

Blackpool Village Area Action Plan November 2010



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council



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Blackpool Village Area Action Plan 2010

City Manager's Foreword

Blackpool Village plays a very important role in the development of Cork City with many of the origins of the city having their roots in this area. It is a well-established residential and commercial quarter.

With the adoption of the Area Action Plan in September 2010 the City Council agreed a strategy for the improvement of Blackpool Village. This followed a full public consultation process, with the final plan being amended to reflect the aspirations of the community, preserving and enhancing the village and its setting, tackling dereliction and promoting the renewal of the area. The rich historical and architectural character of the area is promoted and protected through the designation of the area as an Architectural Conservation Area under the City Development Plan.

This plan is a non-statutory "action plan". Its purpose is to amplify the objectives set out in the Cork City Development Plan 2009-2015 and it seeks to identify specific actions with targets and responsibilities for delivering them.

The preparation of the Blackpool Village Area Action Plan involved an extensive process of consultation with the public and important stakeholders with the active involvement of the Members of the City Council and other directorates within City Hall. I would like to thank the Member's for their significant contribution to the plan preparation and to acknowledge the significant contributions of the staff of the Planning Directorate and other directorates including Recreation, Amenity & Culture Directorate, Roads & Transportation Directorate, and the Architects Dept.

*Mr. Tim Lucey
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November 2010*



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1.0 Introduction

Cork City Council has prepared a Draft Area Action Plan (AAP) for Blackpool Village to guide development and promote improvement and change over the next six years. The decision to prepare the plan is based on the objectives of the *Cork City Development Plan 2009-2015* and the objectives for the City outlined in the *Cork Area Strategic Plan Update*. It is considered that a renewed focus on the heart of Blackpool Village is needed to complement the Farranferris Local Area Plan which assessed the development potential of the area to the west of Blackpool Village, and also in light of the proposal to review development in North Blackpool under a Local Area Plan.

1.1 Importance of Blackpool Village

Blackpool is the main gateway on the north side of Cork City Limerick where the N20 national primary route enters the city via the Blackpool By-pass. Future development in this area will contribute to achieving the increased population targets for the Cork Gateway set by the South West Regional Authority & CASP.

The area is important given its proximity to the city centre and its residential and commercial character.

1.2 Plan Area

The plan area (see Fig. 1.1) is centered on the heart of Blackpool which traditionally lies at the junction of the Watercourse Road, Great William O'Brien Street, Commons Road and the 'main' street Thomas Davis Street. The area extends east to the Blackpool By-pass and takes in Gerard Griffin Street, Great William O'Brien Street, Brocklesby Street and part of the Commons Road to the west. The southern boundary extends to Cathedral Walk; and the By-pass flyover forms the northern boundary.

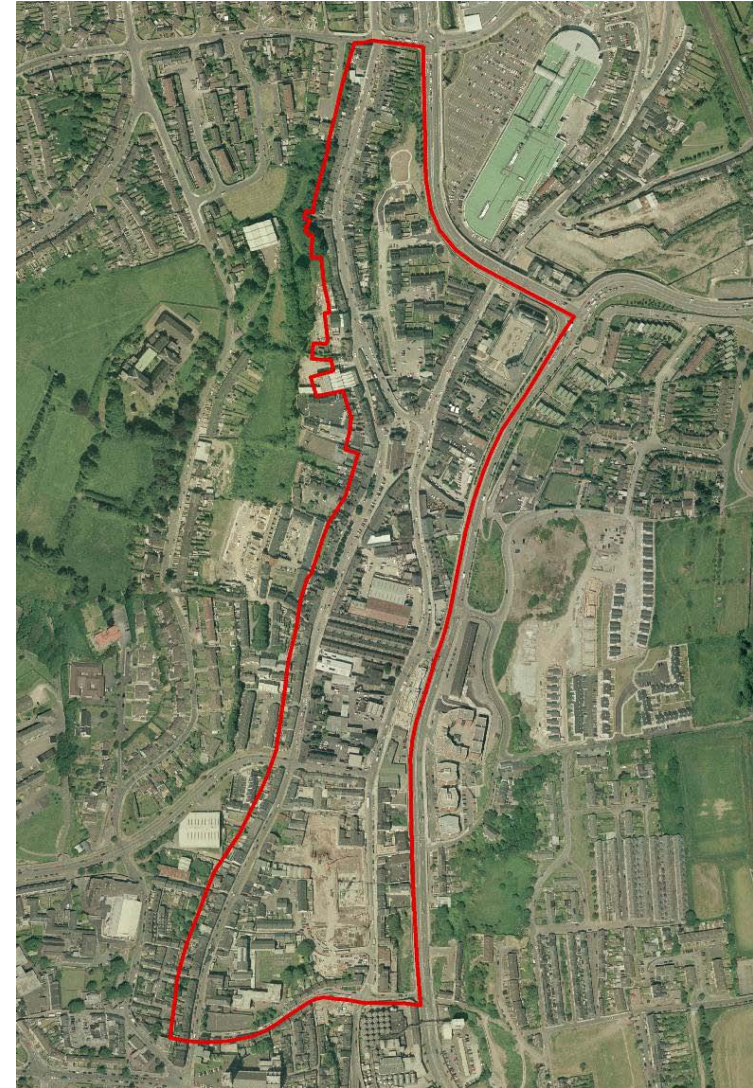


Fig. 1.1 Blackpool Area Action Plan Boundary



1.3 The Role of an Area Action Plan

The AAP is a ‘non-statutory’ area plan which forms a corporate policy document providing a vision for the future development and improvement of the area. It amplifies the existing policy framework set out in the Cork City Development Plan 2009-2015 relating to the area.

A key feature of the AAP will be the focus on implementation. It will seek to:

- Protect areas sensitive to change.
- Stimulate the redevelopment of opportunity sites.
- Focus on the delivery of sustainable forms of development and comprehensive environmental improvements.

1.4 Aim of Plan

The Blackpool Village Area Action Plan is focused on the historic core of Blackpool set against the backdrop of the rapidly developing North Blackpool area and the adopted Local Area Plan for Farranferris to the west. The aim of the Plan is as follows:

To identify the strengths of the area and to promote a series of projects which will significantly improve the socio-economic and physical environment of the plan area. The plan aims to:

- Protect and enhance the built environment and heritage of the area
- Provide a focus for upgrading aspects of the public realm
- Further the cultural and heritage potential of the area
- Provide a framework for the development of key sites within the area

1.5 Plan Structure

The Blackpool Village Plan is set out as follows:

Chapter 1 Introduction ~ introduces the plan and outlines the role of the plan.

Chapter 2 Strategic Context ~ outlines the hierarchy of planning and development guidance within which the plan is set.

Chapter 3 Built Heritage, Conservation & Archaeology ~ considers conservation and archaeological issues in the area.

Chapter 4 Traffic & Public Realm ~ examines issues relating to traffic management and treatment of the public realm in the area.

Chapter 5 Culture and Heritage ~ explores the potential to enhance the heritage and culture of the area.

Chapter 6 Development Strategy ~ examines a number of potential opportunity sites in the plan area.

Chapter 7 Implementation Strategy ~ provides a timeframe and estimated costings to achieve proposals.

1.6 Public Consultation

Consultation forms a key part of the preparation of the AAP in order to ensure that the plan responds to the planning and development issues in the area and takes into account the views and concerns of residents and other interested parties. This Area Action Plan has been shaped by two phases of public consultation:

- A Pre-Draft Issues Exploration consultation was held between July 2009 and October 2009. This helped inform the development of the objectives contained within the plan. A total of 17 submissions were received following several advertising campaigns in the local press. During this period, the key stakeholders were invited to a workshop which was held in the Blackpool Community Centre. A note of workshop submissions was made. A report was prepared in relation to this first stage and this was then submitted to the Planning & Development SPC and Council for discussion in November '09. Appendix 2 provides a list of all those who made submissions to this consultation process.



- A Draft Plan consultation was held between March 2010-May 2010 whereby people were invited to comment on what they liked about the plan, and also what they wanted to see amended. The 15 submissions received helped to shape this final version of the plan. A report was prepared and this was considered at both the June and September Planning and Development SPC meeting. The plan was adopted by the full Council at the September '10 Council meeting. Appendix 2 provides a list of all those who made submissions to this second consultation process.



Chapter 2: Strategic Context

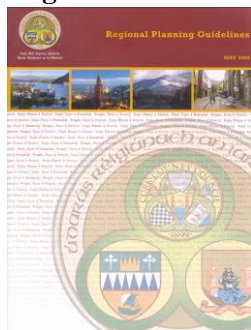
2.0 Introduction

The Area Action Plan is a ‘non-statutory plan which forms a corporate policy document, expressing particular issues and areas of concern while also providing a vision for the future improvement and development of the area.

The plan falls within the context of the following planning policy hierarchy:

- **National Policies** which include documents such as:
 - *The National Development Plan (2007-2013)*
 - The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) (2002-2020)
 - Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland, 1997
 - National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012
 - Ministerial Guidelines and Directives such as The Retail Planning Guidelines 2005; Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas 2009; Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide 2009; The Planning System and Flood Risk management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009 etc.

- **Regional Policies** which include:



– South West Regional Planning Guidelines 2004

– Cork Area Strategic Plan (CASP) 2002-2020

- **Local Policies**

– *Cork City Development Plan 2009-2015*

2.1 Cork City Development Plan 2009 – 2015.



The Blackpool Village Area Action Plan boundary is located in the North Central sector as defined in the *Cork City Development Plan 2009-2015*, which is the statutory plan for the City. This plan forwards a vision for the development of the city from 2009 to 2015. It seeks to develop and improve the economic, social, cultural and environmental health of the City.

The Blackpool Village AAP is mostly zoned as a Neighbourhood Centre with a pocket of “Residential, Local Services & Institutions” in the north-west of

the area. Blackpool Village is a designated Architectural Conservation Area. The area also contains a number of street improvement areas. The relevant City Development Plan policies are outlined below.

2.1.1 Neighbourhood Centres

Objective: *To protect, provide for and/or improve the retail function of local centres and provide a focus for local centres.*

The primary purpose of these centres is to fulfil a local shopping function, providing a mix of convenience shopping, lower order comparison shopping and local services to residential and employment areas. Some of the centres need to be enhanced significantly in terms of their retail offering, mix of uses, public realm, and overall viability and vitality. Limited retail offices will be acceptable in these centres to serve local needs and are subject to restrictions on size and extent (see para 3.15) including a cap of 100 sq.m per unit. Residential uses are also acceptable within this zone. Where neighbourhood centres are located in areas of historic significance, for example, former villages

now within the suburbs of the city such as Blackpool, policies to protect and enhance their architectural character will be applied (see Chapter 9, Policy 9.28).

