

Officer Report to Committee

Application ref:	23/0830
Ward:	Talbot
Application type:	Hybrid
Location:	
	Land bounded by Cookson Street, Milbourne Street, Grosvenor Street and George Street, Blackpool
Proposal:	Hybrid application comprising: Full – demolition of existing buildings and structures Outline- erection of buildings for use as an education-led mixed use development comprising a new education campus building (Use Class F1(a)) and further education floorspace (Use Class F1(a)) and/or office floorspace (Class E(g)), creation of new public realm with associated landscaping, car parking and associated works.
Recommendation:	Approve subject to conditions
Recommendation Summary:	The existing buildings proposed for demolition are not safeguarded for any particular purpose and their loss is considered to be acceptable. The development proposed in outline would deliver clear economic and social benefits by improving access to further education and the skills base in Blackpool to support economic growth and diversification. The scale of the building would inevitably have some impact on residential amenity and this weighs negatively in the planning balance. Subject to a high-quality design being secured at reserved matters stage, it is considered that the development would have a positive impact upon the quality of the streetscene. No unacceptable heritage impacts are anticipated. Equally no unacceptable impacts on highway function or safety, drainage, flood risk, ecology or environmental quality are expected.
Meeting date:	
	09/04/24
Reason for bringing to Committee:	Major application of strategic significance and general public interest
Case officer:	Miss S Parker
Case officer contact:	01253 476228

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The site is roughly rectangular and comprises two blocks of two-storey, largely residential properties with some commercial uses fronting Cookson Street. Charles Street separates the two blocks and the site is bound by George Street to the north-west, Grosvenor Street to the north-east, Milbourne Street to the south-east, and Cookson Street to the south-west.

- 1.2 The area surrounding the site has mixed character. The Council offices and an area of greenspace face the site across George Street with the Sainsbury's building to the north. To the north-west is the Talbot Road multi-storey car park and wider commercial block. The site directly to the west is currently being redeveloped through the erection of a seven-storey office building with associated public realm. Smaller commercial units front Cookson Street to the south and south-west. Residential properties face the site across Milbourne Street and Grosvenor Street. Aside from the large, modern, commercial buildings, the area is characterised by two-storey, traditional properties.
- 1.3 The site falls just outside the boundary of the defined Town Centre and the Central Business District known locally and referred to throughout this report as Talbot Gateway. It is within the Talbot and Brunswick Integrated Neighbourhood Improvement (TABINI) area and within the Blackpool Airport safeguarding zone. The site forms part of the setting of the Grade I Listed Blackpool Tower building, the Town Centre Conservation Area and the former Hop public house which is locally listed. The site falls within Flood Zone 1 meaning it is at least risk of flooding, but is within Blackpool's Air Quality Management Area. No other specific designations or constraints are identified.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application is a hybrid proposal seeking full planning permission for some elements of the scheme and outline planning permission for others.
- 2.2 Full planning permission is sought for the demolition of all existing buildings and structures within the area. This is proposed to enable the clearance of the site so that it is ready for redevelopment as soon as possible once the details are finalised, to ensure that relevant funding deadlines can be met. It is understood that 59 residential properties would be lost as a result of this demolition.
- 2.3 Outline planning permission is sought with all matters reserved for a two-phase, education-led development. It is noted that the floorspace figures quoted in the application form differ from those in the submitted Planning statement. The application has been assessed on the basis of the figures set out in the latter document.
- 2.4 Phase 1 would see the provision of up to 21,625sqm of educational floorspace falling within class F1(a) as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order. This is envisaged to be in one, maximum part five, part three-storey, L-shaped block. It is intended that this floorspace would be occupied by Blackpool and the Fylde College (B&FC).
- 2.5 Phase 2 would see a further 12,690sqm of education floorspace (class F1(a)) provided but, in the event that this is not required by B&FC, flexibility is sought to enable this additional floorspace to be used to provide office accommodation within class E(g) of the aforementioned Order. It is envisaged that this floorspace would be provided in two blocks with that fronting Cookson Street being up to four storeys in height and that on the corner of Grosvenor Street and Milbourne Street being up to three storeys in height.
- 2.6 Whilst all matters are reserved, indicative elevation drawings and artist visualisations have been provided. These show modern buildings comprising largely glazed elevations. The buildings would have flat roofs intended to support the provision of photovoltaic panels and areas of green roof. It is indicated that the massing of the buildings would be broken up by areas of different height. The artist impressions show a high-quality development of striking design that would significantly improve the appearance of the streetscene.

2.7 In addition to the built development, the scheme proposes the pedestrianisation of George Street and the creation of new public realm and landscaping. The description of development makes reference to provision of 22 parking spaces although the position of these spaces is not confirmed.

2.8 The application has been supported by:

- Planning statement
- Design and access statement
- Environmental statement pursuant to the Environmental Impact Assessment regulations
- Daylight and sunlight report
- Bat survey
- Biodiversity impact assessment
- Flood risk assessment and drainage strategy
- Transport statement
- Travel plan
- Air quality assessment
- Noise impact assessment
- Phase 1 desktop study into potential land contamination
- Energy statement
- BREEAM pre-assessment statement
- Broadband connectivity statement

2.9 The Environmental Statement (ES) submitted focusses on Townscape Visual Impact and Heritage Impact only. This scope is agreed. The ES has been reviewed on behalf of the Council by suitably qualified and experienced consultants with specialist knowledge of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations and these topic areas.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 Talbot Gateway as an area has a very lengthy planning history which is summarised comprehensively in the submitted Planning statement. No particularly relevant planning history for the application site itself has been identified. Generally speaking, the development of Talbot Gateway can be broken down into three phases and summarised as follows:

3.2 Phase 1 – the re-modelling of Talbot Road multi-storey car park (11/0842), the erection of the Sainsbury's building (11/0961) and the development of the Council offices (11/0843).

3.3 Phase 2 – the redevelopment of the former Wilkinson's site to provide a six-storey building accommodating a hotel alongside retail, restaurant and bar uses and to enable the creation of a tram link into Blackpool North railway station (17/0276).

3.4 Phase 3 – erection of a seven-storey office building to be occupied by DWP on the northern part of the former East Topping Street car park (20/0751).

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY/GUIDANCE/LEGISLATION

4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4.1.1 The NPPF was adopted in December 2023. It sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The following sections are most relevant to this application:

- Section 2 Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 5 Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes
- Section 6 Building a Strong, Competitive Economy
- Section 7 Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres
- Section 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 9 Promoting Sustainable Transport
- Section 10 Supporting High Quality Communications
- Section 11 Making Effective Use of Land
- Section 12 Achieving well-designed places
- Section 14 Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding, & Coastal Change
- Section 15 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- Section 16 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

4.2 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

4.2.1 The NPPG expands upon and offers clarity on the points of policy set out in the NPPF.

4.3 Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 (Part 1)

4.3.1 The Core Strategy was adopted in January 2016. The following policies are most relevant to this application:

- CS2 Housing Provision
- CS3 Economic Development and Employment
- CS4 Retail and Other Town Centre Uses
- CS5 Connectivity
- CS6 Green Infrastructure
- CS7 Quality of Design
- CS8 Heritage
- CS9 Water Management
- CS10 Sustainable Design and Low Carbon and Renewable Energy
- CS11 Planning Obligations
- CS12 Sustainable Neighbourhoods
- CS15 Health and Education
- CS17 Blackpool Town Centre
- CS19 Central Business District (Talbot Gateway)
- CS22 Key Resort Gateways

4.4 Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations & Development Management Policies (Part 2)

4.5.1 The Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 was adopted in February 2023. The following emerging policies in Part 2 are most relevant to this application:

- DM17 Design Principles
- DM18 High Speed Broadband for New Developments
- DM19 Strategic Views
- DM21 Landscaping

- DM25 Public Art
- DM26 Listed Buildings
- DM27 Conservation Areas
- DM28 Non-Designated Heritage Assets
- DM30 Archaeology
- DM31 Surface Water Management
- DM35 Biodiversity
- DM36 Controlling Pollution and Contamination
- DM37 Community Facilities
- DM41 Transport Requirements for New Development
- DM42 Aerodrome Safeguarding

4.6 Other Relevant documents, guidance and legislation

- 4.6.1 The Talbot and Brunswick Integrated Neighbourhood Improvement Area Neighbourhood Planning Guidance was published in June 2006. The document considered the relevant planning policies in place at that time and suggested how they should be applied to shape the future development of the TAB neighbourhood. It hung on Policy BH2 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 which has since been superseded by the new Local Plan Parts 1 and 2. Fundamentally, the guidance expected new development in the area to be of a high quality and contribute positively to community safety and security and the vitality of the area. Importantly, the document expected new development to be appropriate to the scale and character of the area. It significantly pre-dated the Talbot Gateway vision and so did not envisage or make reference to potential development of the scale now proposed.
- 4.6.2 Blackpool Council declared a Climate Change Emergency in June 2019 and is committed to ensuring that approaches to planning decision are in line with a shift to zero carbon by 2030.
- 4.6.3 Blackpool Council adopted the Blackpool Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy in 2019. The GBI Strategy sets out six objectives for Blackpool in terms of green infrastructure:
- Protect and Enhance GBI i.e. protecting the best and enhancing the rest
 - Create and Restore GBI i.e. greening the grey and creating new GBI in areas where it is most needed
 - Connect and Link GBI i.e. making the links, improving connectivity and accessibility of GBI
 - Promote GBI i.e. changing behaviour, promoting the benefits of GBI and encouraging greater uptake of outdoor activity and volunteering.
- 4.6.4 Blackpool adopted the 2021-2031 Tree Strategy in July 2021. This strategy recognises the importance of trees, the benefits they afford us and the ever-important role they can play in improving our community's mental wellbeing, socio-economic value, providing a home for wildlife and mitigating environmental issues and climate change. Given that Blackpool only has 4.4% tree cover (the lowest in the UK), the Strategy aims to embed trees into decision making processes across the council and ensure the current stock is proactively managed.
- 4.6.5 Greening Blackpool Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) - this document was adopted in May 2022 and sets out the green infrastructure and tree planting requirements for new development.
- 4.6.6 The Environment Act 2021 makes provision for all planning permissions to be conditional on the provision of biodiversity net gain. Whilst there is, as yet, not requirement set out in

statute, the Government's clear intention is a material planning consideration. The Council will therefore seek to secure biodiversity net gains where practicable in advance of this becoming a statutory requirement.

- 4.6.7 National Design Guide (January 2021) recognises the importance of good design and identifies the ten characteristics that make up good design to achieve high-quality places and buildings. The guide articulates that a well-designed place is made up of its character, its contribution to a sense of community, and its ability to address the environmental issues affecting climate.
- 4.6.8 DCLG National Technical Housing Standards – this document was published in March 2015 and sets out the national minimum standards for new homes. This partially supersedes some of the standards in the Council's New Homes from Old Places SPD guidance.
- 4.6.9 Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area when exercising planning functions.
- 4.6.10 Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special regard to be paid to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 4.6.11 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 4.6.12 Blackpool Town Centre Strategy was adopted in May 2022 and sets out the vision for the town centre. In particular it identifies a 'work and learn' key objective which seeks to foster learning and provide opportunities for work.

