facing George Street)**

Members of our team will be on hand to talk to you about any worries or concerns you have about moving and to explain to you what support is available to you. If you are not able to attend at this time but would prefer to meet with us face to face, please give us a call and we can come and see you.

Some people may be eligible for financial compensation because they need to move when their landlord sells the property to the Council, and we can help you find out if you would be able to access this and other support.

Many people who live in homes that we are planning to purchase are making plans to move and some people have already moved. No doubt you will have seen some changes in your local neighbourhood since the work to buy properties started, and we wanted to write to you to let you know that if you are worried about anything, we are here to listen, and where we can, to offer practical help and support.

Whilst we are mindful that people will need time to consider what they want to do and seek advice, the Government grant conditions that are supporting the Multiversity development do mean that we need to progress with the purchase of the remaining properties. The Council has not yet formally made a Compulsory Purchase Order for properties in the affected area, but is preparing to do so later this year for properties that have not been purchased on agreed terms.

Some of the questions we have had from people who live in the area we are sharing here, with what we hope you will find is a helpful response. If you have questions or concerns that are not answered below, or you would like to get some more detail on any of the answers, please do get in touch and our team will work with you to get an answer.

Frequently asked questions –

1. I rent my home and I have not had any information about having to move out from my landlord. Who will tell me what is going on?

The Council have been contacting property owners about buying the affected homes. We have sent them another letter this week, and from that they will know we are also writing to all the people who live in the area. As a first step, please speak to your landlord or rental agent and ask them to talk to you about their plans for your home. Properties will only be purchased as “vacant possession”, which means you will have to move before a sale is completed with the property owner. You may be entitled to compensation because you have to move. If you are worried and you would like to talk to us about what is happening, you can send us an email at infusion@blackpool.gov.uk. Please include a contact telephone number and your home address and one of our team will give you a call. If you prefer you can come and see us at the planned drop in, details above.

2. I own my home but I haven't spoken to anyone about selling it yet, who should I talk to?

We have written to all owners in the affected area and have been making efforts to talk to everyone – so we would welcome a chat if we are not already talking to you. We have written again to all owners this week so you should have our contact details and more information relevant to you in that letter, and if you haven't yet spoken to us then please get in touch with Nick Hill on nick.hill@blackpool.gov.uk or 07342 077826.

3. I am a tenant and I know I need to move but I don't know how I will find a new home to rent, what do I do?

Some people have moved to other properties that are available from their landlord or letting agent. If this is not available to you, or you have not been offered a property that is suitable, we would advise that you speak to local letting agents about available properties so that they can let you know what is available on the market. Some people find that internet access is helpful to get the best view of the properties available for your budget – if you do not have internet access we can help you find support with this. If you would like a list of local letting agents with properties in Blackpool and the Fylde, drop us an email and we will send some contact details for them through to you.

4. It is a big upheaval to move, am I entitled to any compensation to help me with the disruption?

Some people may be entitled to compensation when the owner sells the property they are living in to us through this scheme because of the disruption it causes. To find out if you are eligible and if so, how to access compensation, please send your name, a contact number and your address to infusion@blackpool.gov.uk or visit us at the drop in on Tuesday 14th March at Bickerstaffe House between 11am and 2pm.

We appreciate that moving can be a huge upheaval and while it is really positive for the town to have attracted the investment for the Multiversity we are sorry that it is having an impact on you and hope that, should you need any support, we are able to help you with the next step. Don't worry, anything sensitive that you ask us will be treated in confidence and rest assured, if we are able to help, we will.

Yours sincerely

Kate Aldridge

Infusion Team, Blackpool Council

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ANNEX D : LETTER TO BE DELIVERED TO ALL PROPERTIES ON 7TH MARCH 2023 (PROPERTY OWNERS)

7th March 2023 (Delivered by hand)

IMPORTANT LETTER TO ALL PROPERTY OWNERS

Ref: Multiversity
T: 07342077826
E: nick.hill@blackpool.gov.uk

Dear Property Owner,

**MULTIVERSITY PROJECT:
COOKSON STREET, MILBOURNE STREET, CHARLES STREET, GEORGE STREET, GROSVENOR STREET**

I am writing following the letter we sent to you in September of last year regarding our plans to buy properties in this area to support the Multiversity project. Since we sent that letter we have been working with interested parties, agreeing terms and completing purchases.