Policy 9.28 Local and Neighbourhood Centres of Historic Character
To protect and enhance local and neighbourhood centres of historic character which have a distinctive 'sense of place' by:

- *Protecting and enhancing the existing distinctive architectural character of these areas, discouraging insensitive alterations and promoting new development sympathetic to their character where appropriate.*
- *Promoting and enhancing their commercial vitality and vibrancy by supporting business functions of appropriate scale, form and design*
- *Promoting both public and private investment in the high quality refurbishment of existing buildings and public realm.*

Para 9.56 *In order to achieve this policy, the City Council will:*

- *Promote the creation of a stronger "sense of place" with an emphasis being placed on their history, notable buildings and amenity areas etc.*
- *Consider the development and use of special signage to mark the boundaries of the villages to strengthen the sense of place.*
- *Protect and improve the public realm e.g. retaining existing historic street furniture, developing amenity areas*
- *Implement traffic calming measures within these areas to reduce the impact of traffic on residential amenity and enhance their attraction as local/neighbourhood centres.*

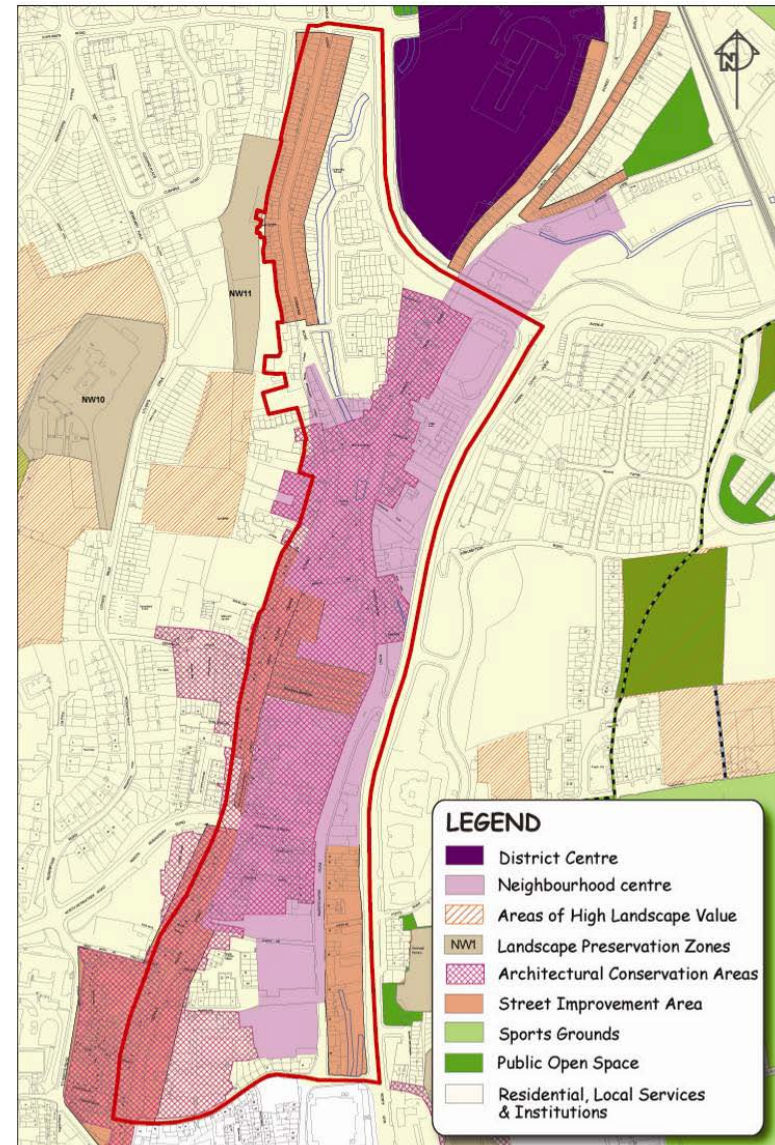


Fig. 2.1 Cork City Development Plan Zoning Objectives for Blackpool Village



2.1.2 Street Improvement Areas

These areas are zoned for the following reasons:

- To maintain the architectural character of these areas. Insensitive alterations which would detract from their character will be discouraged.
- To reduce the impact of traffic on residential amenities.

Street Improvement Areas exist within Blackpool Village along Great William O'Brien Street and the Commons Road.

2.1.3 Residential, Local Services and Institutional Uses

The provision and protection of residential uses and residential amenity is the main objective of this zoning which occurs in the north-west of the study area. However, other uses including small scale local services, institutional and civic uses are also permitted provided they do not detract from residential amenity.

2.1.4 Urban Design

As stated in the City Development Plan 2009-2015, the City Council shall strive for developments of appropriate densities to support good urban design practice and to adhere to policies and objectives set out in the 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas 2009, Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (Dept. of Environment, Heritage & Local Government).

2.1.5 Natural Heritage & Biodiversity

The City Development Plan has adopted policies to protect and promote the conservation of biodiversity in areas of natural heritage importance, outside of designated areas and to encourage the management of features which are important for wild flora and fauna such as rivers, tree groups and hedgerows. The City Council has produced a Heritage Plan (2007-2012) and a Biodiversity Action Plan (2009 -2014). The City Council shall seek to assess, manage and protect the unique urban heritage and biodiversity which Blackpool contains.



Chapter 3: Built Heritage, Conservation & Archaeology

3.0 Introduction



Plate 3.1 Church of the Annunciation

For many, Blackpool is synonymous with Cork, its buildings, people and folklore evoking a strong image and identity of the city. Blackpool is a unique area of the city in that it retains the character and appearance of the original village with important buildings and groups of buildings framing historic streets and lanes. It is important to highlight the heritage value of the area and that efforts are made to improve the physical appearance of the area where necessary.

3.1 Strategic Context

The policy context for Built Heritage and Archaeology is set out in Chapter 9: *Built Heritage and Archaeology* of the Cork City Development Plan 2009-2015.

Policy 9.1 *Conservation of Heritage in the City* outlines the need to ensure that consideration and conservation of heritage is an integral part of Cork City Council's plans and programmes for the physical, economic and social planning and development.

Policy 9.4 *Sites of Established Archaeological Interest* outlines how the City Council will protect and enhance the archaeological value of the sites (and their settings) listed in the *Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)*. In assessing proposals for development, the City

Council will have regard to the recommendations of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

There is currently one collective set of buildings within the Plan area listed on the Record of Protected Structures. These are Madden's Buildings.

Policy 9.19 *Record of Protected Structures (RPS)* states that *Cork City Council will maintain a Record of Protected Structures within the Cork City Development Plan, which shall include structures or parts of structures which are of special, architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest and which is an objective to protect.*

Policies 9.24 to 9.27 relate to Architectural Conservation Areas in the city. The aim of designating areas is to protect their special characteristics and distinctive features from inappropriate actions. External works that would affect the character as described by the Planning Authority will require planning permission, whereas repair or refurbishment which does not materially affect the external character will not require planning permission.

3.2 Historical Overview

Blackpool may be characterized as Cork's major historic industrial area. Early settlements in the area date from the 12th Century. The 18th Century maps suggest that the northern limit of the city was considered to be just north of Peacock Lane (Gerard Griffin Avenue). Dan Murphy's map of 1787 extended the suburbs as far as Great William O'Brien Street.

Thomas Davis Street was first identified on Holt's map of 1801 as York Street. Probably the most significant building on the street is No. 40 Thomas Davis Street which was home to one of the most important figures in Cork's history Tomás MacCurtain. A plaque on the front of the now renovated building commemorates MacCurtain.

Until the 1940's, the core of Blackpool looked very different: two bridges (Blackpool Bridge and Tanto Bridge) crossed the Bride River.

A row of four buildings faced onto the weir between the bridges, occupying the space now known as Blackpool Plaza.

The original Blackpool National School opened in 1863 and when room became limited, it moved to larger premises on nearby Brocklesby Street. The old schoolhouse by the weir was extended, modified and converted into a church (St. Nicholas' Church). It was later replaced by the present day church designed by local artist Seamus Murphy.



Plate 3.2 Plaque on Madden's Buildings

Situated towards the northern end of the Watercourse Road, the Madden's Buildings (Plates 3.2 & 3.3) are probably the most distinctive terraced houses in the city. They were built in response to the dire and overcrowded living conditions in the city and its suburbs in the late 19th Century. As the first municipal housing scheme in Cork, the houses were built on the site of the old cattle, milk and potato market. The market was established in 1794 on land that had previously been the site of a guardhouse, which had protected the north entrance to the city.

3.3 Statement of Character

The character of the area, of architectural, archaeological, historical and social significance, varies as you move northwards away from the city centre. Essentially it is made up of three sections.



Plate 3.3 Madden's Buildings

The first is Gerald Griffin Street to the south; second is the central section of Great William O'Brien Street and third is Blackpool Village centre, focused around the church in the north. Collectively, the streets formed the principle route from the city leading north for hundreds of years, the urban form of which has remained largely unchanged. The area was the industrial centre of the city in the 19th century, evident by the high concentration of tanneries, distilleries, mills, maltings and breweries that once occupied it. This has resulted in a rich legacy of industrial archaeology within the area.

The first, southern, sub-area has a mix of uses but is mainly residential in character, with two and three-storey, mainly two-bay dwellings lining Gerald Griffin Street. Commercial and institutional buildings are largely located at the southern end of the area. The North Presentation Convent, associated with the area since the late 18th Century, dominates the south-eastern section of the sub-area, while there is a high density residential area to the south-west located around



Farren Street. These are laneways of one and two-storey houses, typical of the historic urban patterns prevalent in the area in the 18th and 19th Centuries.

The second middle sub-area of the area along Great William O'Brien Street is largely residential in character consisting mainly of 19th Century housing. The first example of modern social housing in Cork is found on the eastern side of the road in the form of Madden's Buildings, which were built by Cork Corporation in 1886. These are an important part of Cork's social heritage.

The third sub-area is centred on Blackpool Village, the area surrounding the church, the site of the original market place. This area has retained its historic street pattern resembling an elongated 'X'. This unusual layout was dictated by the waterways that subsequently influenced the layout of the streets. Buildings have generally commercial and/or residential uses, are two and three-storeys in height, of two or three-bays, and largely date from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The attractive pair of 18th Century buildings at Nos. 96 and 97 (Dennehy's Fish Shop and adjacent building) terminate the northern vista from Great William O'Brien Street and provide an attractive bookend to the street.

3.4 Archaeology

3.4.1 Archaeological Setting

The boundary for the Blackpool Area Action Plan is situated outside the Zone of Archaeological Potential (ZAP) for Cork City (CO074-122). It is however located in an area of industrial archaeological importance. The plan area falls partially within the Zone of Archaeological Potential for Hewitt's Distillery (CO074-116).

The most interesting feature on these early maps is the Watercourse. The confluent rivers can still be seen in the village, on the east side of the Church of the Annunciation. The river flowed along the now modern street level and was gradually culverted and covered over in the nineteenth century and became known as the Watercourse Road.