5.0 CONSULTEE RESPONSES

5.1 Active Travel England –

- 5.1.1 14/12/23 – ATE is not in a position to support the proposal and requests further information.
- 5.1.2 The provision of only 22 parking spaces would encourage users to use sustainable transport modes to access the development. There is a lack of cycling infrastructure for cyclists, particularly those travelling from the south. It is questioned if any off-site improvements are proposed. Further assessment of Church Street and Cookson Street and any potential for improvements is recommended to encourage cycling. There are no cycle lanes or tracks along Talbot Road or Church Street and so the claim that the site is well-connected by cycleways is disputed. ATE considers the cycle network is limited, unconnected and offers the lowest level of protection for cyclists. The availability of off-site public car parking may discourage nervous cyclists from cycling. There is potential for Cookson Street and Grosvenor Street to have cycle routes that link into the Counce Street cycle lanes.
- 5.1.3 Cycle parking should meet the standards set out in the Local Transport Note or local standards, whichever are higher. Long-stay spaces should be secure and covered and 5% should be designed for non-standard cycles. The spaces should be in a convenient and

attractive location. Some short-stay spaces should also be provided on George Street.

5.2 Local Highway Authority –

- 5.2.1 The initial submission did not provide sufficient information to enable a robust assessment of the application and so an amended Transport Assessment (TA) has been requested and provided. This TA has been developed in consultation with the Council's Transport Policy and Highway officers.
- 5.2.2 The proposed development would be significant in terms of traffic and people movements. It includes the pedestrianisation of the length of George Street fronting the site. The development would only have a small amount of parking meaning that travel to the site would involve use of Council car parks, public transport, cycling and walking. The application has been supported by a Framework Travel Plan which is considered to be broadly acceptable. The TA considers various modes of travel and satisfactorily assesses the volumes involved, modal split and how the journeys would be accommodated.
- 5.2.3 The progressively increasing levels of pedestrian movement within the Talbot gateway area are recognised and it is acknowledged that there is a need to accommodate these flows safely and conveniently. This would be achieved through additional pedestrian crossing facilities. An additional bus stop and other setting down/picking up facilities are proposed.
- 5.2.4 The conclusions and proposals set out within the TA are reasonable and proportionate to the issues. Nevertheless, the increasingly large and complex pedestrian flows within the Talbot Gateway area need to be understood and addressed. The Town Centre Access Scheme (TCAS) aims to address some of the locations where pedestrian flows need to be better understood and accommodated. At present, it is not possible to predict in detail how this application would dovetail with the TCAS scheme. This would need to be resolved through a S278 Highways Act agreement alongside the TCAS scheme.
- 5.2.5 The pedestrianisation of George Street would integrate the site with the wider Talbot Gateway and the public transport network. The TA deals with the effects of diverted traffic in considerable detail and concludes that the network has sufficient capacity to accommodate the changed flows. The approach in the TA is considered to be conservative as some drivers would divert further rather than simply using the immediate area. George Street is used by bus services but, as there are no stops, it is not an essential element of any routes. No material changes to bus journey times would result from the proposed closure.
- 5.2.6 There is some concern that an emergency or other unplanned closure of Talbot Road could lead to a more complex and less desirable collection of diversions. To mitigate this risk it is suggested that the closure incorporate appropriate measures for temporary use in such circumstances. Discussions as to how this could be achieved are ongoing.
- 5.2.7 Some work still needs to be done to arrive at a package of highway works to deal with the effects of the development. For example, the TA traffic analysis does not allow for changes in flows subsequent to the re-opening of High Street or the impact on flows through the Talbot/Dickson Road signals once the extended tram lines are operations. Such analysis should be secured through condition.
- 5.2.8 It is recommended that the following conditions are imposed on any permission granted:
- Submission of revised traffic flow analysis following the re-opening of High Street and the opening of the North Station tram station

- Provision of the additional pedestrian crossing facilities identified in the TA
- Agreement and implementation of a scheme of highway works to include:
 - Pedestrianisation of George Street to include provision for temporary emergency use
 - Public realm enhancements
 - Changes to traffic signal junctions and co-ordination systems
 - Provision of additional pedestrian crossing facilities
 - Modification of existing layby for bus operation
 - Modification of existing layby to provide set-down/pick-up facility
 - Amendments to Traffic Regulation Orders
 - Amendments to street lighting
 - Amendments to utilities provisions
- Agreement of and adherence to a Demolition and Construction Management Plan

5.3 **Blackpool Transport** – no comments have been received in time for inclusion in this report. Any comments that are received in advance of the meeting will be reported through the update note.

5.4 **United Utilities** – the submitted drainage strategy is acceptable in principle. Nevertheless it is recommended that a condition to require the agreement of drainage details be imposed. Equally, a condition requiring agreement of drainage management details should be attached to any permission granted. It is the applicant's responsibility to determine the exact relationship between UU assets and the proposed development. A water main crosses the site and must not be built over or access compromised in any way. This may prevent implementation of the development or may require diversion at the applicant's expense. Equally a public sewer crosses the site, it must not be built over, and an access strip must be maintained. The applicant should contact UU at the earliest opportunity to discuss these issues.

5.5 **Lead Local Flood Authority** – the submitted FRA is acceptable and they have detailed combined sewer connection which is considered to be the only realistic option. A peak flow rate of 6.5 litres per second with 767 cubic metres of storage is proposed. No objection is raised to the proposed drainage strategy.

5.6 **Natural England** – the proposed development is not anticipated to have any significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes. As such, no objection is raised. General advice is provided.

5.7 **Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU)** – the applicant has submitted a Biodiversity Impact Assessment and bat surveys. The former finds the site to have no biodiversity value as it is all hard-standing. Any landscaping provided would therefore deliver a net gain in biodiversity. The submitted bat survey finds the buildings to have negligible potential to support bats. However, no internal surveys were undertaken and the external survey was undertaken in late September. The report recommends a pre-commencement check of external features. This should be conditioned. The survey also recommends provision of bat boxes and an appropriately worded condition is suggested.

5.8 **Head of Parks and Greens** –

5.8.1 The matter of landscaping is reserved for later consideration. However, in accordance with the Council's Tree and Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategies the landscaping should consider:

- The right tree in the right place with trees planted for longevity without becoming a nuisance
- Planting to provide wildlife links and habitat enhancement
- Trees should complement the architecture with consideration to colour (e.g. silver birch would not be easily visible against a light backdrop)
- Canopy density, shading and the propensity to shed seeds, fruit etc
- Suitability of species to avoid risk of structural damage
- Need for larger species with fuller canopies to be afforded open space; use of smaller, fastigate or more manageable species where space is an issue
- Suitability of species in relation to potential climate change
- Maximum benefits of canopy cover, health and well-being and urban cooling
- Provision of sufficient soil volume and drainage for tree growth and function
- Purpose of tree, e.g. visual, thermal comfort, shade, habitat, drainage (use of sustainable urban drainage systems integrating green infrastructure assets can improve water quality, reduce run-off and reduce the impact of climate change).
- Tree health as native species are increasingly threatened by pests and disease due to climate change
- Need for a high level of species diversity including non-native species suited to a challenging urban environment (relevant guides are available).

5.8.2 Consideration should be given to implementation of green roofs and walls where appropriate and viable, particularly as tree planting would be tightly constrained on site. Plans must detail how landscaping and green infrastructure would be implemented and maintained in the long term.

5.9 **Environmental Protection (Environmental Quality)** – agree with the recommendations of the Phase 1 report that a Phase 2 investigation is required. The phase 2 report should give particular attention to the potential for the basements to contain ash and clinker which are sources of potential contamination. With regard to air quality, the conclusions of the report are agreed and no additional receptors are required to be considered. All materials should be covered when arriving on site and, if stored on site, should be covered to prevent dust migration. Regular road sweeping would be required to further prevent dust migration.

5.10 **Environmental Protection (Amenity)** – agree with the conclusion of the noise assessment that noise could be adequately managed through a Construction Management Plan. Hours of operation to be limited to Monday – Friday 0800-1800 and Saturday 0900-1300 with no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays without prior consent.

5.11 **Commercial Waste** – no comments have been received in time for inclusion in this report. Any comments that are received in advance of the meeting will be reported through the update note.

5.12 **Historic England** – no advice offered in this case. The views of a specialist conservation and archaeological advisor should be sought. Published advice is also available online.

5.13 **Blackpool Civic Trust** – no comments have been received in time for inclusion in this report. Any comments that are received in advance of the meeting will be reported through the update note.

5.14 **Built Heritage Manager** – the site is not in a Conservation Area and does not include any designated or undesignated heritage assets. The existing buildings are of a common type that have been much altered and so there is little heritage value in the site. Although there

would be some minor visual impact on heritage assets such as Blackpool Tower and St. John's Church, overall the scheme would have a neutral impact and no objection is raised.

- 5.15 **Blackpool Airport** – a condition should be attached to any permission granted to require the developer to notify the airport at least 14 days in advance if any equipment that would exceed the maximum height of the finished development would be used during construction. Details of the required notification and relevant operation standards are provided.
- 5.16 **NATS safeguarding** – no objection is raised. If any changes are proposed, NATS should be re-consulted.
- 5.17 **Lancashire Constabulary Police Architectural Liaison Officer** – the development should be constructed to the Secure By Design 'Commercial Developments 2023' and 'New Schools 2014' Design Guides. Provision of a secure boundary is recommended. Defensible spaces should be created around buildings to prevent attack by vehicle strike or parked vehicles giving access to upper floor windows or roofs. Vehicular and pedestrian access points should be controlled. Landscaping should be maintained below 1m in height with tree canopies maintained above 2m so as to ensure clear natural surveillance. Parking provision should meet relevant standards. Buildings should be designed to avoid features that could act as climbing aids. Appropriate external lighting and 'rule-setting' signage should be provided. Consideration should be given to arrangements for mail delivery and utility metre positioning to ensure they do not compromise security. Waste bins should be inaccessible to unauthorised persons. Appropriate doors, windows, alarms and CCTV should be provided. Appropriate consideration should be given to property marking, key and cash security, access controls and the supervision of reception and servicing areas. Suitable security should be maintained during construction. Full details have been set out in the Crime Impact Statement provided by the Police.
- 5.18 **Community Safety Manager** – no comments have been received in time for inclusion in this report. Any comments that are received in advance of the meeting will be reported through the update note.
- 5.19 **Head of Estates and Asset Management** – no objection raised.

6.0 REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.1 Press notice published: 30/11/23, and re-published: 06/03/24
- 6.2 Site notice posted: 30/11/23, and re-posted: 06/03/24
- 6.3 Neighbours notified: 23/11/23, and re-notified: 06/03/24
- 6.4 Since first submission it has been necessary to change the description of development in order to improve clarity. The proposed building footprint parameters have also had to change slightly to take account of existing utilities infrastructure. This last change has triggered an amendment to the Environmental Statement and this has required re-publication of the application under Regulation 25 of the relevant EIA regulations. This opportunity has equally been taken to re-consult on the revised description of development. Given that only one representation has been received in relation to the application since first publication in November, it has been considered reasonable and proportionate that only new press and site notices as required by the legislation have been published. A letter

advising of the amendment has also been sent direct to the party that has submitted the representation but the original letter issue has not been repeated.