Our records show that we are not currently in formal negotiations with you, and we want to ensure that you have access to the support you need to consider next steps. We know that what is proposed may be unsettling, and we want to assure you that within the limitations of what we are allowed to do by law and the budget available we will help you as much as we are able.

The Council is purchasing properties in this area to create a new purpose built higher education campus in the town centre. Since we wrote to you in September, we have purchased several properties in the area by negotiation and agreed terms with others.

Whilst we are mindful that people will need time to consider what they want to do and seek advice, the Government grant conditions that are supporting the Multiversity development do mean that we need to progress with the purchase of the remaining properties. The Council has not yet formally made a Compulsory Purchase Order for properties in the affected area, but is preparing to do so later this year for properties that have not been purchased on agreed terms.

We would much rather work with you as a property owner to make an agreed purchase. If you are willing to negotiate with the Council please do get in touch. The contact details are at the top and close of this letter and we are willing to negotiate with you over the value of your property within the constraints of what we are legally allowed to do. We will work with you to assess the market value and we are able to consider disturbance, compensation and reasonable legal costs.

If this property is your home, we know that you will want to purchase another house to live in. People living in the homes that we have already purchased have told us that they have found local estate agents and property websites such as Right Move and Zoopla to be helpful in their property search. If you do not have internet access please do let us know and we help you to get support to be able to use these sites.

We appreciate that people will be worried about making sure that they get a good price for their property and help to move to a new home. There is no set price for properties as everyone is unique and we need an individual discussion with you to address all the relevant matters to assess your property value, which will be the market value of your property. Depending on your circumstances, because you are a resident in the property you may be eligible to some compensation for the disruption that selling your home and moving to a new home causes.

If you do not live in your property, please note that we can only buy your property with vacant possession. If you have tenants living in your property we have also written to them and would ask you to ensure they have had a letter from us offering advice and support, a copy of which is enclosed. They can contact us directly by emailing their name, a contact number and their address to infusion@blackpool.gov.uk or they can attend our tenant drop in the details of which are in the letter to all residents. If you are worried about how you can support your tenants to move, it is possible that we may be able to provide some compensation to assist them if they are eligible.

We also plan to organise face-to-face appointment sessions with property owners where you will be able to discuss your specific requirements and property values in person. The venue and date is yet to be confirmed but we expect this will be no later than mid-April. **Please let us know if you would like to have such an appointment so that we can ensure you will get sufficient notice to attend.**

If you run a business from your property and are willing to negotiate with the Council please do get in touch. If you are worried about finding alternative premises, we may be able to assist you with this.

We hope that you will want to talk to us about the sale of your property, but even if you do not feel ready to enter in to negotiations, please do get in touch with us. This is so that we can be assured that we have your contact details as things progress, and can be confident that you know we are here when you do feel ready to discuss next steps. Please contact -

Nick Hill
Acquisitions Surveyor
nick.hill@blackpool.gov.uk
07342 077826

We look forward to hearing from you soon,

Yours sincerely,

Growth & Prosperity Team

Blackpool Council

ANNEX E : NEW/UPDATED OFFER LETTER FORMAT

DATE:

ADDRESS

By email and post.

Ref: XXXX

T: 07342077826

E: nick.hill@blackpool.gov.uk

SUBJECT TO CONTRACT AND FORMAL COUNCIL APPROVAL

Dear xx

MULTIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT – BLACKPOOL

Financial offer to acquire the freehold interest in [XXXXX], as registered under HM Land Registry title number [XXXX]

Further to our recent discussion and my inspection of your property at the above address, I can confirm that Blackpool Council (“the Council”) would like to make an offer to acquire your property. I set out the detail of this offer [below](#).

As you know Blackpool Council are bringing forward a new Multiversity Campus. Your property is included within the boundary of the new development and the Council would like to acquire your property to enable the development to progress.