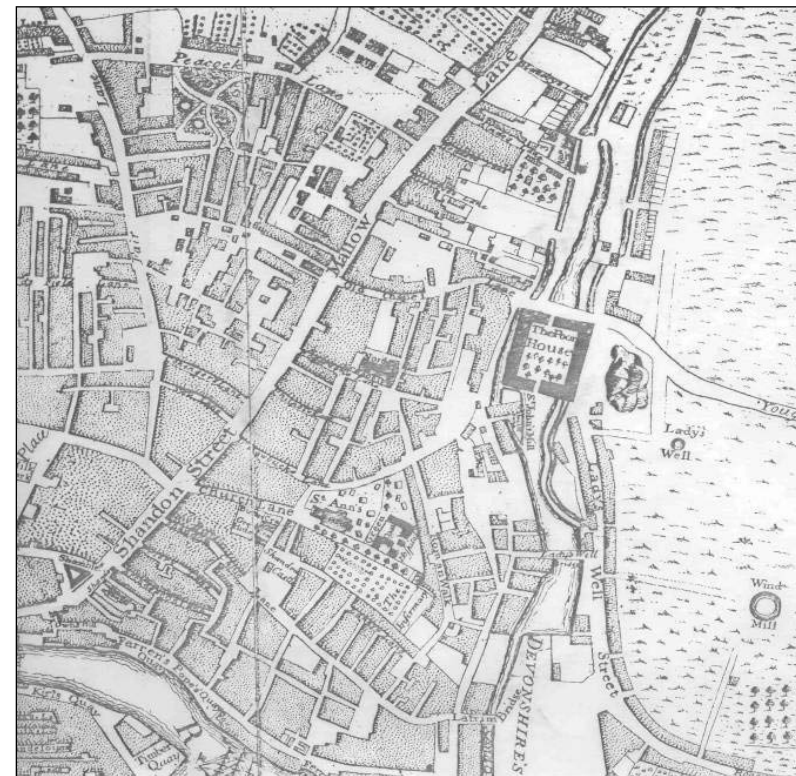


Figure 3.1 Extract from O'Connor 1779 Map showing part of the Blackpool area

In the 18th century Blackpool developed as an industrial suburb of the city with its many rivers enabling the development of water powered factories. The Ordnance Survey map of 1869 (See Fig. 3.2) shows in detail the various industries that were operating in Blackpool in the 19th century. It is evident that during this time the Blackpool area was also residential. The highest concentration of laneways in Blackpool ran from Thomas Davies Street to the Back Watercourse (river) between Spring Lane and Bird's Quay and the Assumption Convent.



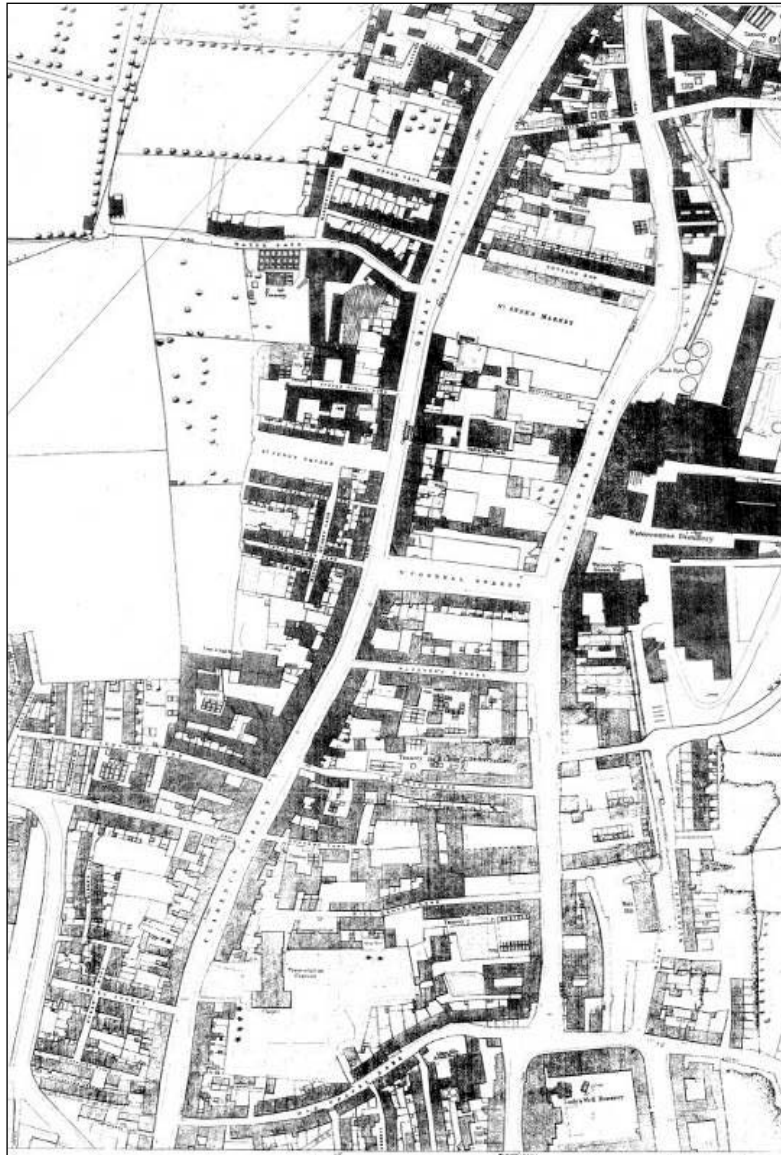


Figure 3.2 Extract from O.S 1869 Map, southern end of Blackpool Village.



3.4.2 Archaeological Considerations

The village and its environs are of historic industrial archaeological significance. Industrial archaeological remains are distinctive and diverse and can range from large mills and maltings to tanning pits and sluice gates. Policies 9.3 City Archaeology, 9.12 Surveys Test Trenching and Monitoring, 9.13 Large-scale Developments (outside the boundaries of a Recorded Monument or Place), 9.16 Industrial Archaeology, from the Cork City Development Plan 2009-2015, are relevant to any proposed development within the AAP area. Policy 9.16 is perhaps of most relevance in any appraisal of the Blackpool Area.

While many of the industrial buildings are no longer extant, other elements of archaeological significance, such as tanning pits may be present below the existing ground level. It is therefore important that detailed surveys of buildings are undertaken where appropriate. All large scale development proposals within the AAP should be accompanied by an archaeological assessment

3.4.3 Plaques and Laneway Markers

The Blackpool area has some plaques celebrating important landmark buildings and commemorating the contribution made by individuals. The 'Bull and Drover' sculpture on Madden's Buildings reminds us that the houses are on the site of a former cattle market. This piece and a similar one recently erected opposite form part of the cultural heritage of Blackpool and should be encouraged in any future developments in the area. The laneways of Blackpool denote the area's progressive development over the centuries. Some laneways no longer exist. Hence it is considered worthy that these are marked to commemorative the history of the area as has been successfully done on North Main Street. (See Plate 3.4 on next page).

The heart of Blackpool lies at the junction of the Watercourse Road, Great William O'Brien Street, Commons Road and the 'main' street Thomas Davis Street. As a result this area has been selected as the most appropriate location for the erection of commemorative lane

markers. Funding has been secured through the Roads and Transportation Directorate.



Plate 3.4 Example of Laneway Marker from North Main Street

3.4.4 Proposed location of Lane Markers (See Fig. 3.3)

- **Wherlands Lane** (*Thomas Davis Street, West*)

The entrance to the lane survives between two 1990's apartment blocks. In the mid-1800s this was a busy laneway with 23 properties, including 14 houses, a corn mill, a kiln and associated yards.

- **Site of Thomas Davis Avenue/Foster's Lane** (*Thomas Davis Street, East*)

Midway along Thomas Davis Street, the entrance to Foster's Lane was between nos 18 and 19. The covered entrance led to 16 houses along the laneway. As with all the lanes on the eastern side of the main street, it led to the Back Watercourse but, unlike the others, Foster's Lane led to a bridge that connected the lane to Tanners Row

and Bullen's Alley on the eastern side of the river.

- **Slattery's Lane** (*Thomas Davis Street, East*)

During the mid-19th century Slattery's Lane was the most densely populated laneway off Thomas Davis Street, with 28 properties fronting onto it by 1869.

- **Site of Green Lane/Tanners Row and the Back Watercourse** (*Thomas Davis Street, East*)

Today there is no trace of Green Lane and Tanner's Row and Bullen's Alley are not extant (beneath the Blackpool Bypass). Tanner's Row was a terrace of eight houses overlooking Thomas Davis Street from the east and fronting onto the Back Watercourse. Bullen's Alley lay on the east side of the Back Watercourse and was accessed from Foster's Lane.

- **Walsh's Lane** (*Thomas Davis Street, East*)

Walsh's lane was the northern-most of the terrace lined lanes that once led off the east side of Thomas Davis Street.

- **Bird's Quay** (*Spring Lane, South*)

Bird's Quay lay south of and parallel to Spring Lane. The quay was formed by a stretch of water flowing east to west, from the Back Watercourse to the River Bride.

The following laneways were also identified as suitable for laneway markers:

- Combmarkers Lane
- Gerald Griffin Avenue
- Farren Street
- Hillgrive Lane
- Sunday School Lane.

See Fig. 3.3 for the location of the proposed Laneway Markers.