6.5 Two representations have been received from 43 Milbourne Street raising the following issues:

- Heritage impact on nearby Conservation Areas
- No details of building appearance have been provided
- Unclear why the scheme is proposed as B&FC already have existing sites with capacity for expansion
- The submitted information makes reference to the neglected state of the area but the Council has done nothing to remedy this
- Some of the photographs provided are not of the relevant site area
- The scheme would result in the loss of residential properties and local amenities
- Loss of privacy
- Overshadowing
- Loss of on-street car parking
- Unclear where the new parking would be provided
- Increased pressure on existing parking provision which is not appropriate
- Inadequate parking provision
- Increase in congestion
- Impact on highway safety
- Insufficient highway details provided at this stage
- Impact on wildlife
- Would not result in new jobs, merely relocated jobs from elsewhere
- Application details have been with-held from the public
- The Council has been the cause of decline in the area through the refusal of planning applications
- There has been pre-meditated obstruction of property maintenance to facilitate forced purchase
- There has been pre-meditated alterations to bus routes and timetables to facilitate development

6.6 The Committee are respectfully reminded that the applicant has chosen to reserve all matters for later consideration. Whilst the Council can require that certain matters be considered at outline stage, it can only do so where it is considered absolutely essential in order to enable the proper consideration of the application. This is not considered to be the case in this instance. The information submitted is considered to be appropriate to the permission sought and assessment of detailed matters at a later date would not result in undue prejudice to any party. The inclusion of photographs from outside the application site are is not considered to compromise proper assessment and determination of the application. All application details upon which the assessment has been made are in the public domain. The last three points are entirely refuted. All planning applications are determined on their own merits. There have been some changes to bus service routes and frequencies that affect the nearby area, but these have been initiated by Blackpool Transport Services as part of their new Reimagined Network review starting 7th January 2024. The changes have not been driven by this application.

7.0 ASSESSMENT

7.1 Principle

Overview

- 7.1.1 The site lies within the defined Inner Area and within the Talbot and Brunswick Integrated Neighbourhood Improvement (TABINI) area. In particular it falls within TABINI Area 3 where new officer uses and community uses to serve the needs of local residents will be permitted. The site directly abuts the boundary of the Town Centre and the Central Business District, known locally and referred to throughout this report as Talbot Gateway.
- 7.1.2 Although not a material planning consideration, Members may be interested to note that the scheme would benefit from significant public sector investment from the Department for Housing, Levelling Up and Communities (DHLUC) including an allocation of £9m Town Deal Funding for the acquisition of land and a further £40m from the Levelling Up Fund towards construction costs. The remaining costs are to be covered by Blackpool and the Fylde College who are the intended operator. The intention is to deliver a world-class university experience with total project costs predicted at £65m.
- 7.1.3 The proposed campus would be known as the University Centre Blackpool (UCB) and could support over 3,600 learners through the provision of more than 70 individual courses. The scheme would expand the College's current higher education offer and potential student cohort. The College would collaborate with Lancaster University to grow high-level skills with a focus on automation, mobility, artificial intelligence, data, population aging and sustainability. Whilst this provision may not serve specific local needs generated by the TABINI community, it would serve the general higher education needs of Blackpool and the wider Fylde Coast.
- 7.1.4 In terms of planning policy background, the vision as set out in the Core Strategy is for Blackpool by 2027 to be *"the principal centre for business, culture and education on the Fylde Coast"*. It is envisaged that Blackpool Town Centre will provide an *"important sub-regional retail, cultural and business centre for Fylde Coast residents"*. Economically, the ambition is that Blackpool will have a *"diverse and prosperous economy with a thriving culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship. It will retain a strong educational offer supporting a skilled and educated workforce encouraging aspiration and ambition"*.
- 7.1.5 The main Core Strategy vision is supported by four goals and twenty-one objectives. The fourth goal relates to development in South Blackpool but the first three goals are:
- 1 - Sustainable regeneration, diversification and growth
 - 2 - Strengthen community wellbeing to create sustainable communities and reduce inequalities in Blackpool's most deprived areas
 - 3 - Regeneration of the town centre, resort core and inner areas to address economic, social and physical decline
- 7.1.6 Policy CS1 specifically relates to the strategic location of development. It states that Blackpool's future growth, development and investment will be focused on Inner Area regeneration, including a focus on the Town Centre and the Central Business District (Talbot Gateway). Similarly, the Town Centre Strategy seeks to foster learning and provide opportunities for work.

Demolition

- 7.1.7 There are no planning policies that would preclude the demolition of the existing buildings within the application site in principle. As the site lies outside of the Town Centre, the

commercial uses are not safeguarded. The proposed demolition would result in the loss of 59 residential units. However, as the Council can comfortably demonstrate a five year housing land supply at present, this does not weigh notably in the planning balance in quantitative terms. Qualitatively, some 67% of the housing stock in the area immediately surrounding the site is made up of flats, and around 41% of units offer only a single bedroom. This compares with national averages of 22% and 12% respectively and indicates that, generally speaking, the housing stock in the area is not of particularly high quality.

- 7.1.8 In any event, any negative impacts of demolition must be balanced against the benefits that would result. In this case the demolition would facilitate the comprehensive redevelopment of the site to deliver a new higher education facility to serve the Fylde Coast in a highly accessible location on the edge of the Town Centre and the Central Business District. The social and economic benefits this would bring to the town are considered to significantly outweigh the loss of residential accommodation. As such, the demolition proposed is considered to be acceptable in principle.

Education uses

- 7.1.9 The creation of a new higher education facility directly adjacent to the Town Centre and Central Business District boundary, within easy distance of Blackpool North train station and the hub of the public transport network, would clearly support the overall vision and the first three goals set out within the Core Strategy. An educational use does not classify as a Main Town Centre use and so there is no requirement for application of a sequential test.
- 7.1.10 Policy CS15 of the Core Strategy is relevant and states that development will be supported that enables the provision of high quality new and improved education facilities, including the expansion, modernisation and enhancement of Blackpool's higher and further education facilities. Policy CS3 likewise provides support by identifying a focus on the development and delivery of an effective skills agenda to improve aspiration and opportunity. Supporting text paragraph 5.46 identifies the key role that local higher education providers will need to play in equipping local people to access job opportunities and thereby improve employment and economic activity rates.
- 7.1.11 When considering the acceptability of a use in principle, there is no requirement for a specific and permissive site allocation to be in place. In this case, the provision of an educational facility in this location would not conflict with any particular policy requirements, it would support the objectives of Policies CS3 and CS15, and it would clearly accord with the overall thrust and ambitions of the Local Plan as a whole. The NPPF similarly acknowledges the importance of delivery of public service infrastructure such as further education colleges and expects the planning system to plan positively for such requirements and work proactively to widen educational choice. As such, the provision of an educational facility in this location is considered to be acceptable in principle and, moreover, is welcomed as development appropriate to the Council's wider planning strategy.

Office uses

- 7.1.12 The NPPF identifies office accommodation as a Main Town Centre use and, as such, strictly speaking any office provision on this edge-of-centre site must be subject to the sequential test. However, the applicant has asserted that the site should in fact be treated as a de-facto 'in centre' location given that it adjoins the existing Town Centre boundary on two sides and would form a seamless extension to the designated Central Business District. There is a rationality to this argument.

- 7.1.13 If the sequential test were to be applied, it is considered reasonable to restrict the area of search to Blackpool Town Centre as the office development proposed would be significant in scale and because this location would best meet the regeneration objectives of the Local Plan (as set out under Policies CS1, CS3 and CS17). Neither the applicant nor Council officers are aware of any existing site within the defined Town Centre boundary that could accommodate an office development of this size which is also suitable and available for that use. On this basis, it is considered that the sequential test is effectively passed.
- 7.1.14 Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy relates to the Central Business District, or Talbot Gateway, area. It promotes the site for comprehensive redevelopment of mixed use to create an important northern hub for the town centre. Office development is identified as a use that will be supported.
- 7.1.15 In light of the above, the provision of office accommodation as part of the development if there is no requirement for the floorspace to be used for education is considered to be acceptable in principle.
- 7.1.16 Notwithstanding the above, some consideration needs to be given to the severability of the permission and the potential phasing consequences that could result. As written, the description of development would allow for the development of office floorspace that would be entirely independent and separate from the provision of an educational facility. However, in practice and following demolition, if the 'Multiversity' does not happen this would allow office development at the southern end of the site where it would be most disconnected from Talbot Gateway, and where it would leave a gaping hole of undeveloped land in a prime location. To avoid this eventuality, it is proposed that a condition be imposed on any permission granted to prevent any development of phase 2 until such a time as a substantive start were made to deliver phase 1.

7.2 Planning obligations

- 7.2.1 The proposal would not be liable for any planning obligations relating to affordable housing provision, contributions to local health or education provision, or provision of public open space. It would, however, be liable for the provision of trees as set out by the Council's Greening Blackpool SPD.
- 7.2.2 This SPD requires new non-residential schemes of this nature to provide one tree for every 100sqm floorspace. The proposal is for up to 34,315sqm of new floorspace and this would generate a requirement for up to 343 new trees. An off-site contribution of £1,000 would be required for every tree that could not be accommodated on site, although the Greening Blackpool SPD does allow for flexibility to be shown with regard to tree requirements where other innovative greening measures are proposed. However, there are two complicating factors. The first is that this is an outline scheme meaning that final overall floorspace is unknown. Nevertheless, it is self-evident that the physical constraints of the site would significantly limit tree provision on-site. The second is that, as the current application for new floorspace is in outline, finalised details of potential greening measures are not available.
- 7.2.3 The greening measures proposed as part of the scheme will be discussed below. It is important that a proportionate and reasonable approach is taken. The applicant has stressed that this project is only deliverable through public funding, and that this funding makes no provision for any tree contributions. As a result it is asserted that any requirement

for a monetary contribution in respect of tree provision would render the scheme financially unviable. Viability is a material planning consideration as set out in the NPPF. If it is concluded that the greening measures proposed would be insufficient to meet the relevant planning obligations, this would weigh against the proposal and would need to be balanced against the merits of the scheme in the overall assessment.