The Council has recently taken a report to its Executive to obtain various approvals to take forward the scheme including the approval to in principle consider the use of the Council’s compulsory purchase powers if necessary, alongside pursuing detailed negotiations to acquire the required properties.

I have now reviewed the information available and I am now able to make a financial offer on behalf of the Council for the acquisition of the freehold interest at the above address. The Council would be able to purchase your property as soon as agreement is reached on this offer. This offer is made in line with the statutory Compensation Code to reflect the sum of compensation as if your property were to be acquired under a Compulsory Purchase Order. This effectively means that the Council is offering you market value for your property plus various other financial allowances.

On this basis, the Council’s offer is set out below and is subject to contract, formal Council approval, the satisfactory undertaking and review of searches, surveys and all other legal and/or title information necessary to undertake such a conveyance. The offer is also subject to the provision of vacant possession, with the property to be transferred to the Council free from any existing tenancies upon completion.

Market Value	Disturbance/ Reinvestment	Statutory Loss Payment	Total Purchase Price
£	£	£	£

You are also entitled to appoint a surveyor to act on your behalf and to engage with us on this matter. The Council will reimburse any reasonable fees incurred. Please discuss this further with us should you wish to appoint a surveyor.

Once you have had time to consider this offer please do get in touch with us to discuss further. Our contact details are below:

Nick Hill 07342077826 nick.hill@blackpool.gov.uk
 General Contact 01253 477477

Yours sincerely,

Nick Hill

Acquisition Surveyor

On behalf of Blackpool Council, Growth & Prosperity Division.

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ANNEX F: LETTER TO ALL TENANTS – OUTLINING INFO ON HOME LOSS PAYMENTS

19th April 2023 (Delivered by hand)

IMPORTANT LETTER TO ALL RESIDENTS

Ref: Multiversity Residents
T: 01253 477477 – please ask for Infusion
E: infusion@blackpool.gov.uk

Dear Resident,

HELP FOR RESIDENTS AFFECTED BY THE MULTIVERSITY PROJECT: COOKSON STREET, MILBOURNE STREET, CHARLES STREET, GEORGE STREET, GROSVENOR STREET

Thank you for talking to our team about the impact of the Multiversity development on your home. When we met you told us that you have been living in your current home as a tenant of **Landlord**. and that your tenancy in the property has been in place for more than one year.

You have told us that you are worried about the costs associated with finding, moving to and settling in to a new home. Based on the information you have shared with us, you may be entitled to a payment from the Council to help you with the costs associated with the distress and disruption of moving and finding a new home. This payment can help you with the upfront costs of securing a property, like a deposit and/ or rent up front, the costs of moving to your new home and to compensate you for the disruption that is caused.

The “home loss” payment is usually made to people where the authority has made and been granted a Compulsory Purchase Order for their home. As you know, we have not yet made an application for this order, as we are negotiating directly with property owners. **However, we are able to make this payment to people in the properties that have been identified if their landlord reaches an agreement with us.**

This means that **if your landlord agrees to sell to us**, we will be able to make a payment to you at the same rate as the payment that would be made should we undertake a “compulsory purchase”. The amount is set by government, **and is £7,800 per household.**

We can only make this payment to you once we have reached an agreement with the property owner and the sale is complete. However, once we have reached an agreement, it will be possible for you to access some of the money early if you need to cover upfront costs which arise before you move. You can talk to us about how to do this. If you are worried about some of the practical costs of moving – for example the cost of moving your furniture and belongings from your current to a new home, then we can also look at how we can help with these expenses – this is separate from the Home Loss payment.

If the property owner does not reach an agreement with us, we will not be able to make a payment to you at this time. However, if and when a compulsory purchase order is made on properties that we have not reached agreement on, you will then be eligible for the home loss payment and help with moving costs.

We appreciate that moving can be a huge upheaval and while it is really positive for the town to have attracted the investment for the Multiversity we are sorry that it is having an impact on you. Thank you for talking to us about your circumstances and the worries that you have, I hope that we have

been able to allay some of these worries in this letter. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions, and we will be happy to help wherever we can.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Aldridge

Infusion Team

Blackpool Council

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