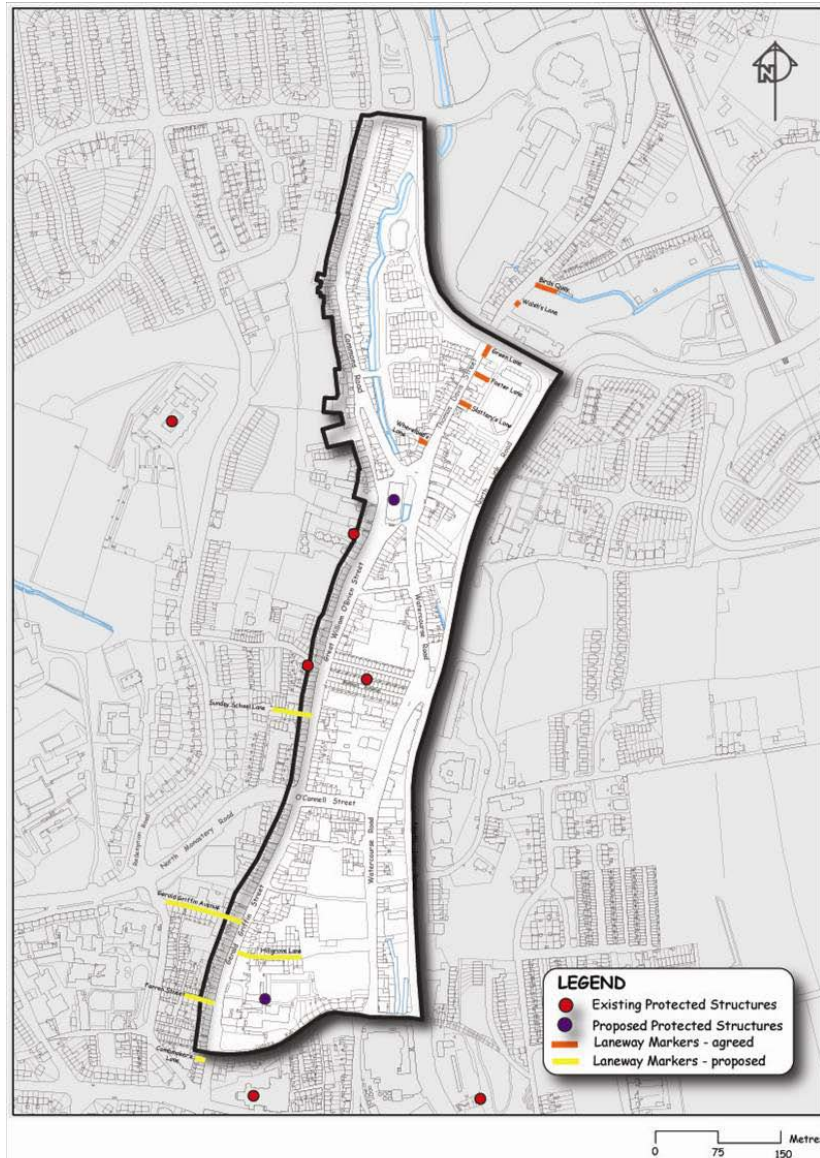


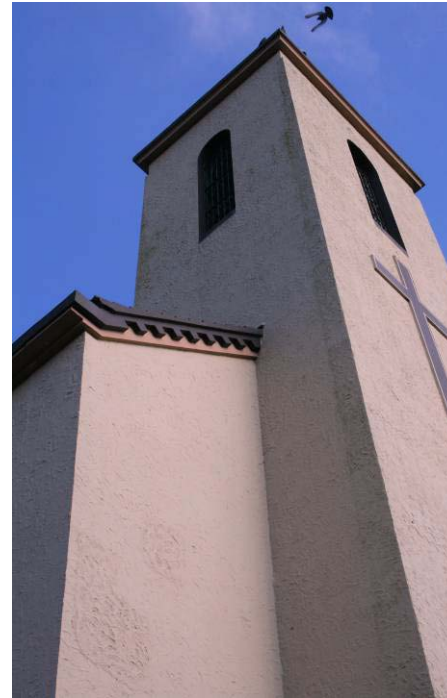
Fig. 3.3 Laneway Markers and Protected Structures



3.5 Built Heritage and Conservation

3.5.1 Built Heritage & Conservation Setting

This section deals with the historic fabric of the area and issues of conservation and heritage. Following a survey of the area much of



Blackpool Village is designated as an Architectural Conservation Area in the Cork City Development Plan 2009-2015, recognising its architectural, archaeological, historical and social significance. This designation is highlighted in Fig. 3.4.

In addition, buildings recommended for inclusion on the Record of Protected Structures are identified in Figure 3.3 and in the Table 3.2. While some of the buildings identified may warrant Protected Structure status others may be sufficiently protected by Architectural Conservation Area status due to their group value.

Plate 3.5 Church of the Annunciation, Blackpool

Protected Structures within Blackpool Village Plan Area		
RPS Ref	Name	Location
PS491	Madden's Buildings	Watercourse Road

Table 3.1 Protected Structures within Blackpool Village Plan Area

3.5.2 Proposed Additions to the Record of Protected Structures

Two buildings were recommended for inclusion on the Record of Protected Structures in November 2009. These are the Church of the Annunciation and North Presentation Convent and associated chapel and school buildings.

Buildings Proposed for Inclusion on the Record of Protected Structures		
1	Junction of Watercourse Road, Commons Road & Great William O'Brien Street	Church of the Annunciation
2	Gerald Griffin Street	North Presentation Convent and Associated Chapel and School Buildings

Table 3.2 Buildings Proposed for Inclusion on the Record of Protected Structures

1. Church of the Annunciation

This Roman Catholic Church located is located at the centre of Blackpool Village. It is an architecturally-accomplished mid 20th Century building that successfully integrates a traditional religious plan layout with modern architectural form. It is of architectural, historical and social interest.

2. North Presentation Convent and Associated Chapel and School Buildings

The core of the complex is an 18th Century Georgian house which was greatly extended. The complex retains the core of an older house, arranged around an attractive garden to the rear. The stone embellished chapel is very similar in design and detail to the contemporaneous chapel at the Ursuline Convent in Blackrock. It is of architectural, historic and social interest.



Plate 3.6 North Presentation Convent



3.5.3 Architectural Conservation Area

The area is centred on the main thoroughfare running south-north from Old Chapel Lane and Cathedral Street to Thomas Davis Street and the Link Road. It is bounded to the east by the western boundary of Watercourse Road and to the west by the rear of the properties fronting onto the area's central spine of Gerald Griffin Street, Great William O'Brien Street and Thomas Davis Street. (See Figure 3.4) It is made up of three sections:

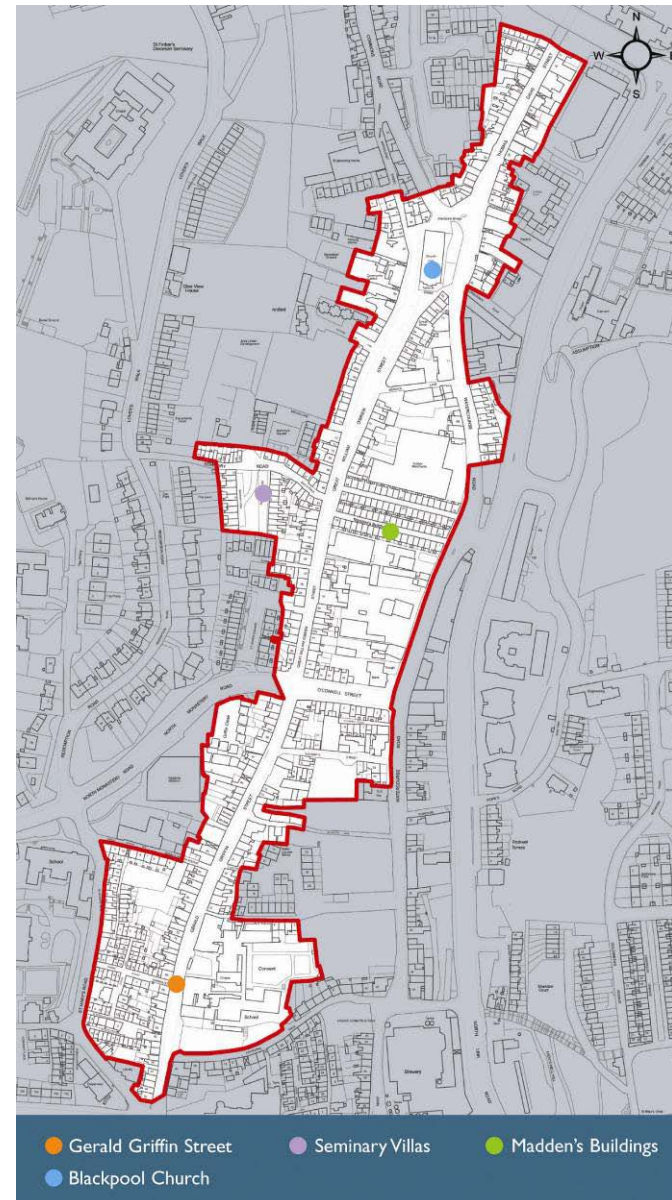


Plate 3.7 Great William O'Brien Street

Collectively, the streets formed the principle route from the city leading north for hundreds of years, the urban form of which has remained largely unchanged.



Fig 3.4 Blackpool Architectural Conservation Area



The area's building stock ranges from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries but is mainly characterised by the nineteenth century residential two and three-storey buildings that line the principle thoroughfare. There are a number of traditional timber shopfronts in the area that have been retained even in cases where the buildings no longer serve as commercial premises. The retention of the traditional timber shopfronts in the southern part of the area should be encouraged as they provide a social narrative on the street's former commercial viability at one time and are, in themselves, often of good quality. In October 2009, the City Council produced a leaflet for guidance in relation to Architectural Conservation Areas which is available to property owners and the general public. The main aim of ACA designation is to preserve the special and distinctive character of your area. The leaflets details:

“Protecting and enhancing the character of these areas generally improves property values. Keeping and enhancing building features makes the area special, increases desirability and makes the area more attractive.”

3.5.4 Additional Architectural Conservation Areas.

In addition to the area already designated as per Figure 3.4, there are a number of terraces of housing along Commons Road of particular architectural interest. These date from the late 19th and early 20th centuries and provide an attractive streetscape at this location. These are No.s 1-13 Springview Terrace, Commons Road and No.s 1-13 Golden Villa's as detailed below. It is recommended that these be considered for inclusion as additional architectural conservation areas in their own right in order to protect the overall integrity of the housing in question.

A: 1-13 Springview Terrace, Commons Road

Terrace of two-storey two-bay houses with ground-floor bay windows, set back from Commons Road with a low wall with attractive iron railing. The simple architectural expression with the nicely detailed railed wall contributes to the attractive architectural character of this part of Commons Road.



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Plate 3.8 1-13 Springview Terrace, Commons Road

B:1-13 Golden Villas, Commons Road

Terrace of attractive two-storey, three-bay houses, gardens to front with wall with low railing over. They are modest but attractive and contribute to the pleasant architectural character of this part of Commons Road through the continuity given by the repetitive three-bay architectural expression and the setback walled and railed gardens.



Plate 3.9 1-13 Golden Villas, Commons Road

Chapter 4: Traffic & Public Realm

4.0 Introduction

This section of the plan addresses issues relating to traffic and the public realm in Blackpool Village. The through movement of vehicles needs to be balanced with the creation of pedestrian-friendly streets, which cater for more sustainable modes of transport. The public realm consists of all public spaces including streets, squares and lanes. It is therefore crucial to address the treatment and role of public spaces and to outline objectives to upgrade them.

Aim

To ensure the vitality and vibrancy of the plan area and to improve the quality of the existing streetscape, traffic elements and public realm.



Plate 4.1 Great William O'Brien Street



Plate 4.2 City Square, Watercourse Road

4.1 Strategic Context

The policy context for traffic and design of the public realm is set out mainly in *Chapter 5 Transportation* and *Chapter 16 Urban Design* of the *Cork City Development Plan 2009-2015*.

Policy 5.4 Modal change outlines the need to encourage modal change from private car use towards more sustainable forms of transport such as public transport, cycling, and walking.

Policy 5.9 Walking states that it is the policy of the City Council to support walking as a significant mode of transport and to facilitate the upgrading of walking routes and footpaths in the city centre and suburbs.

Paragraph 12.62 of Chapter 12 City Centre & Docklands outlines the need to improve the pedestrian link between the two *Cultural Precincts* of Shandon and South Parish by upgrading the medieval spine of the City running between the two areas. It is considered that the

Blackpool Village area forms a natural extension to the Shandon Precinct. As a consequence it is intended to upgrade the public realm linking these important tourist/cultural areas and efforts will be made to retain and improve the character of the streetscape through appropriate development management guidance.

Policy 15.1 High Quality Urban Design outlines how development should be designed to a high qualitative standard and promotes the creation of good places.