7.3 Amenity impact

- 7.3.1 At up to 5 storeys plus parapet, or up to 29m, the buildings proposed would be substantial in scale. A heights parameters plan has been submitted as part of the application. This shows that plot 1, that envisaged for the initial education facility, would be part three, part five storeys in height. The taller element would be situated in the north-western corner of the site where it would face the Council offices and Sainsburys building at some distance to the north, and the former Hop now dentists' surgery and a car park to the west. Whilst it would sit to the south and east of these premises, the commercial nature of their use would prevent any unacceptable amenity impact.
- 7.3.2 The three-storey element of the phase 1 development would sit directly to the south-west and west of no. 47 Grosvenor Street. This property is the termination of the terrace fronting George Street, but its primary elevation faces Grosvenor Street. The property has no rear elevation and the main windows to its habitable rooms face towards the site, with only secondary windows facing to the side. The proposed building would rise 9.7m above the existing structure on site up to a maximum height of 16.6m, and would sit 1m closer at a distance of 17.7m. In order to protect resident amenity, the Council usually expects to see separation distances of 21m between properties, rising up to 30m when considering a three storey development. The existing arrangement is a little tight but is very typical of the dense inner urban area of Blackpool. It is highly likely that the development proposed would have a notable impact on levels of sunlight and daylight to the property, particularly later in the day, and could have an over-bearing impact. This weighs against the proposal.
- 7.3.3 The development would also sit to the south-west and west of no. 30 Charles Street. According to Council tax records, this property is in use as a single dwelling. Whilst it is dual-aspect with some main habitable room windows facing Charles Street, which would lessen the impact somewhat, this property also has main habitable room windows facing the site. Again, the development would have an impact on levels of sunlight and daylight later in the day, and could appear over-bearing. Again this weighs against the proposal.
- 7.3.4 Given the proposed use of the building and the existing views of the frontage from the street, no unacceptable impacts on privacy within the properties referenced above are anticipated, but privacy levels within garden areas would be affected. Again this weighs against the application.
- 7.3.5 Moving further south along Grosvenor Street, Phase 2 would sit to the west/south-west of the front elevations of seven residential properties at a distance of around 16.9m. The three-storey element of phase 2 is proposed to reach up to 18.8m in height. This reflects the slight slope of the road from north to south and would enable the provision of level floors internally. This relationship in terms of height and separation falls significantly short of the Council's expected standard and would likely have an impact in terms of loss of sunlight and daylight, and an over-bearing presence. As above, this weighs against the application.
- 7.3.5 The development would sit almost due west relative to the flat block on the corner of Milbourne Street and Grosvenor Street. Any impact on light level to this property would be

limited to the end of the day and the oblique angle would significantly lessen any over-bearing impact.

- 7.3.6 The scheme would sit to the north-west of the properties on the southern side of Milbourne Street. This again means that any loss of daylight or sunlight would be limited to the end of the day. However, the phase 2 development would step up to four storeys or 23.5m in height at the western end of the street with a separation distance of 13.5m. This has clear potential to have an over-bearing impact which weighs against the application. Given the proposed use of the building and the existing views available from the street, no unacceptable impacts on privacy would be expected.
- 7.3.7 Moving round onto Cookson Street, the development would sit to the north-east and so any impact in terms of loss of daylight or sunlight would be limited to the very start of the day. The existing buildings would be separated from the new development by around 18m so, whilst there would likely be some over-bearing impact, it would be more limited.
- 7.3.8 Overall, it is clear that the scale of development proposed would have an impact on the amenities of nearby residents surrounding the site by virtue of over-shadowing, an over-bearing impact and some loss of privacy in non-frontage garden areas. However, this would likely be the case from any major redevelopment of scale on this site. Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that the plans submitted are generalised parameters plans that set out the maximum potential extents of the building. It is anticipated that smaller footprints and lesser heights could ultimately result. The applicant has been asked if there is any scope to reduce the maximum heights of the buildings and any response will be reported through the update note. Nevertheless, the detrimental impact on residential amenity must be weighed in the overall planning balance against the benefits of the scheme.
- 7.3.9 In terms of potential amenity impact from activity, it is acknowledged that this is a busy town centre location. The surrounding roads carry a high volume of traffic and there are numerous commercial uses, including some late-night operations. Whilst the development would clearly generate increased activity and 'comings and goings', there is no reason to suppose that education and office uses would have an unacceptable impact by virtue of noise generation. Technical details of external plant and any necessary noise mitigation could be agreed through condition prior to installation to avoid any nuisance from such sources. Similarly, measures to avoid impact from odour could similarly be secured through condition prior to first use of any associated canteen or café facilities.
- 7.3.10 There is also clear potential for the demolition of the existing buildings on site to have an impact on amenity through noise and dust. It is considered that agreement of an appropriate Demolition and Construction Management Plan through condition would be sufficient to adequately mitigate any potential impact.

7.4 Visual and heritage impact

- 7.4.1 The site is in a visually sensitive location, although the application site does not form part of a protected landscape or townscape. The sensitivity arises in part from the proximity of heritage assets as the site falls within the setting of the Town Centre Conservation Area and the Grade I Listed Blackpool Tower. It is also in a prominent location on the edge of the defined Town Centre, surrounded by residential and commercial premises, and on a busy local distributor road.

- 7.4.2 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires LPAs to afford great weight to the desirability of preserving the character, fabric and settings of designated heritage assets. Paragraph 207 of the NPPF states that, where a proposal would lead to substantial harm or total loss of a designated heritage asset, planning permission should be refused unless substantial public benefits would result and very specific exceptions apply. Paragraph 208 states that, where a development would lead to a less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, that harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 7.4.3 Paragraph 128 of the NPPF confirms that decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting, or of promoting regeneration and change and the importance of securing well-designed and beautiful, attractive and healthy places.
- 7.4.4 The NPPF at paragraph 131 states that the creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve, with good design being a key aspect of sustainable development. Paragraph 135 explains that developments should function well and add to the overall quality of an area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).
- 7.4.5 Paragraph 139 states that significant weight should be given to outstanding or innovative design which promotes high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of the their surroundings.
- 7.4.6 Policies CS7 and DM17 relate to design and require new development to be well designed and to enhance the character and appearance of the local area, being appropriate in terms of scale, mass, height and the relationship with adjoining buildings. CS7 also supports contemporary and innovative expressions of design, where appropriate. Policy DM17 expects the scale and massing of new buildings to be appropriate for their use and location and be related to the scale, massing and height of neighbouring buildings and should have regard to the pattern, size and arrangement of streets, buildings and building lines and confirms that particular attention should be paid to the design of new buildings that would be highly visible due to the prominence of the location or the scale of the development. Policy DM19 relates to strategic views and seeks to protect and enhance views of Blackpool Tower along main transport corridors into the town centre.
- 7.4.7 By virtue of the scale of the proposal and the visual sensitivity of the site, the applicant has elected to submit an Environmental Statement. This focuses on the visual and heritage impacts of the proposal. It is supported by a Townscape Visual Impact Assessment, a series of verified views and a Heritage Statement. This information has been considered on behalf of the Council by ARUP, a firm of suitably qualified and experienced consultants who specialise in these areas.
- 7.4.8 The assessments undertaken by the applicant are based on viewpoint locations that were agreed with officers prior to submission. The viewpoints reflect local knowledge and are considered to represent those most important in terms of their significance (i.e. key arrival points, gateways and well-travelled routes), and their relevance in relation to the key local heritage assets of the Tower, the Hop and the Town Centre Conservation Area including the listed buildings therein.

- 7.4.9 The submitted TVIA has been carried out to appropriate standards and in accordance with accepted methodologies. It identifies the key character areas in relation to the site, their value, their susceptibility to change and their sensitivity. With regard to each of the viewpoints, the TVIA also identifies their value for receptors, the susceptibility to change of the visual receptors, and their sensitivity. For each area, the TVIA assesses the extent, magnitude and significance of the visual effect. As part of their TVIA, the applicant has produced a number of visuals to illustrate the impact of the scheme from the agreed vantage points.
- 7.4.10 As stated, the ES including the TVIA has been reviewed by ARUP who, in accordance with their usual practice, has produced a spreadsheet summarising observations and raising a number of questions and requests for clarification. The applicant is currently working through these points and anticipates being able to address all issues raised. However, this response will not be available in advance of the report deadline for the target Committee meeting. Instead, it is intended that this matter will be reported through the update note. If the discussions relating to the ES are not resolved before the Committee meeting, it would be open to Members to make any resolution in favour of the scheme dependent upon all ES issues being fully satisfied.
- 7.4.10 With regard to potential built heritage impact, ARUP has suggested a condition to advise that the design of the building would have to be sensitive to the location. However, it is considered that an advice note would adequately communicate this requirement. ARUP also advises that the effects reported in the submitted TVIA could be exceeded if a poor quality design were proposed at reserved matters stage. However, as such a design would not be acceptable to the Council, no further action is considered necessary at this stage.
- 7.4.11 The ES summarises the anticipated impacts during both the construction and operational phases within table 8.1. During construction, it is considered that the potential and residual effects on townscape and visual considerations would be 'not significant'. On built heritage the potential effects would be minor-moderate adverse but the residual effects following agreement of a Construction Environmental Management Plan would be minor beneficial. During the operational phase of development, the potential and residual effects on townscape would again be 'not significant'. Some significant visual effects would result to the public realm outside the Council offices and on Cookson Street, but they are considered to be positive. In terms of built heritage, the potential and residual operational effects would vary between minor adverse and minor beneficial. These findings are accepted.
- 7.4.12 The application has otherwise been considered by Historic England and the Council's Built Heritage Manager. Neither consultee raises any objection. The Blackpool Civic Trust has been consulted but has not provided any comments. Overall, whilst some minor visual impact on existing designated assets would result, it is considered that this would be largely neutral in nature.
- 7.4.13 It is recognised that the character of the area has changed over time as part of the evolution of the town and resort. The application site is located towards the edge of the town centre in a transitional zone between the commercial core and the residential areas beyond. The key considerations are considered to be the visual impact for local residents and businesses; the visual impact for visitors travelling into Blackpool; and the impact on the setting of Blackpool Tower, the Hop and the Town Centre Conservation Area and the listed buildings therein.

- 7.4.14 In terms of general visual impact, it is inevitable that a development of the scale proposed would have a significant visual impact upon its surroundings. Although the outline application is made with all matters reserved, the building proposed would be up to 5 storeys tall plus parapet, or 29m in height. The contrast with the traditional two-storey properties in the wider area would inevitably be clear. However, this juxtaposition, as with the contrast between modern and traditional architecture, is a recognisable feature of town and city centres and is important to establish identity and legibility between different zones. The masterplan for the Talbot Gateway area is the creation of a commercial, business and civic hub. Already the Sainsbury's, Bickerstaff House (5 storeys), Talbot multi-storey car park (6 storeys) buildings, the DWP building currently under construction (7 storeys), and the Holiday Inn building (6 storeys) establish a scale that reads differently to the wider surroundings.
- 7.4.15 From many viewpoints, including those on Talbot Road, Church Street and within the Conservation Area, the building would have a presence as part of the townscape backdrop. This presence on the skyline may be significant in places but it is not considered that it would have an unacceptably over-bearing visual impact given the context. No conflict with Policy DM19 is identified. When viewed from the east along George Street and Charles Street, the development would block views of Blackpool Tower. From Milbourne Street the development would crowd views of the Tower. This visual impact and loss of view would be significant, but it should be noted that any major-scale development of the type sought in a location like this would block views of the Tower to some extent. George Street is a local distributor route and Charles Street and Milbourne Street are secondary roads. As such they make little contribution to the visitor arrival experience and do not offer protected strategic views. Although residents and businesses may enjoy the existing views of the Tower, for locals it is a familiar presence in the townscape which can be glimpsed from multiple locations. As such, whilst the loss of a view of the Tower is a detrimental impact, assuming this impact could be mitigated to a significant extent through high-quality design, its weight against the application is limited.
- 7.4.16 Although the exact position, scale and appearance of the buildings are not matters for this application, it is clear that the development could be viewed as a landmark building. The public realm proposed to the north would join with that to the east of the approved DWP building and provide a pleasant outdoor setting, enabling movement and connectivity and allowing for the introduction of green infrastructure into an otherwise very urban area. As the buildings would be highly visible from all angles, a high-quality detailed design treatment would be required to all elevations. It is considered that this could be adequately secured at reserved matters stage. Suitable materials that suit the design of the building whilst also referencing the local materials palette could equally be agreed at detailed design stage.
- 7.4.17 Overall, and subject to agreement of a detailed design, it is considered that the proposal would have a positive visual impact upon the townscape. This weighs notably in favour of the scheme. The impact on views of the Tower weigh against the application. It is acknowledged that some detrimental visual impacts would inevitably arise during construction, but these would be short-term and so are considered to carry relatively little weight in the planning balance.

7.5 Access, highway safety and parking (including active travel provision)

- 7.5.1 Subject to the agreement of an appropriate Demolition and Construction Management Plan through condition, no unacceptable impacts on highway safety or function are anticipated from either the demolition or construction phases.

- 7.5.2 The operational phase would see the closure of part of George Street and the provision of up to either 34,315sqm of class F1a education floorspace, or 21,625sqm of class F1a education floorspace and 12,690sqm of class E(g) office floorspace.
- 7.5.3 The Council's expectations in terms of parking provision are set out under appendix G1 of Local Plan Part 2. For class F1a education floorspace, the standards expect provision of one space per two full-time members of staff. For Class E office floorspace, parking at a rate of 1 space for every 30sqm floorspace would be required.
- 7.5.4 The application form submitted with the application states that the development would not increase the number of employees on the site. This is clearly incorrect. The College produces an annual Report and Financial Statement and these are available to view online. These suggest that the College employs in the region of 1,000 staff, although it does not state what proportion are part-time or what a full-time equivalent figure may be. Equally, no information has been provided as to the number of staff who would likely be based at the Multiversity centre. Based on the floorspace proposed, the office element of the scheme, if delivered, would generate a requirement for up to 423 parking spaces.
- 7.5.5 The scheme proposes provision of 22 spaces, although no details as to the location of these spaces is available as part of the outline application. Regardless of the demand for parking generated by the development, it is clear that the level of parking proposed would fall significantly short of the standards expected in the Local Plan. However, the site is in a highly accessible location. One of the drivers behind the creation of a higher education campus and provision of office space on the edge of the town centre is to make the facility more easily accessible by public transport modes, and to encourage greater interaction and linked trips with the town centre.
- 7.5.6 The site would be within 300m of Blackpool North train station and the new tramway extension terminus that will provide a link along the entire seafront into the Talbot Gateway area. There are numerous bus stops within a reasonable, 400m, walk of the site and these are served by over 20 different bus routes. A pick-up/drop-off facility would be created to serve the development for private hire vehicles. Appropriate cycle storage and associated facilities are proposed and could be secured through condition. The pedestrianisation of George Street and the provision of new pedestrian crossing facilities would encourage pedestrian movement and access. It must also be recognised that public car parking is available within easy walking distance within the town centre.
- 7.5.7 On this basis, the lack of any substantive parking within the development is considered to be acceptable.
- 7.5.8 In terms of impact on the highway network and highway safety, particularly from the proposed closure of George Street, the scheme has been considered in detail by the Council's highways team.
- 7.5.9 The response provided from highways colleagues neither promotes nor objects to the partial closure of George Street. Instead it explains the additional information that would be required to enable a full assessment of potential impact, and to design a comprehensive scheme of highway improvement works to mitigate for the closure and the general impact of the development. Chiefly, further information would be needed now that High Street has reopened and once the tramway extension is operational, to understand the impact of these two elements on existing traffic flows.

- 7.5.10 Overall, it is considered that the existing network would be able to support the proposal subject to a scheme of highway works being agreed and implemented. However, there are some concerns over the potential for the network to cope if the section of Talbot Road between Cookson Street and Buchanan Street had to close for any reason. It has been suggested that consideration be given to ensuring that the space to the north of the Multiversity building be designed such that it would be able to support traffic flow in the event of an emergency. This would essentially allow the section of George Street proposed for closure to be reopened if need be.
- 7.5.11 This suggestion requires further consideration once the additional information referenced in paragraph 7.5.9 is available. It may not be possible to design the space in such a way as to enable a flow of traffic that would satisfactorily relieve a temporary pressure on the network. It may be that any such design would compromise the appearance and layout of the space to such an extent that it would no longer function as a public plaza with its associated benefits on streetscene appearance, biodiversity, green infrastructure and public amenity. A careful balancing exercise would have to be carried out weighing up the potential likelihood and duration of an event that would require closure of Talbot Road, the network issues this might present, and the permanent impact the arrangement would have on the proposed scheme. A condition has been recommended that gives scope for these assessments to be undertaken and, if Members are minded to support the proposal, it is respectfully requested that this matter be delegated for determination by officers in the fullness of time.
- 7.5.12 Notwithstanding the above, it is considered that appropriate measures could be put in place to ensure that no unacceptable impacts on highway safety would result. If planning permission is granted, it will be important to dovetail development of this scheme with that of the Town Centre Access Strategy.
- 7.5.13 The comments of Active Travel England (ATE) are noted. ATE is a statutory consultee and any application proposed for approval in the face of an ATE objection would need to be referred to the Secretary of State (SoS) for a call-in determination. Following the submission of the updated Transport Assessment and Travel Plan, ATE has been reconsulted on the application. Any comments received in advance of the Committee meeting will be reported through the update note. It is recommended that no planning permission be granted until either ATE has confirmed they have no objection to the scheme or the SoS has confirmed that he does not wish to call the application in for his own consideration.

7.6 Drainage and flood risk

- 7.6.1 The site falls within flood zone 1. As it exceeds 1ha in area, a site-specific flood risk assessment (FRA) is required and has been submitted. There is no requirement for the applicant to demonstrate compliance with the sequential or exceptions tests.
- 7.6.2 The FRA has been considered by the Council as Lead Local Flood Authority and has been found to be acceptable. It is proposed that surface water would drain into the combined sewer which is considered to be the only realistic option. It is noted that a significant amount of on-site surface-water storage is proposed, and that discharge would be restricted to a peak flow rate of 6.5 litres per second. This is considered to be acceptable by both the Council and United Utilities, although full details would need to be secured through condition. Details of appropriate drainage management would also need to be secured through condition.

7.6.3 United Utilities has advised that both a water main and public sewer cross the site and that they would not permit building over either asset type. The potential impact of a development on a UU asset is not generally held to justify the refusal of planning permission. If an applicant cannot design their scheme to avoid impact on a UU asset, it can be possible for them to divert the asset at their own expense. If this is not possible then it may be the case that any permission granted simply cannot be implemented, or is not financially viable to implement. In this case, however, it is understood that the water main and sewer assets serve the existing properties that are proposed for demolition as part of the full element of this application. It is assumed that, following demolition, these assets will become redundant and UU will have no objection to their being built over. In any event, this is considered to be a matter for private resolution between UU and the applicant.

7.6.4 In light of the above, no unacceptable flood risk or drainage issues are identified.

7.7 Ecology and green infrastructure

7.7.1 Policy CS6 of the Core Strategy expects new developments to create new accessible green infrastructure and support urban greening within the built environment. All new development should incorporate green infrastructure. The policy makes it clear that financial contributions will be sought where on-site provision is not possible.

7.7.2 Policies DM21 and DM35 of Part 2 relate to landscaping and biodiversity respectively. Policy DM21 again expects new development to contribute towards green and blue infrastructure. Landscaped buffers are encouraged with use of green walls or roofs where this cannot be achieved. Tree planting is required where appropriate but, where this cannot be achieved on-site, financial contributions towards off-site provision will be required. Policy DM35 requires that development proposals not harm biodiversity and expects application of the protection hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation and compensation.

7.7.3 The Greening Blackpool SPD was published in May 2022 and details the level of provision required in new developments. As set out above, non-residential development is expected to provide a tree for every 100sqm of floorspace. Where on-site provision cannot be achieved, a contribution of £1,000 per tree is payable unless other innovative greening measures are proposed. The SPD expects all developments to deliver a degree of biodiversity net gain.

7.7.4 The national requirements for 10% biodiversity net gain came into force in 2024 but do not apply retrospectively. As this application was submitted in 2023, the national requirement cannot be applied and no metric has been provided as a result but a biodiversity impact assessment has been submitted. It is accepted that the site currently offers no biodiversity value as it is entirely hard-surfaced.

7.7.5 As this is an outline application, details of greening measures are limited. However, with the proposed pedestrianisation of George Street to the north of the site, it is intended that an area of public plaza would be created. The indicative masterplan submitted suggests that this would include areas of landscaping and tree planting. This also shows provision of some tree planting within the development in central courtyard areas. It is thought that up to 70 trees could reasonably be accommodated on site and in the immediate area. This may perhaps be over-ambitious but it seems likely that 40-50 could be achieved. Whilst this would fall significantly short of the requirement for up to 343 trees, it must be recognised that tree planting within a town centre is inherently more challenging and more expensive

than on greenfield land, and that any trees provided would have a far more significant greening impact against the prevailing urban backdrop.

- 7.7.6 In addition to the tree planting that could be achieved on-site, a fairly extensive area of green roof is proposed. Photovoltaic (PV) panels are proposed on the flat roof of the building to generate renewable solar energy, and the green roofing would provide ballast to the PV panels. Use of a robust seed mix which has been tested to survive in low-light, high-water environments could be used and this could work well in this context. Roof-top planting has the potential to create undisturbed areas of habitat that can attract and serve pollinators.
- 7.7.7 On balance, it is considered that there is potential for the development to provide a combination of sufficient tree planting and innovative greening measures within the site to meet the requirements of relevant policy and the SPD. However, as this is an outline application with all matters reserved, aside from the demolition element, it is considered that a condition requiring full details to be agreed is necessary. As part of any discharge of condition application, if it transpires that insufficient greening measures are proposed on-site, it would be possible for officers to either take account of financial viability information or require the developer to enter into a S106 legal agreement to secure a financial contribution.
- 7.7.8 With regard to protected species, the proposal includes the demolition of all existing buildings on site and these have the potential to support roosting bats and/or nesting birds. The information submitted has been considered by GMEU who acknowledge that the buildings have negligible potential to support bats. However, it is noted that the surveys undertaken were external only and carried out in late September. In line with the precautionary principle it would therefore be appropriate to condition a pre-commencement check of external features. The survey also recommends provision of bat boxes and an appropriately worded condition is suggested.
- 7.7.9 Overall it is considered that the development would deliver biodiversity net gain and has the potential to include sufficient greening measures to meet the requirements of planning policy.

7.8 Environmental impact

- 7.8.1 The site falls within Blackpool's Air Quality Management Area and an Air Quality Assessment has been submitted. This has been considered by the Council's Environmental Protection team who agree with its conclusions. Dust during demolition and construction is the only remaining concern and it is considered that this could be satisfactorily addressed through agreement of a Demolition and Construction Management Plan by condition.
- 7.8.2 With regard to potential land contamination, a phase 1 geo-environmental report has been provided. Again, this has been agreed by Environmental Protection. A phase 2 investigation is now required and this could be secured through condition along with any necessary mitigation measures.
- 7.8.3 It is considered that any potential impact on water quality could be adequately addressed through the conditioning of a drainage strategy and Demolition and Construction Management Plan.
- 7.8.4 Policy CS10 requires all major-scale non-residential schemes to achieve a BREEAM rating of 'very good'. A BREEAM pre-assessment has been submitted with the application which

identifies an applicant aspiration to achieve an 'excellent' rating. Whilst this higher rating would naturally be welcomed, it would be unreasonable to require it through condition as it would go beyond the policy stipulation. As such, the standard BREEAM condition has been recommended.