4.2 Existing Situation

The area around Blackpool Village centre and the northern part of Great William O'Brien Street (See Plate 4.1) benefited greatly from the Blackpool Renewal Scheme which improved the aesthetic quality of the streetscape by introducing features such as mature trees, attractive iron lamp standards, and simple well-designed paving and soft landscaping. Other sections of the street would benefit from a similar scheme both to enhance their environmental quality and to emphasise the continuity of the character of the historic route. The retention of the traditional timber shopfronts in the southern part of the area should be encouraged as they provide a social narrative on the street's former commercial viability at one time and are, in themselves, often of good quality.

4.3 Works to be considered:

- There is a need to upgrade the existing public space along side the church to reinforce the sense of community at the heart of the village.
- Traffic elements such as improving movement along Commons Road, incorporating a temporary car-park, increased signage at the entrance to Blackpool, and investigating the possibility of a 2-way system at Cathedral Walk.
- There is a need to continue urban renewal works further along Gerald Griffin Street.
- Public Realm to be improved by removal of obsolete lampposts, tackling dereliction and by the input of schemes such as Painting



Grant Schemes and Flower Box Planting Schemes.

4.4 Public Open Space at the Church of the Annunciation

The centre of Blackpool is now dominated by the Church of the Annunciation and its adjoining plaza, but Dennehy (1980, 16) tells us that the site of the church was the original market place in Blackpool. This area forms a natural "cross" pattern in the village setting.

This area can be upgraded by removing the boundary wall between the space and the church and removing the railing along the Watercourse Road. This will open up the area and integrate into its setting. A continuous stone plinth is to be located along the Watercourse Road. This will create a definite boundary but retain the openness of the area. It will also act as extra seating.

Internally, the area is to be formalised by two rows of planted trees. A number of benches are to be provided. It is considered that a sculpture designated to commemorate Seamus Murphy could be suitably located to the rear of the church. This is a focal point on the to Blackpool Village approach from the Commons Road.



Plate 4.3 Current Open Space at Church

A number of stainless steel bollards erected to the rear of the church are proposed to limit car-parking and to retain the space as a pedestrian zone. These bollards will also act as design features. There are already 3 tiered flower boxes in front of the church and it is considered that something similar can be brought into the main open space. These shall be located in such a manner so as to discourage ball playing against the church wall. The church shall continue to be flood lit with lighting placed into the ground and shatterproof glass placed over. A number of uniquely designed lampposts can also be located into the

space. The area is also considered suitable for an interpretative panel outlining historical information of Blackpool Village.



Fig. 4.1 Indicative Urban Renewal Scheme at Church of the Annunciation



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Plate 4.4 Example of Urban Tree Planting



Plate 4.5 Example of Street Seating

Plate 4.6 Example of Steel Bollards



4.5 Traffic Elements

The By-pass has undoubtedly removed considerable traffic, including heavy goods vehicles in particular, from the village core. This has had a number of various effects on the village.

Firstly, it is felt that previously passing trade no longer stops off in Blackpool Village to the detriment of local businesses.

On the other hand, the removal of a large volume of vehicles has made the area both more pedestrian friendly and more permeable for local traffic. Notwithstanding this, an ever increasing levels of car-ownership means that local traffic needs to be managed in order for it to be accommodated in the village.

4.5.1 Additional Signage

In order to address the above, it is recommended that increased and improved signage be erected on the by-pass showing the location of Blackpool Village to encourage trade. It is proposed to locate a sign just before the existing entrance off the by-pass (opposite Madden's Buildings).

4.5.2 Two-way system at Cathedral Walk

The Council investigated the feasibility of increasing permeability in and out of the village from the by-pass by revising the current one-way system at Cathedral Walk, along side the Heineken Brewery, into a two-way system. Currently this is not feasible as the road is too narrow at the junction with the by-pass thereby rendering turning movements impractical. However, as a medium term objective, the Council will consider road widening at this location, thereby improving accessibility to Blackpool Village from the City direction.

4.5.3 Brocklesby Street

Brocklesby Street is currently a two-way system and quite narrow. Cars can also exit Great William O'Brien Street via a one-way system at the rear of the Church. An alternative traffic layout will be considered at this location allowing for a one-way system on Brocklesby Street exiting Great William O'Brien Street through to

Commons Road and revising the one-way system at the rear of the church to allow traffic to enter Great William O'Brien Street from Commons Road. While the Traffic Division generally advises against making two-way roads one-way, it can be considered in this case due to the narrowness of the roadway.

4.5.4 Commons Road

The Commons Road width narrows at the northern section. Coupled with on-street parking on both sides, this hinders easy flow of 2-way traffic. It is recommended that some parking spaces are removed at regular intervals to create 'give-way' areas to assist vehicle movements.

Figure 4.2 details this.



Fig. 4.2
Proposed “No-Parking Zones”
Commons Road



4.6 Public Realm

A series of public realm improvements are proposed in Blackpool. These include:

- Enhancement of the physical fabric of important streets such as Great William O'Brien Street and spaces in line with Street Improvement Area objectives;
- Removal of obsolete lampposts;
- Tackle Dereliction;
- Additional Tree Planting to be considered along Watercourse Road;
- Promotion of urban realm enhancement schemes such as painting and flower box planting schemes.

4.6.1 Great William O'Brien Street

The proposed upgrade of the lower section of Great William O'Brien Street is illustrated in Fig. 4.3 and includes:

- Tree planting along the roadside
- Further cobbled crossings to aid pedestrians crossing
- Improved street furniture (bins & bollards)

4.6.2 Removal of obsolete lampposts



Blackpool Village benefited from street upgrading works in recent years including installation of new lampposts. A number of the obsolete lampposts were left in situ causing obstruction and visual clutter on Watercourse Road in particular. The removal of old lampposts would have a positive visual impact on the streetscape. There are approximately 14 posts which require removal.

Plate 4.7 Example of additional lampposts

Objective:

To improve and complete street renewal works by the removal of obsolete lampposts.



Fig. 4.3 Proposed Public Realm Upgrades for Great William O'Brien Street

4.6.3 Derelict Sites

Under the Derelict Sites Act 1990 it is the duty of owners/occupiers and the Council that land does not become or continue to be derelict.

The Council is required to maintain a 'derelict sites register' and enter on the register, the particulars of the land/site; the name and address of each landowner and occupier; the particulars of any Council action taken; and the market value of the land. The Council is required to notify landowners or occupiers of its intention to place site(s) on the Register.

Alternatively, the Council may serve written notice on the landowner or occupier; specifying the measures/actions considered necessary to prevent the land becoming or continuing to be a derelict site.

If the notice is not complied with within the specified timeframe, the Council may take necessary reasonable steps to give effect to the terms of the notice, and recover expenses incurred. The Council may also acquire derelict sites by agreement or compulsory order.

There are a number of buildings in Blackpool Village which could be considered for inclusion on this register. The City Council is currently actively revising its Derelict Sites Register. A concerted effort is required to ensure that those units recommended for inclusion become listed on the register in order to enable the Council to take action to improve designated sites.

Objective:

To continue to monitor and update the Cork City Council Derelict Sites Register with a view to reducing dereliction in the area.

4.6.4 Blackpool Enhancements List

The City Council, through the active involvement of the Community Warden, has been proactive in encouraging improvements in the public realm. There are a number of buildings in a degenerate condition and which display a poor appearance for Blackpool Village.

An enhancement list was drawn up over a year ago by the Community Warden suggesting improvements to buildings. An ongoing concerted effort is being made to encourage the owner's of the buildings to repair, upgrade and maintain façades appearance in order to secure aesthetic improvements.

Objective:

To continue to actively encourage improvements within the village by regularly updating and monitoring the Blackpool Village Enhancement List.

4.6.5 Painting Grant Scheme



A painting grant scheme was launched in May '09. The scheme assisted owners in the upkeep of both residential and commercial façades in the area. There was unprecedented interest in the scheme and a total of 59 applications within the designated boundary were received along with a further 7 applications from outside the designated boundary. Available funding was issued to the first 30 applications received. The results illustrated below show the difference which a properly painted façade can make. This in turn raises the profile of the area in question. Due to the success and uptake of the current scheme, Cork City Council shall seek to run similar schemes for a broader area of Blackpool subject to available funds. Based on the paint scheme model, the

Council will also investigate the possibility of operating a flower box/basket scheme with the co-operation of the general public.





Plate 4.8 Results of Painting Grant Scheme

Objective:

To run future painting schemes in the wider area subject to available funding.

4.6.6 Flower Box/Basket Grant Scheme

The Council (in co-operation with RAPID) will aim to organise and operate a flower planting grant scheme in Blackpool Village subject to available funding. In a drive to enhance the heart of the village, the aim will be to provide flower window boxes and hanging baskets to interested applicants. Applicants will then be encouraged to utilise these to enhance their properties and will be eligible for entrance into a competition for the best display. As per the painting grant scheme, the flower planting scheme will be proactively advertised locally, in local newspapers and also on the Council's website.



Objective:

To operate a flower box/hanging basket scheme subject to available funding.



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Chapter 5: Culture & Heritage

5.0 Introduction

This section of the plan outlines the need to highlight the importance of local heritage and culture within an area.

Aim

To enhance heritage and cultural attractions unique to Blackpool Village and Cork City.

5.1 Natural Heritage

One of the actions identified in the National Biodiversity Plan is the promotion of biodiversity among the public. Cities provide an ideal opportunity for people to become acquainted with their local biodiversity and become involved with initiatives in their areas.



Plate 5.1 Herons

There is an existing site in Blackpool village which is considered a locally important site for biodiversity. The site in question is located on Cathedral Walk off the North City Link Road just opposite the Heineken brewery. This is located behind units 30 - 40 Watercourse Road. It measures approximately 100m x 25m, is bounded by a high stone wall to the east; and a lower stone wall and mesh fencing to the south. Various properties, mainly 2-storey in height, back on to the



west and north of the site. There is access to the site from the eastern side. It is currently zoned ZO 5 “Residential, Local Services & Institutional Uses”. There is noticeable birdlife resident here including herons.



Plate 5.2 Existing Site off Blackpool By-Pass

5.1.2 Habitat Potential

The configuration of the site, including the two existing watercourses, may constrain the development potential of the site. As such, it is considered this has the potential to incorporate a Bird Sanctuary or Biodiversity Park. This could involve the following actions:

- Improve access into site for maintenance purposes only e.g.
- Open portholes in the perimeter walls to allow viewing to the public.
- Increase enclosure by raising boundary fence to inhibit dumping and access.
- Create a viewing platform.
- Install interpretive panel.
- Clean out rubbish and clear the river of invasive species.
- Plant appropriate berry producing trees and bushes.
- Install bird and bat boxes.



Plate 5.3 Bats & Sample of Bird Box



0 10 20 Metres

Fig. 5.1 Existing Site at Cathedral Walk



5.2 Cork City and County Archives

Cork City and County Archives is jointly funded by Cork City Council, Cork County Council, and University College Cork. The day to day operation of the Archives is carried out by Cork City Council. In June 2006, the Archives opened a new purpose built building which was funded as part of the Cork City Council 2005 Capital Programme.