- 7.8.5 Blackpool Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to ensuring that approaches to planning decision are in line with a shift to zero carbon by 2030. The application proposes provision of photovoltaic (PV) equipment on the roofs of the buildings and the documentation submitted with the application expresses a commitment to minimising energy use. It is recommended that conditions be attached to any permission granted to require submission and agreement of a sustainability statement to cover energy, water and waste minimisation.

7.9 Compliance with Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations

- 7.9.1 As set out above, an Environmental Statement (ES) has been submitted with the application. Given the planning agents familiarity with the site, no formal screening or scoping opinion was sought. Instead, as stated, and in-line with the approach taken on Talbot Gateway phase 3, the ES focus has been limited to that of townscape visual and heritage impact.
- 7.9.2 As discussed, the ES has been considered on behalf of the Council by ARUP who are specialists in the field of EIA. Since first submission, both the proposed footprint and maximum height of the building have changed. The first triggered Regulation 25 of the EIA regulations which relates to the provision of further information and evidence because the parameter plans and Townscape Visual Impact Assessment had to be revised. As a result, the application was republicised. The latter change is a reduction in maximum height and ARUP has confirmed that this would not require any update to the ES as the original was based on worst-case-scenario impact.
- 7.9.3 As part of the ARUP review of the ES, they have considered all of the topics that are covered by EIA regulations, including those that have been scoped out on this occasion. A number of queries and requests for clarification have been made through the spreadsheet that ARUP typically produces as part of their ES review. As set out in the section on visual and heritage impact, the applicant intends to provide a response to all of the points raised and feels that they can be addressed. However, confirmation of this will not be available in time to be included in this report. This matter will be covered through the update note. As above, it will be possible to amend the officer recommendation if need be if additional time is required to resolve any outstanding ES queries.
- 7.9.4 Overall, and subject to the provision of additional confirming information, it appears to be the initial view of ARUP that the Environmental Statement is broadly acceptable and that the proposal would not result in any significant adverse effects as defined by the EIA regulations.

7.10 Other Issues

- 7.10.1 Policy DM18 requires all new developments to offer high-speed broadband connection. The applicant has submitted a broadband connectivity assessment which demonstrates that high-speed broadband is available in the area. A condition requiring that the development be provided with high-speed broadband is considered to be sufficient to discharge the requirements of this policy.

7.10.2 Policy DM25 requires all new development to support the cultural well-being of Blackpool and contribute to addressing positive social, economic and environmental outcomes through the provision of public art projects. In particular there is an expectation that public art will be provided within the Strategic Locations of Development identified by Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy. The town centre is one of these locations. Whilst the application site falls just outside of the town centre, it will be read as a continuation of it and as part of the Talbot Gateway area known formally as the Central Business District. It is therefore considered appropriate that public art be secured as part of the scheme.

7.10.3 It is acknowledged that public art can take many forms beyond traditional representations such as sculptures or murals. Public art can be woven into the fabric of a building through materials and architectural features, or into landscaping through street furniture, seating and planting designs. Lighting and way-finding features can also provide public art is appropriately designed. As this, with the exception of the demolition element, this application is made in outline with all matters reserved, it is considered that a condition should be imposed on any permission granted to ensure that the detailed schemes brought forward at reserved matters stage include appropriate public art provision.

7.11 General requirements

7.11.1 The application has been considered in the context of the Council's general duty in all its functions to have regard to community safety issues as required by section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended).

7.11.2 Under Article 8 and Article 1 of the first protocol to the Convention on Human Rights, a person is entitled to the right to respect for private and family life, and the peaceful enjoyment of his/her property. However, these rights are qualified in that they must be set against the general interest and the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This application does not raise any specific human rights issues.

7.11.3 Through the assessment of this application, Blackpool Council as a public authority has had due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty ("PSED") under s.149 of the Equality Act and the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, and to foster or encourage good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The application is not considered to raise any inequality issues.

7.12 Sustainability and planning balance appraisal

7.12.1 Sustainability comprises economic, environmental and social components.

7.12.2 Economically the scheme would bring a further education campus and potentially new office floorspace into the town centre. Not only would this support existing business and services, it would expand the Blackpool skills base to support economic growth and diversification. Some employment could be generated through operation, particularly from any office floorspace, and employment could be generated through the construction phase. Overall the scheme is expected to deliver clear economic benefits.

7.12.3 Environmentally, it is expected that a building or buildings of high quality design could be secured through agreement of reserved matters to ensure that the development would have positive visual impact. The site is in a sustainable location and there is no reason to

suppose that users would be dependent upon private car use. Renewable energy sources are proposed and strategies and measures to minimise energy and water use and waste generation could be secured through condition. Appropriate drainage could be provided. No unacceptable impacts on environmental quality are expected and the scheme would deliver biodiversity net gain and green infrastructure. As such, the proposal is expected to deliver clear environmental benefits.

7.12.4 Socially, the proposal would result in the loss of some housing, but as the Council can comfortably identify a sufficient housing land supply, this does not weigh heavily in the planning balance. The scale of the development and the proximity to existing properties means that the scheme would have some impacts on residential amenity through overshadowing, over-bearing impact and loss of privacy. Whilst this weighs notably against the application in the planning balance, no impact is expected to be so severe as to outweigh all other considerations and justify refusal. The proposal would result in the loss or crowding of views of Blackpool Tower from some localised viewpoints. However, these would not be strategic views. Overall and subject to a high quality design being secured at reserved matters stage, the development would have a neutral impact upon the setting and significance of local heritage assets. Subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, it is considered that the development can be kept safe from and would not exacerbate existing flood risk, and that any highway safety concerns could be adequately managed.

7.12.5 In terms of planning balance, the clear economic and wider community benefits of the scheme are considered to be sufficient to outweigh the localised impact on residential amenity and any localised visual impacts. This conclusion is subject to a high quality design being secured at reserved matters stage. On this basis, the development proposed is considered to constitute sustainable development and no other material planning considerations have been identified that would outweigh this view.

8.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The scheme would generate business rates income for the Council but this is not a material planning consideration and carries no weight in the planning balance.

9.0 BLACKPOOL COUNCIL PLAN 2019-2024

9.1 The Council Plan sets out two priorities. The first is ‘the economy: maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool’, and the second is ‘communities: creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

9.2 This application is considered to accord with both priorities as the provision of further education floorspace and potentially office space would support an enhanced skills base and economic growth. The development would also deliver regeneration in a deprived area and bring students and potentially workers into Blackpool town centre. Finally, the provision of a further education hub would have clear community benefits through increased access to education and from that skills and employment.

10.0 CONCLUSION

10.1 The proposal is considered to represent sustainable development and no material planning considerations have been identified that would outweigh this view. As such, planning permission should be granted.

11.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 11.1 Resolve to support the application and delegate approval to the Head of Development Management subject to either Active Travel England withdrawing their objection to the scheme or the Secretary of State confirming that he does not wish to call the application in for his own determination.
- 11.2 Resolve to support the application and delegate approval to the Head of Development Management subject to the following conditions, but to authorise the Head of Development Management to make changes to the wording of the conditions as may be appropriate as long as the changes would not materially affect what the condition is trying to achieve or the permission overall:

FULL ELEMENT

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2 (a) Prior to the commencement of any development on site, a Demolition Management Plan shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. For the purpose of this condition, the Demolition Management Plan shall specify the provision to be made for the following:
- (i) measures to prevent detrimental impact on air quality including confirmation that no materials would be burned on site and dust mitigation measures to be followed during the demolition period
 - (ii) measures to control noise emanating from the site during the demolition period
 - (iii) hours and days of demolition work for the development. Please note that typically acceptable working hours are 0800-1800 Mondays to Fridays and 0800-1200 on Saturdays with no working on Sundays or Public Holidays
 - (iv) details of contractors' compounds and other storage arrangements, to include position, means of screening, storage heights, details of enclosures, and appearance of any structures or cabins
 - (v) provision for all site operative, visitor and demolition loading, off-loading, parking and turning within the site during the demolition period including all requirements for occupation of areas of highway
 - (vi) arrangements for the provision of wheel washing facilities comprising a 10m x 3.5m wheel wash with two 6m long ramps to be operated during the demolition period to minimise the deposit of mud and debris on the adjacent highways

- (vii) provision of a board at the entrance to the site, to be retained throughout the demolition period, to include 24hr contact details for site management; and provision of contact details for the contractor's street sweeping subcontractor with specific authorisation for the Council as Local Highway Authority to call out that contractor as and when required
- (viii) measures to prevent contamination of surface and sub-surface water bodies during the demolition period, and prevent the runoff of surface water to the highway in storm conditions during and following demolition and site restoration
- (ix) routing of demolition and site restoration traffic
- (x) a condition survey of the adopted public highway up to the first junction with the strategic road network along the proposed demolition traffic route, or other area as may first be agreed in writing with the Local Highway Authority, along with a demolition stage timeline proposal for the provision further condition surveys (either post-completion or to include surveys at appropriate intervals depending upon the duration of the demolition period)

(b) The demolition hereby approved shall proceed in full accordance with the approved Demolition Management Plan.

(c) Each condition survey required pursuant to part (a)(x) of this condition shall be accompanied by a scheme and timing schedule of any works as may be appropriate to rectify any dilapidation caused to the adopted public highway as a result of demolition works related to the development hereby approved, to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These works shall then be carried out in full in accordance with this agreed scheme and schedule.

Please note, **the submission of a standard Health and Safety statement will not be sufficient to discharge this condition.** As part of any discharge of condition application you will be expected to highlight the location of each element of information required above within your submission.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of surrounding residents and to safeguard environmental quality and the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policies DM31 and DM36 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027. This condition is required to be discharged prior to commencement in order to ensure that the development proceeds without causing undue harm to residential amenity, highway safety or the quality of the environment.

- 3
- (a) Immediately prior to the demolition of any property as hereby approved, a pre-commencement check of external features shall be carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced bat-licensed ecologist. This check shall include use of high-level access equipment to access the key areas of the structure such as any slipped tiles, mortar cracks or missing bricks, with features then searched using an endoscope and thermal imaging camera.

(b) Prior to the commencement of any development, a Method Statement for bat protection shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and

the demolition works shall thereafter proceed in full accordance with this agreed Method Statement.

(c) In the event that the check required pursuant to part (a) of this condition reveals a bat to be present, or if a bat or bats are encountered during works, all works shall cease until such time as a bat mitigation licence has been obtained.

Reason: In order to safeguard biodiversity in accordance with Policy CS6 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policy DM35 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

- 4 No demolition hereby approved shall take place during the main bird nesting season (March to September inclusive) unless written confirmation of the absence of nesting birds by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to safeguard biodiversity in accordance with Policy CS6 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policy DM35 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

- 5 (a) Prior to the commencement of demolition hereby approved, a site waste management plan for the demolition and site restoration phase shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

(b) The development hereby approved shall then proceed in full accordance with the plan agreed pursuant to part (a) of this condition.

Reason: In order to maximise the environmental sustainability of the development and limit potential environmental impact in accordance with the provisions of Policy CS10 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

- 6 Prior to the commencement of any demolition hereby approved, a scheme for the restoration of the site to leave it in a secure and tidy condition shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, including a timetable for implementation, and the development shall thereafter proceed in full accordance with this approved scheme.

Reason: In order to ensure that the site is left in a tidy and secure condition following demolition in the interests of public visual and general amenity, and to safeguard the setting of nearby heritage assets, in accordance with the provisions of Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policy DM17 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

OUTLINE ELEMENT

- 7 (i) Approval of the following details (hereinafter called "the reserved matters") shall be obtained from the Local Planning Authority:

- Layout
- Scale

- Appearance
- Access
- Landscaping

(ii) Applications for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority in accordance with the following timetable:

Phase 1 (marked on the Land Use Parameters Plan ref. BLMU-HBA-SW-ZZ-DR-A-080004 Rev P8 as 'Plot 1) before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission and the development hereby permitted in respect of phase 1 shall be begun not later than the expiration of two years from the final approval of the reserved matters or, in the case of approval on different dates, the final approval of the last such matter to be approved.

Phase 2 (marked on the Land Use Parameters Plan ref. BLMU-HBA-SW-ZZ-DR-A-080004 Rev P8 as 'Plot 2) before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission and the development hereby permitted in respect of phase 2 shall be begun not later than the expiration of two years from the final approval of the reserved matters or, in the case of approval on different dates, the final approval of the last such matter to be approved.

Reason for (i) and (ii): This is an outline planning permission and these conditions are required to be imposed pursuant to Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 8 The Reserved Matters applications submitted for each phase hereby approved in outline shall be in strict accordance with the parameters outlined on the following drawings:

Land Use Parameters Plan ref. BLMU-HBA-SW-ZZ-DR-A-080004 Rev P8
 Maximum Building Heights Parameter Plan ref. BLMU-HBA-SW-ZZ-DR-A-080005 Rev P9
 Illustrative Masterplan ref. BLMU-HBA-SW-ZZ-DR-A-080006 Rev P5

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and so the Local Planning Authority can be satisfied as to the details of the permission, and to protect strategic views, the quality of the streetscene and townscape and the setting of heritage assets, and to prevent unacceptable impacts from over-shadowing, over-looking and an over-bearing presence, in accordance with the provisions of Policies CS7 and CS8 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policies DM17, DM26, DM27 and DM28 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

- 9 The outline element of the development hereby approved shall not exceed the following quantum of floorspace/capacity and shall not be used other than for the following uses:

Phase 1: Education provision within Use Class F1(a) up to a maximum of 21,625sqm

Phase 2: Education provision within Use Class F1(a) OR office floorspace for use within Use Class E(g) up to a maximum of 12,690sqm

Use Classes quoted as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended and as may be amended by any future update to this legislation.

Reason: In order to protect the vitality and viability of the town centre and the wider spatial strategy for Blackpool in accordance with the provisions of Policies CS4, CS7 and CS19 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policies DM15 and 41 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027

- 10 No development shall commence in respect of any permission granted for phase 2 (marked on the Land Use Parameters Plan ref. BLMU-HBA-SW-ZZ-DR-A-080004 Rev P8 as 'Plot 2) in advance of a substantive start of above ground construction being made in respect of approved development authorised by this permission on phase 1 (marked on the Land Use Parameters Plan ref. BLMU-HBA-SW-ZZ-DR-A-080004 Rev P8 as 'Plot 1).
Reason: In order to ensure appropriate sequence of development to prevent construction of an isolated building detached from the main body of the Central Business District and resulting in a potentially overly constrained vacant site directly adjoining the Town Centre and Central Business District boundary in accordance with the objections of Policies CS1, CS4, CS7 and CS19 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

- 11 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended), no enlargement of the building(s) the subject of this permission shall be carried out without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to safeguard the setting of nearby heritage assets, the visual amenities of the area and the amenities of nearby residents in accordance, and to avoid unacceptable impact upon the highway network, in accordance with Policies CS7 and CS8 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policies DM17, DM26, DM27, DM28 and DM41 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

- 12 (a) Prior to the commencement of any development on site, a Construction Management Plan shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. For the purpose of this condition, the Construction Management Plan shall specify the provision to be made for the following:
- (i) measures to prevent detrimental impact on air quality including confirmation that no materials would be burned on site and dust mitigation measures to be followed during the construction period
 - (ii) measures to control noise emanating from the site during the construction period
 - (iii) hours and days of construction work for the development. Please note that typically acceptable working hours are 0800-1800 Mondays to Fridays and 0900-1300 on Saturdays with no working on Sundays or Public Holidays without prior consent.
 - (iv) details of contractors' compounds and other storage arrangements, to include position, means of screening, storage heights, details of enclosures, and appearance of any structures or cabins

- (v) provision for all site operative, visitor and construction loading, off-loading, parking and turning within the site during the construction period including all requirements for occupation of areas of highway
- (vi) arrangements for the provision of wheel washing facilities comprising a 10m x 3.5m wheel wash with two 6m long ramps to be operated during the demolition/construction period to minimise the deposit of mud and debris on the adjacent highways
- (vii) provision of a board at the entrance to the site, to be retained throughout the construction period, to include 24hr contact details for site management; and provision of contact details for the contractor's street sweeping subcontractor with specific authorisation for the Council as Local Highway Authority to call out that contractor as and when required
- (viii) measures to prevent contamination of surface and sub-surface water bodies during the construction period, and prevent the runoff of surface water to the highway in storm conditions during construction
- (ix) routeing of construction traffic
- (x) a condition survey of the adopted public highway up to the first junction with the strategic road network along the proposed construction traffic route, or other area as may first be agreed in writing with the Local Highway Authority, along with a construction stage timeline proposal for the provision further condition surveys (either post-completion or to include surveys at appropriate intervals depending upon the duration of the construction period)

(b) The construction of the development shall thereafter proceed in full accordance with the approved Construction Management Plan.

(c) Each condition survey required pursuant to part (a)(x) of this condition shall be accompanied by a scheme and timing schedule of any works as may be appropriate to rectify any dilapidation caused to the adopted public highway as a result of demolition and construction works related to the development hereby approved, to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These works shall then be carried out in full in accordance with this agreed scheme and schedule.

Please note, **the submission of a standard Health and Safety statement will not be sufficient to discharge this condition.** As part of any discharge of condition application you will be expected to highlight the location of each element of information required above within your submission.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of surrounding residents and to safeguard environmental quality and the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policies DM31 and DM36 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027. This condition is required to be discharged prior to commencement in order to ensure that the development proceeds without causing undue harm to residential amenity, highway safety or the quality of the environment.

13 (a) Prior to the commencement of development on any phase of the development hereby approved, a site waste management plan shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

(b) The development hereby approved shall then proceed in full accordance with the plan agreed pursuant to part (a) of this condition.

Reason: In order to maximise the environmental sustainability of the development and limit potential environmental impact in accordance with the provisions of Policy CS10 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

14 (a) Prior to the installation of any external plant on any phase of the development hereby approved, the following information shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority;

(i) details of the plant and associated systems to include positioning, appearance, materials and technical specification;

(ii) a noise impact assessment to include details of any noise attenuation measures required to demonstrate that the operation of the plant would not result in the following cumulative noise levels being exceeded:

- 35dB LAeq (16hr) from 0700 to 2300 within living rooms
- 30dB LAeq (8hr) from 2300 to 0700 within bedrooms
- 45dB LAFmax from 1900 to 0700 for single sound events within bedrooms
- 50dB LAeq (16hr) from 0700 to 2300 for outdoor living areas
- The evening standard LAFmax will only apply where the evening LAFmax significantly exceeds the LAeq and the maximum levels reached are regular in occurrence, for example several times per hour.

(b) the external plant agreed pursuant to part (a) of this condition shall then be implemented in full accordance with the approved details and shall not be brought into use until any necessary noise attenuation measures identified and agreed pursuant to part (a) of this condition have been implemented in full and in full accordance with the approved details.

(c) the external plant and any associated noise attenuation measures shall thereafter be retained and maintained as such.

Reason: In order to safeguard the amenities of nearby residents in accordance with Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policy DM36 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

15 Prior to any internal cooking facilities being first brought into use in any phase of the development hereby approved, details of a scheme to control odour shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the use shall thereafter operate in full accordance with this agreed scheme.

Reason: In order to safeguard the amenities of nearby residents in accordance with Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policy DM36 of the

Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

- 16 Before any phase of the development hereby approved is first brought into use:
- (a) details of refuse storage provision to include size, design and materials shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority;
 - (b) the refuse storage agreed pursuant to part (a) of this condition shall be implemented in full and in full accordance with the approved details; and
 - (c) No bins or refuse shall be stored outside of the building.

Reason: In the interest of the appearance of the site and locality and to safeguard the amenities of nearby residents in accordance with Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policies DM17 and DM36 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

- 17 The flat roofed section of the building shall not be used for any purpose other than for maintenance or as a means of escape in the event of an emergency.

Reason: In order to safeguard the amenities of nearby residents in accordance with Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policy DM36 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

- 18 (a) Prior to or concurrent with the submission of a reserved matters application for each building hereby approved, an operational waste management plan for that building shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- (b) The development shall thereafter proceed and be operated in full accordance with the operational waste management plan agreed pursuant to part (a) of this condition.

Reason: In order to maximise the environmental sustainability of the development and limit potential environmental impact in accordance with the provisions of Policy CS10 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

- 19 Prior to the commencement of development;

- (a) a methodology for a phase 2 geo-technical site investigation into potential land contamination to include the provision of information on existing basements within the site shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority; and
- (b) the phase 2 investigation approved pursuant to part (a) of this condition shall be carried out in full and the results of this investigation shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority; and

(c) any scheme of remediation shown to be required by the investigation undertaken pursuant to part (c) shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority; and

(d) the remediation agreed pursuant to part (d) of this condition shall be carried out in full and a validation report confirming the works shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure a safe form of development that poses no unacceptable risk of pollution to water resources or to human health and in accordance with the provisions of Policies CS7 and CS9 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policy DM36 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027. This information is required to be submitted and agreed prior to commencement in order to ensure that the development hereby approved proceeds safely.

20 a) Prior to or concurrent with the submission of any reserved matters application for any part of the development hereby approved, a scheme of ecological enhancement for that part shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

(b) The scheme agreed pursuant to part (a) of this condition shall be implemented in full and in full accordance with the approved details prior to first use of that part of the development and shall thereafter be retained and maintained as such.

For the purpose of this condition, the scheme of ecological enhancement shall include:

- Native tree planting
- Provision of planting to attract pollinators
- Provision of bird holes or boxes
- Provision of bat holes or boxes

Reason: In order to safeguard and enhance biodiversity in accordance with Policy CS6 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policies DM21 and DM35 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027

21 (a) No development of any phase shall commence until a scheme for the provision of green infrastructure within the site for that phase including a timetable for delivery and a maintenance strategy for it has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; and

(b) No development shall be first brought into use until the green infrastructure agreed for that phase pursuant to part (a) of this condition has been implemented in full and in full accordance with the agreed details.

For the purpose of this condition it should be noted that the green infrastructure proposed should be sufficient to meet the requirements of the Greening Blackpool SPD and include innovative greening measures such as green walls and/or roofs and best practice SUDS with multiple benefits for people and biodiversity. The level of provision should be sufficient to off-set any shortfall in tree provision on-site. If it is not possible for sufficient tree planting or innovative greening measures to be provided on site, this should be robustly demonstrated

through provision of a Financial Viability Appraisal as part of any discharge of condition application.