Plate 5.4 Cork City and County Archives

The Seamus Murphy Building is located at 33a Great William O'Brien Street. Aside from important research and academic use, it



has proven very popular for locals and visitors seeking information on their heritage. Its

architecturally-styled form has also added to the streetscape. There is capacity to the rear of the building to facilitate an extension in the future to support an increasing archive collection on the site of the former Fire



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Station. Cork City Council owns this site which is being used as a Council depot.

5.3 Temporary Use of Vacant Spaces

There are a number of vacant buildings in the Blackpool Area and “To Let” or “For Sale” signs are becoming more prevalent. Many of these units are relatively new. It is considered that a temporary use may be viable through a new “Creative Industry” initiative, based on the Limerick City Council model. It is hoped that the initiative will temporarily fill vacant retail window space in Blackpool with work from creative industry practitioners based in Cork.

The initiative is an opportunity for local artists and crafts people to come together to show case work and to highlight the indigenous industries that are thriving in the city. It is hoped that the scheme will have the dual benefit of reducing vacant street frontages and also actively supporting and promoting home-based crafts and industries.

Objective:

To actively encourage the temporary use of vacant units in Blackpool Village for use by local artists and crafts people.

5.4 Regular Local Market

The centre of Blackpool is now dominated by the Church of the Annunciation and its adjoining plaza, but Dennehy (1980, 16) tells us that the site of the church was the original market place in Blackpool.

Cork City Council will actively support a regular local market located at the heart of Blackpool Village. A number of farmer’s markets which have been introduced in and around Cork City in recent years. While not excluding foods produce, it is envisaged that Blackpool Market be a local arts and crafts orientated market. As such, this would be a focal attraction unique to Blackpool Village.



Plate 5.5 Example of Outdoor Flea Market

There are a number of locations which are considered appropriate in Blackpool Village. These are:

- The area in front of the Church of the Annunciation and adjoining Great William O'Brien Street
- The plaza alongside the church at Watercourse Road
- The paved area underneath the fly-over along Thomas Davis Street.

All or some of the proposed sites could be used on a monthly or weekly basis. It is envisaged that a pilot scheme could initially be run to assess the public interest. A successful regular market would generate activity and entice visitors to the area.

Objective:

To actively encourage and support a regular local market at the heart of Blackpool Village.



Chapter 6: Development Strategy

6.0 Introduction

This section provides a strategy for future development in the area. There are a number of opportunity sites within Blackpool Village which could, if developed, bring new life and activity to the area.

This section focuses on the main opportunity sites in the area which may become viable for development in the next 5-6 years. It aims to provide a coherent strategy for their development. Some general guidance regarding the development of smaller infill sites will also be included as well as outlining some key urban design principles.

6.1 Summary of Proposals

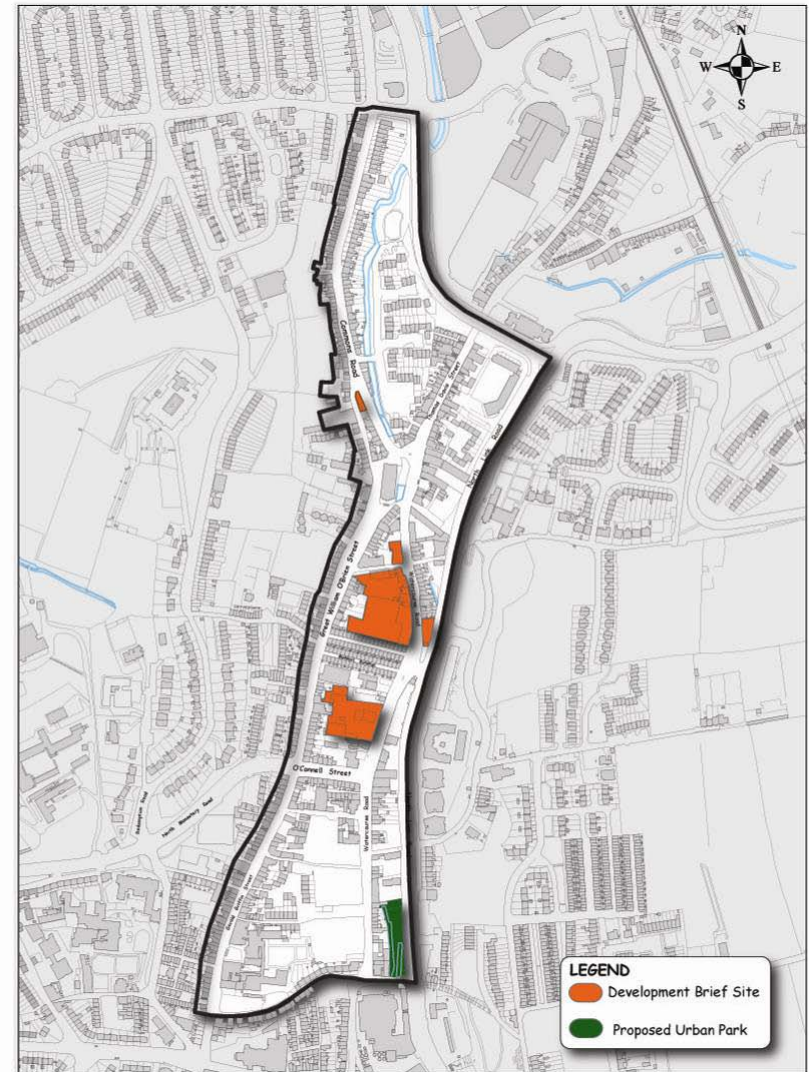
- To provide guidance for good urban design practice, tackling dereliction and new infill development.
- Guidance for the redevelopment of O’Meara’s site.
- The potential for developing the T&A site is discussed.
- The potential for developing O’Reilly’s Garage (Maxol Petrol Station), Watercourse Road is discussed.
- Guidance is given for developing the narrow site at entrance to Blackpool Village opposite T & A site.
- Potential for developing site at junction of Brocklesby Street and Commons Road.

Aim

To seek the appropriate and sensitive development of the area in a way which injects new activity, improves its urban character and provides a vibrant mix of uses.

6.2 Cork City Development Plan 2009-2015

The majority of the plan area is designated as a Neighbourhood Centre as part of the City Development Plan 2009-2015. The primary purpose of these centres is to fulfil a local shopping function, providing a mix of convenience shopping, lower order comparison shopping, and local services to residential and employment areas. As the Development Plan states ‘some of these centres need to be



Blackpool Plan Area - Development Sites

Fig. 6.1 Proposed Development Opportunity Sites

enhanced significantly in terms of their retail offering, mix of uses, public realm, and overall viability and vitality'. Limited retail offices will be acceptable in these centres to serve local needs and are subject to restrictions on size and extent including a cap of 100sq.m per unit. Residential uses are also acceptable. The Development Plan also notes that 'where neighbourhood centres are located in areas of historic significance, for example former villages now in the suburbs of the city such as Blackpool, policies to protect and enhance their architectural character will be applied'. (CDP 2009-2015, Chapter 9, Policy 9.28)

6.3 Street Improvement Areas

A number of sections of the plan are designated as *Street Improvement Areas*. The Blackpool Village areas include Commons Road, Madden's Buildings, from 13 to 21 Great William O'Brien Street, 33 to 45 (excluding 37) Great William O'Brien Street, 54 to 82 Great William O'Brien Street, 60 to 104 Gerald Griffin Street and on the opposite side from the Presentation Sister's School to 1 Gerald Griffin Street, and also including 13 to 40 Watercourse Road which adjoins the proposed urban park as detailed in Chapter 5.

These areas are zoned for the following reasons:

- To protect the mainly residential nature of these areas. Small scale local services may be open for consideration in exceptional circumstances provided the architectural character of the building or area is not compromised.
- To maintain the architectural character of these areas. Insensitive alterations which would detract from their character will be discouraged.
- To reduce the impact of traffic on residential amenities.

The remainder of the plan area is zoned as *Residential, Local Services and Institutional Uses*. This aims to protect and provide for residential uses, local services, institutional uses, and civic uses, having regard to employment policies outlined in Chapter 3 of the City Plan. The employment policies in Chapter 3 designate particular locations for offices, office based industry, major retailing development and these

uses are not generally open for consideration in this zone.

6.4 Existing Situation

- Blackpool Village is a very historic area with a rich industrial built heritage and sensitive renewal of the existing building stock should be encouraged where possible.
- There are a number of vacant or underutilised sites which would benefit from new development activity to improve the appearance of the general area.
- There is a need to provide for good quality residential development to encourage more families to remain or return to live in the area and balance the population profile.
- Blackpool Village is located adjacent to the city centre and is an excellent location in which to live, work and visit. However, its potential is not being fully realised at present.

6.5 Good Urban Design

Well designed spaces and buildings play a vital role in contributing to the creation of attractive and exciting places. The following outlines some of the main ways in achieving this:

6.5.1 Key Aspects of Good Design

- **Places for People** ~ for places to be enjoyed and actively used, they must be safe, comfortable, varied and attractive, distinctive and offer variety, choice and fun.
- **Enrich the Existing** ~ new development should enrich the qualities of existing urban places and respond to its setting.
- **Make Connections** ~ places should be easily accessible and integrated physically and visually with their surroundings taking into account the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and the car;
- **Work with the Landscape** ~ a balance needs to be struck between the natural and man-made environment and a site's resources utilised including climate, landform, landscape and ecology, to maximise energy conservation and amenity.



- **Mix of Uses and Form** ~ stimulating and interesting places meet the needs and demands of a wide range of people and also weave together different building forms, uses, tenures and densities.
- **Design for Change** ~ developments should be flexible and respond to future changes in use, lifestyle and demography. They should be designed for energy and resource efficiency, contain flexibility in terms of use and introduce new approaches to transportation, traffic management and parking.

Source: Urban Design Compendium 1 & 2, 2007, English Partnership

6.6 Development Opportunities

Chapter 4 Traffic and Public Realm comments on issues such as tackling dereliction and the painting grants scheme. This chapter proposes to look at a number of specific potential development sites in the Village. These are:

1. The O'Meara Camping site, Watercourse Road.
2. T & A Builder's Merchants site, Watercourse Road.
3. Maxol Petrol Station, Watercourse Road.
4. Site Depot at By-pass entrance to Blackpool Village
5. No. 23 Commons Road.

These sites are zoned as 'Neighbourhood Centre' under the City Development Plan 2009-2015 and there is no proposal to amend this zoning under the Blackpool Village AAP. As per Section 15.14 of the City Development Plan, 'the primary purpose of neighbourhood centres is to fulfil a local shopping function, providing a mix of convenience shopping, lower order comparison shopping, and local services to residential and employment areas.' The details listed below are indicative to provide constructive guidance on possible options which the Council deems suitable for these sites and will have to comply with the adopted policies and objectives of the City Development Plan 2009-2015 and also national and regional guidelines. The following provides an indication of the possibilities which could be considered but is not limited to same.

6.6.1 O'Meara's Camping, Watercourse Road

Site Description

This site is located at the corner of Watercourse Road and Berwick Lane. The site area is approximately 0.037hectares, (370sq.m.). The site is occupied by a vacant two-storey building, currently in a state of disrepair, (which the Council has assessed for inclusion on the Derelict Sites Register).