Reason: In order to ensure that adequate greening measures are incorporated into the development in the interests of biodiversity, the quality of the environment and the appearance and character of the site and area in accordance with the provisions of Policy CS6 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027, and Policies DM21 and DM36 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027 and the Greening Blackpool SPD. This condition is required to be discharged prior to commencement in order to ensure that an acceptable scheme can be secured to serve the development.

22 (a) The development hereby approved shall proceed in full accordance with the submitted Pre-Assessment BREEAM Report prepared by KJ Tait Revision 01 dated October 2023 unless an alternative assessment is first submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority;

(b) Before any phase of the development hereby approved is first brought into use, a Post Construction Stage BREEAM assessment and BREEAM rating certificate demonstrating that the development has achieved BREEAM 'very good' standard shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

(c) The development shall thereafter proceed and be operated in full accordance with the approved BREEAM assessments and 'very good' certification.

Reason: In order to maximise the environmental sustainability of the development and limit the potential impact of the proposal on climate change in accordance with the provisions of Policy CS10 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

23 Prior to the commencement of above ground development on any phase of the development hereby approved, a Sustainability Strategy for that phase shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This strategy shall;

- specify energy efficiency measures to be used within the development
- specify renewable energy features to be used within the development
- specify measures to reduce water consumption by the development

The development shall thereafter proceed and be operated in full accordance with agreed the Sustainability Strategy.

Reason: In order to ensure that the development contributes to sustainability and supports the Council's wider objectives and commitments relating to environmental quality and climate change in accordance with Policy CS10 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

24 (a) Prior to the commencement of any development, a surface water drainage scheme, based on the hierarchy of drainage options in the National Planning Practice Guidance and in accordance with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems

(March 2015) or any subsequent replacement national standards shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This scheme shall include the following:

- (i) Evidence of an assessment of the site conditions to include site investigation and test results to confirm infiltrations rates;
 - (ii) Surveys and appropriate evidence to establish the position, capacity and interconnection of all watercourses and surface-water sewers within the application site and those outside of the site into which a direct or indirect connection is proposed;
 - (iii) A determination of the lifetime of the development design storm period and intensity (1 in 30 & 1 in 100 year + allowance for climate change - see EA advice Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances'), discharge rates and volumes (both pre and post development), temporary storage facilities, means of access for maintenance and easements where applicable, the methods employed to delay and control surface water discharged from the site, and the measures taken to prevent flooding and pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface waters, including watercourses, and details of flood levels in AOD;
 - (iv) A demonstration that the surface water run-off would not exceed the equivalent greenfield rate or a rate to be first agreed in writing by United Utilities.
 - (v) Any works required off-site to ensure adequate discharge of surface water without causing flooding or pollution (which should include refurbishment of existing culverts and headwalls or removal of unused culverts where relevant);
 - (vi) Flood water exceedance routes, both on and off site;
 - (vii) A timetable for implementation, including phasing where applicable;
 - (viii) Details of water quality controls, where applicable.
- (b) Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, no surface water shall discharge to the public sewerage system either directly or indirectly.
- (c) The scheme agreed pursuant to part (a) of this condition shall be implemented in full and in full accordance with the approved details before the development hereby approved is first brought into use.

Reason: To promote sustainable development, secure proper drainage of surface water and to manage the risk of flooding and pollution in accordance with the provisions of Policy CS9 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policy DM31 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027. This information must be agreed prior to the commencement of development in order to ensure appropriate drainage of the site as the development proceeds.

- 25 Prior to the commencement of the development a sustainable drainage management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and agreed in writing. The sustainable drainage management and maintenance plan shall include as a minimum:

a) The arrangements for adoption by an appropriate public body or statutory undertaker, or management and maintenance by a Site Management Company;

b) Arrangements concerning appropriate funding mechanisms for its on-going maintenance of all elements of the sustainable drainage system (including mechanical components) to include elements such as:

(i) on-going inspections relating to performance and asset condition assessments

(ii) operation costs for regular maintenance, remedial works and irregular maintenance caused by less sustainable limited life assets or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the surface water drainage scheme throughout its lifetime;

c) Means of access for maintenance and easements where applicable.

The development shall subsequently be completed, maintained and managed in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: To manage flooding and pollution and to ensure that a managing body is in place for the sustainable drainage system and there is funding and maintenance mechanism for the lifetime of the development in accordance with Policy CS9 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policy DM31 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027. This information must be agreed prior to the commencement of development in order to ensure appropriate drainage of the site as the development proceeds.

26 Prior to or concurrent with the submission of any reserved matters application for any phase of the development hereby approved, a parking scheme and management plan for that scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This scheme shall:

- detail the number of spaces
- detail the proportion of spaces to be accessible and/or provide electric vehicle charging facilities
- detail how use of the spaces would be restricted and managed

Any parking provided on site shall thereafter be retained, maintained and operated in full accordance with these approved details.

Reason: In order to ensure that adequate and accessible parking and EV charging provision is available to meet the needs of the development in the interests of highway safety, and to encourage travel to and from the site by ultra-low and zero emission vehicles in accordance with Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policy DM41 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

27 Before any phase of the development hereby approved is first brought into use:

(a) details of cycle storage provision for that phase to include the type of cycle stand and (if external) the form and materials of a waterproof cover and enclosure shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority; and

(b) the cycle storage agreed pursuant to part (a) of this condition shall be implemented in full and in full accordance with the approved details.

The cycle storage shall thereafter be retained and maintained as such.

Reason: In order to encourage travel to and from the site by a sustainable transport mode in accordance with Policy CS5 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policy DM41 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

28 Within three months of the date of this decision, and prior to the commencement of any development, a Transport Assessment addendum shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This addendum shall detail:

- (i) analysis of traffic flows following the reopening of High Street and operation of the North Station tram station / tramway extension
- (ii) assessment of the consequences to the traffic flow analysis within the submitted Transport Assessment as a result of (i)
- (iii) modelling of traffic flows taking account of (i) and (ii) in the event that the section of George Street between Cookson Street and Grosvenor Street is closed
- (iv) modelling of traffic flows taking account of (i) and (ii) in the event that the section of George Street between Cookson Street and Grosvenor Street is closed and any part of Talbot Road between Cookson Street and Buchanan Street has to be closed in the event of emergency
- (v) modelling of traffic flows taking account of (i) and (ii) in the event that any part of Talbot Road between Cookson Street and Buchanan Street has to be closed in the event of emergency but that the relevant section of George Street could be reopened to temporary flows
- (vi) consideration of how George Street between Cookson Street and Buchanan Street could be configured to support temporary use in the event of an emergency requiring the closure of the relevant part of Talbot Road

Reason: In order to ensure that the development would not compromise the safe and convenient function of the road network in accordance with the provisions of Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policy DM41 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

29 (a) Prior to the commencement of development a scheme of off-site highway improvement works including a timetable for implementation based on trigger points associated with the proposed phases shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

For the purpose of this condition, this scheme shall include:

- additional pedestrian crossing facilities
- public realm enhancements
- changes to traffic signals at existing junctions (to be informed by the information required pursuant to condition 28)
- modification of existing layby for bus operation
- modification of existing layby for set-down and pick-up for vehicle types to be agreed
- upgrade of bus stops

- provision/modification of street-lighting
- provision/modification of utilities
- provision/modification of Traffic Regulation Orders

(b) no phase of development hereby approved shall be first brought into use until the necessary highway works identified in the timetable of implementation and agreed pursuant to part (a) of this condition have been implemented in full.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy DM41 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027. This scheme must be agreed prior to the commencement of works on site in order to ensure that appropriate access is available once the scheme is operational.

30 Notwithstanding the information set out in the submitted Travel Plan which is broadly acceptable:

(a) No phase of the development hereby approved shall be first brought into use until a Travel Plan in respect of that phase has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The Travel Plan shall include:

- (i) appointment of a travel co-ordinator
- (ii) proposals for surveying
- (iii) production of travel audits
- (iv) establishment of a working group
- (v) an action plan
- (vi) timescales for implementation
- (vii) targets for implementation

(b) Each phase of development hereby approved shall then proceed and be operated in full accordance with the relevant approved Travel Plan.

Reason: In order to encourage travel to and from the site by sustainable transport modes in accordance with Policy CS5 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policy DM41 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

31 Prior to first use of any phase of the development hereby approved, a Servicing Strategy for that phase shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall detail how deliveries to and collections from the development, including waste removal, would be managed. The development shall thereafter proceed in full accordance with the relevant Servicing Strategy.

Reason: In order to safeguard highway safety and function in accordance with Policy DM41 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

32 (a) Prior to or concurrent with the submission of any reserved matters application in respect of a phase or building of the development hereby approved, a security strategy for that phase shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

(b) The development shall then proceed and be operated in full accordance with the relevant strategy approved pursuant to part (a).

For the purpose of this condition, the security strategy shall include details of;

- (i) CCTV
- (ii) Security lighting
- (iii) Alarm systems
- (iv) Use of appropriate materials such as anti-climb and anti-vandal finishes
- (v) Access controls
- (vi) Measures to deter skateboarder and similar from use of streetfurniture, stairs and ramps
- (vii) Doorway and recess treatments to deter rough-sleeping
- (viii) Measures to minimise risk of suicide attempt
- (ix) Approaches to landscaping to maintain natural surveillance and visibility across the site
- (x) Use of streetfurniture designed to withstand vandalism
- (xi) Provision of anti-terrorism features

Note: all security measures should be designed to a high standard to fit with and enhance the overall visual quality of the site without appearing unduly intimidating or overly defensive.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the site and locality and public safety in accordance with the provisions of Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 and Policies LQ1 and BH4 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016.

33 (a) Prior to or concurrent with the submission of any reserved matters application for any phase of the development hereby approved, a scheme for the provision of public art as part of that phase shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

(b) Prior any phase of the development hereby approved being first brought into use, the Public Art approved pursuant to part (a) of this condition for that phase shall be provided in full and in full accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to ensure that the development contributes to the provision of public art in accordance with Policy DM25 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

34 The development hereby approved shall proceed in full accordance with the broadband provision statement produced by GTech Surveys Limited and recorded as received by the Council on 17 Nov 2023.

Reason: In order to ensure that the development is served by high-speed broadband in accordance with the provisions of Policy DM18 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

- 35 At least 14 days before commencement of the demolition and/or development, the developer must email safeguarding@blackpoolairport.com if any equipment to be used during construction will exceed the maximum height of the finished development (e.g. tower cranes, piling rigs). Notification of the equipment shall be made on the standard Crane Permit request form available on the Blackpool Airport website and include:
- its position (OSGB grid coordinates to 6 figures each of Eastings and Northings);
 - height above ordnance datum;
 - anticipated dates on site;
 - emergency contact numbers for the crane operator and site manager
 -

The equipment must be operated in accordance with BS 7121 and further advice can be found in Airport Operators Association Advice Note 4 'Cranes'.

Reason: In order to safeguard aerodrome operation in accordance with the provisions of Policy DM42 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2012-2027.

ADVICE NOTES TO DEVELOPERS

1. The design put forward at Reserved Matters stage must be sensitive to the location of the development to off-set localised heritage impacts.