Plate 6.1 O'Meara's Site



In the 20th Century, Berwick Lane was known as Lido Lane after the Lido Cinema, sited at the north-eastern end of the lane. The former 'box office', situated on the O'Meara site is a visible reminder of an important social and cultural element of Blackpool history. Any redevelopment of the site might reflect this history.

Plate 6.2 Aerial Photograph of O'Meara's Site



Zoning

The site is zoned ‘Neighbourhood Centre’ under the City Development Plan 2009-2015 and is within the ‘Blackpool’ Architectural Conservation Area.

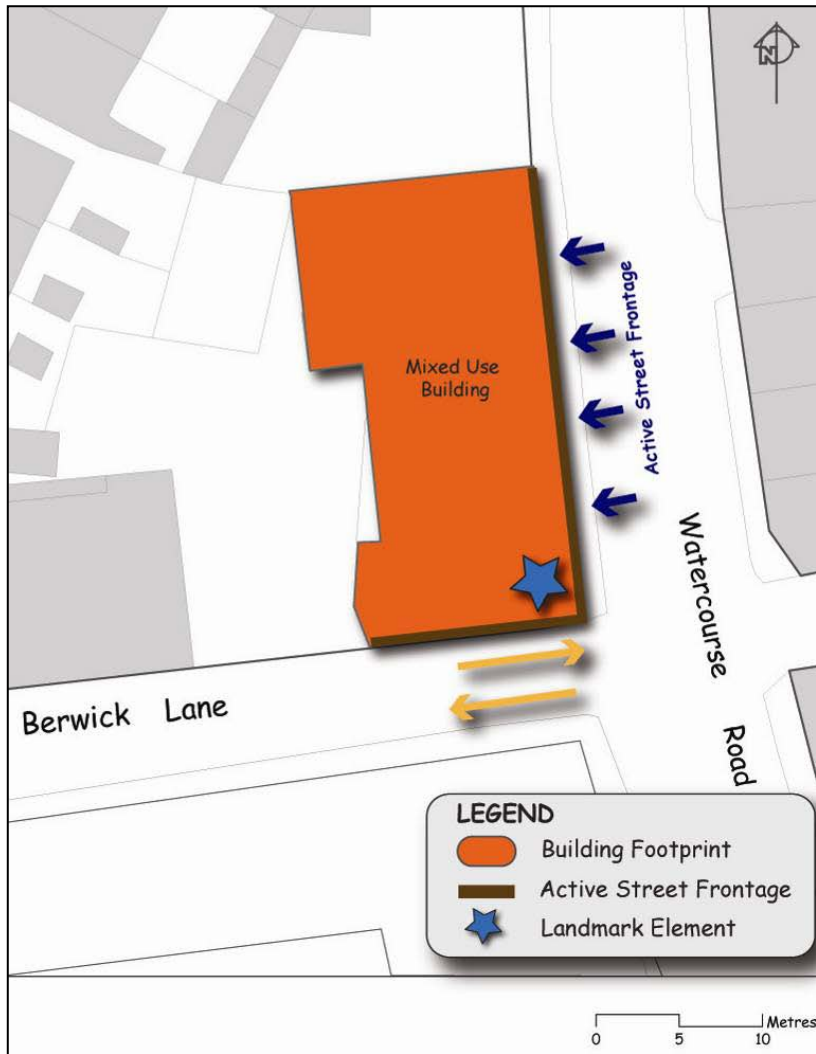


Fig. 6.2 Development Strategy for O'Meara's Site



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Proposal

Given its prominent ‘corner’ location within Blackpool Village, it is considered that the site is capable of facilitating a ‘local landmark’ building of up to 3-4 storeys. The site is ideally suited for a mixed use development including an active street frontage and residential units at upper levels. A community or social related use could also be accommodated within the site, such as an indoor market and a youth café at ground floor level; artist/photographic studios and/or retail offices at first floor level and residential apartments at second and third floors.

6.6.2 T & A Building Merchant's Site, Watercourse Road.

Site Description

This site is located on the corner of Watercourse Road and Berwick Lane opposite the O'Meara's Camping building. The site area is approximately 0.54hectares, (5,400sq.m.). This site currently houses a builder's merchants and a number of empty units fronting onto Watercourse Road.

Zoning

The site is zoned ‘Neighbourhood Centre’ under the City Development Plan 2009-2015 and is within the Blackpool Architectural Conservation Area.



Plate 6.3 Front of T & A Site, Watercourse Road

Proposal

Protecting building form and the established character of the area is important, having regard to its location within the Architectural Conservation Area. The site is bounded by single-storey terraced houses (Protected Structures) along the southern boundary; the western boundary is defined by two-storey structures.

Re-development should include the objective of increasing the width of Berwick Lane and insertion of a 2.0m wide footpath along the entire length of lane to assist vehicle and pedestrian movements between Watercourse Road and Great William O'Brien Street.

Surface car-parking should be limited, and located within or to the rear of site. Underground car parking is the preferred option. The opportunity exists to create a new pedestrian link (east-west) through the site between Watercourse Road and Great William O'Brien Street.



New buildings should address the public realm and respect the established building line and the established character of the area. Building form and townscape issues should override strict compliance with parking standards.

Plate 6.4 Aerial Photograph of T&A Site

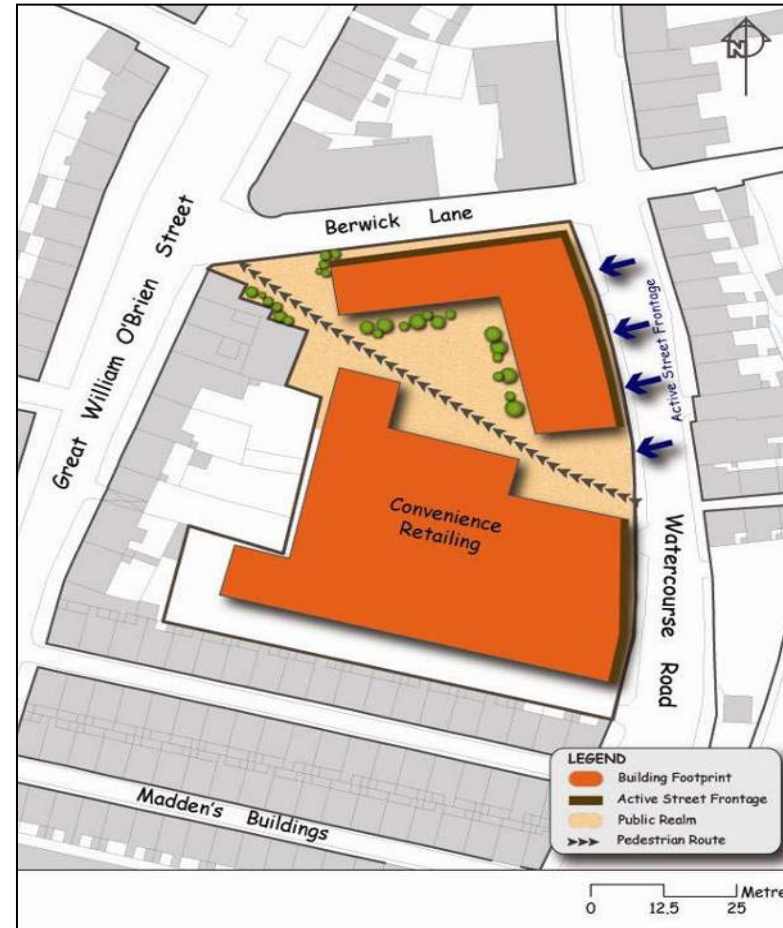


Fig. 6.3 Development Strategy for entire T&A Site



There are a number of on-site structures that require demolition in order to facilitate redevelopment, including buildings addressing Watercourse Road and Berwick Lane.

It is considered that the site can accommodate a mixed-use development including a convenience retail unit with floor area in the region of 1,500 net sq.m at ground level; retail offices, offices or residential apartments at upper levels. The ground floor level units at the junction of Berwick Lane and Watercourse Road should accommodate retail or retail service use or pharmacy, hair salon, etc.

It is considered that the southern boundary can accommodate 2 - 2.5 storey (7-9 metres) structures. The western boundary can accommodate 2 - 3 storey (7-10 metres) structures. New development should be sympathetic to the existing structures abutting the site, in terms of form and design. Care should be taken to avoid dead street frontage.

6.6.3 O'Reilly Garages, Blackpool Ltd.(Maxol Petrol Station) Watercourse Road

Site Description

This site is located towards the lower end of Watercourse Road, south of the Old Fire Station. The site area is approximately 0.27 hectares, (2,700sq.m.). The site is currently in use as a petrol station, vehicle cleaning & servicing facilities to the rear (west) of the site, on Gt. William O'Brien St. The site is bounded by a terrace of two-storey houses to the rear, two-storey commercial building to the north and a three-storey building to the south on Watercourse Rd.

Zoning

The site is zoned as 'Neighbourhood Centre' under the City Development Plan 2009-2015 and is within the 'Blackpool' Architectural Conservation Area.

Proposal

It is considered that the site can facilitate buildings of 3 & 4 storeys on

Watercourse Road and 2-storey structures to the rear of site.

The site can accommodate a mixed-use development, including retail unit or retail office units at ground and first floor levels addressing Watercourse Rd. Residential apartments can be accommodated at second and third floor levels and to the rear of the site. It is recommended that a ground floor restaurant with outdoor seating area be incorporated into any scheme to add vitality and vibrancy and to enliven the street with activity. An alternative use for the site may be third level education or training facility.



Plate 6.5 Aerial Photograph of O'Reilly's Garage (Maxol Petrol Station)



New buildings should address the public realm, respect the established building line, and character of the area. The wide footpath on Watercourse Rd should be retained. Streetscape and urban form needs to be strengthened. Building form and townscape issues should override strict compliance with car parking standards. Surface parking should be limited and located within or to the rear of site. Underground car-parking is the preferred option.

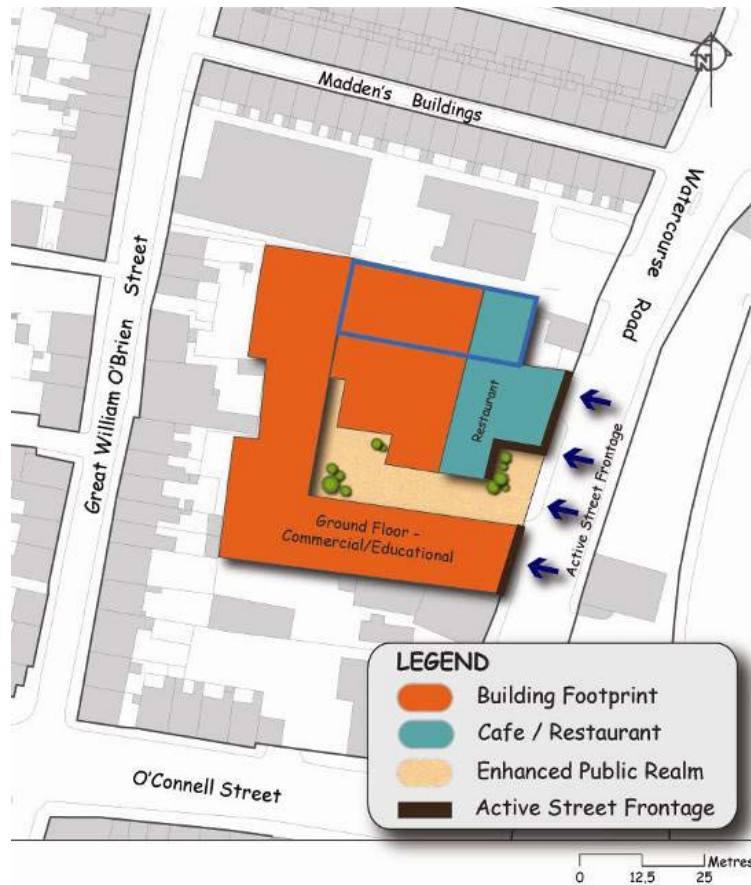


Fig. 6.4 Development Strategy for O'Reilly's Garage (Maxol Petrol Station)



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6.6.4 Site at By-pass Entrance to Blackpool Village (abutting Foley's Row).

Site Description

This site is located at the northern side of the entrance into Blackpool Village from the By-pass, east of Assumption Rd. The site area is approximately 0.036 hectares, (360sq.m.). It is currently used by Cork City Council for parking Council vehicles. It is bounded to the south by an ESB substation, to the north by residential dwellings on Foley's Row, to the east by the Blackpool By-pass and west by Watercourse Road.



Plate 6.6
Aerial
Photograph
of Site at
By-pass
Entrance to
Blackpool
Village

Zoning

It is zoned as ‘Neighbourhood Centre’ under the City Development Plan 2009-2015.

Proposal

The linear form and roadside location of the site act as constraints to development. However, it is considered that a local landmark building could be accommodated on this visually prominent site. The extensive roadside frontage of the site requires that high quality building design and choice of finishing materials are of primary importance. The residential amenity of Foley’s Row should be protected.

It is considered that a 2 & 3-storey building of mixed uses, including residential apartments at upper floor levels or abutting Foley’s Row at northern end of site, could be facilitated. Building design should override compliance with the Council’s parking standards. Ground floor uses could include local services or convenience retail, etc.

The informal ‘green area’ to the south of the site could be re-landscaped to create an appropriate setting for a public sculpture or art installation, thus reinforcing this important entrance/gateway into Blackpool village.

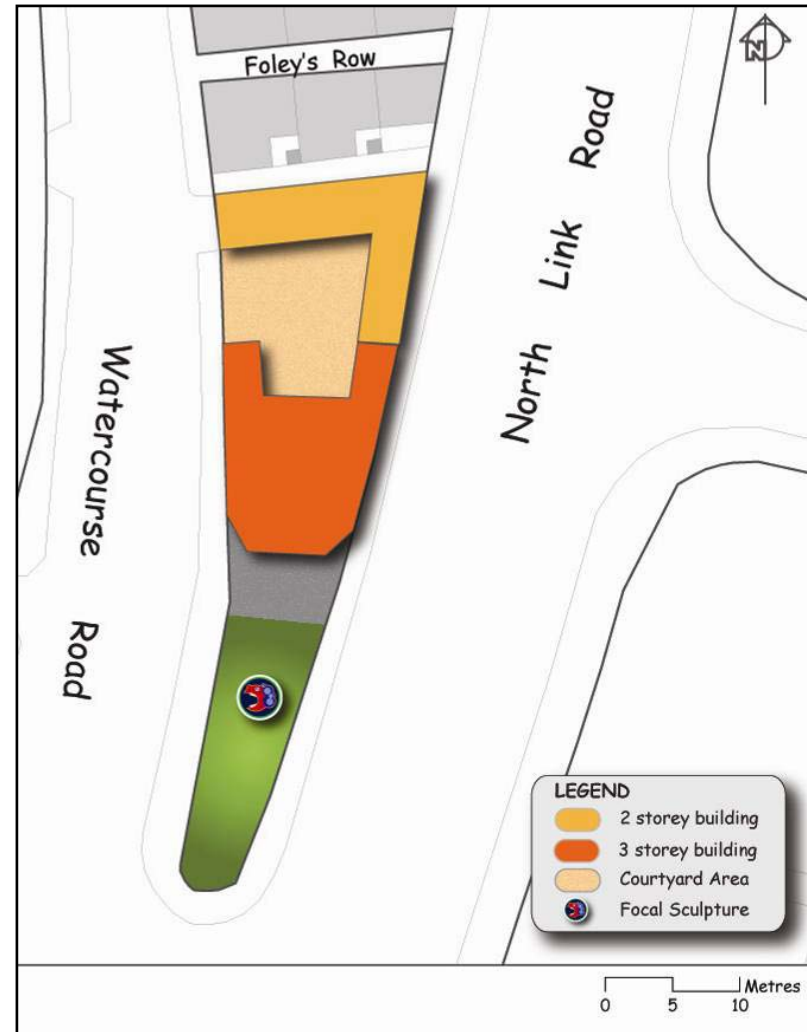


Fig. 6.5 Development Strategy for Site at Entrance to Village



6.6.5 No. 23 Commons Road, T/A Blackpool Auto's

Description

Located at the northern end of the Village, this site occupies an important position at the junction of Commons Rd & Brocklesby St. The site area is approximately 0.01 hectares, (100sq.m.). The site is currently occupied by a shed type structure housing car maintenance services including advertising hoarding.



Plate 6.7 No. 23 Commons Road

Zoning

The site is zoned as 'Neighbourhood Centre' under the City Development Plan 2009-2015.



Plate 6.8 Aerial Photograph No. 23 Commons Road



Proposal

Redevelopment of the site should respect the existing massing, form and character of the area. It is considered that a 2-storey structure could be accommodated on-site.

Given its location, a commercial use such as a local retail service/office unit would be preferable. Alternatively, an active ground floor use such as an artist's live-work unit or restaurant/café could make a positive contribution to the streetscape. A residential development may be considered appropriate.

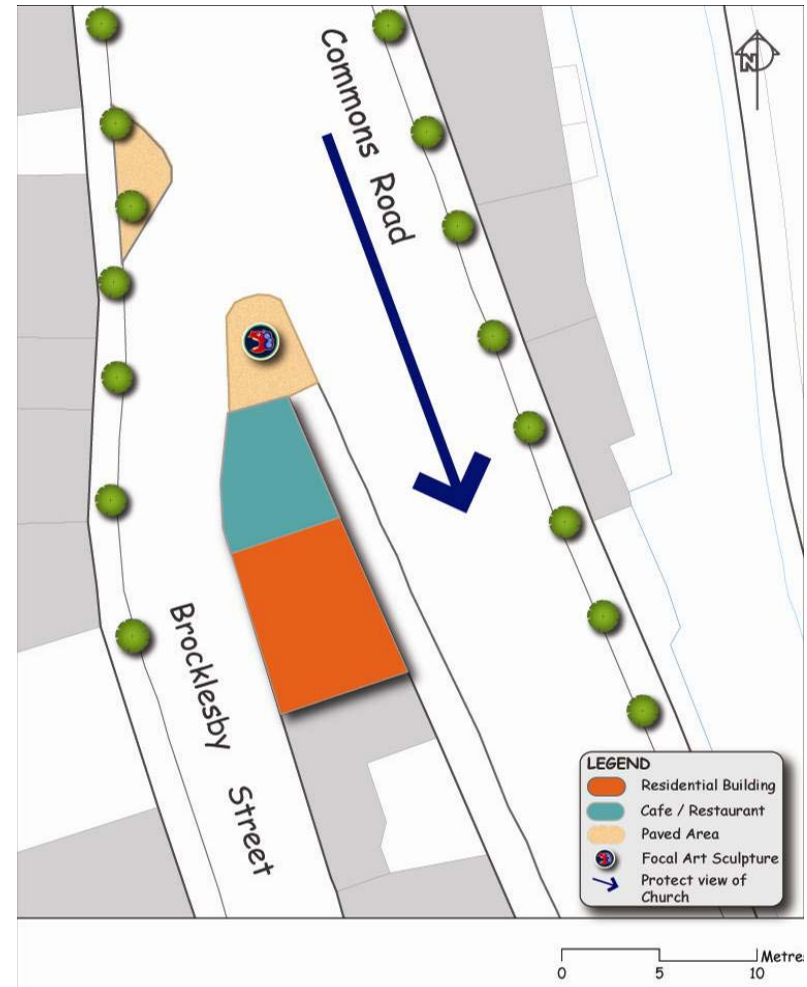


Fig. 6.6 Development Strategy for No. 23 Commons Road



Chapter 7: Implementation Strategy

7.0 Introduction

The implementation strategy sets out the programme of actions that the City Council will undertake to achieve the aims and objectives set out in this plan. These can be grouped as follows:

- Traffic and Public Realm
- Development Strategy
- Built Heritage and Conservation
- Culture and Heritage

A project team will be established once the plan has been adopted to ensure delivery of key projects.

Project	Cost Estimates	Completion Target
Traffic and Public Realm		
Additional Signage for Village on Blackpool By-pass	€800	2010
Temporary Public Car-park at old Fire Station	€2,000	2010
Revising Cathedral Walk into 2-way Street	TBC	2011/2012
Removal of obsolete lampposts	Under orig. urban renewal scheme	2010
Road Scheme on Commons Road	€1,200	2010
Re-development of Public Open space at Church of the Annunciation	TBC	2012
Make Brocklesby Street One-Way Outbound	TBC	2011
Built Heritage and Conservation		
Installation of historical laneway plaques	TBC	2010
Commencement of process for inclusion of new structures within the Record of Protected Structures	n/a	2010
Development Strategy		
Use of Derelict Sites Act to tackle dereliction in the area, focusing on specific areas	As required	2010
Flower Planting Scheme	€800	2010
Culture and Heritage		
Incorporation of urban nature reserve: viewing platform, interpretative panel etc.	TBC	2012
Temporary Use of Vacant Spaces for Artists	n/a	As required
Facilitation of Regular Local Flea Market	n/a	2010

Appendix 1: Flooding Issues, Blackpool Village

Extracts from “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2009”.

‘With climate change, the frequency, pattern and severity of flooding are expected to change becoming more uncertain and more damaging.

There are two major causes of flooding – Coastal and Inland. River flooding occurs when the capacity of a watercourse is exceeded or the channel is blocked or restricted, and excess water spills out from the channel onto adjacent low-lying areas (the floodplain). This can occur rapidly in short steep rivers or after some time and some distance from where the rain fell in rivers with a gentler gradient.

The principal sources are rainfall or higher than normal sea levels. The principal pathways are rivers, drains, sewers, overland flow and river and coastal floodplains and their defence assets.

Flooding can also arise from the failure of infrastructure designed to store or carry water (e.g. breach of a flood defence, failure of a flap valve or pumping station or blockage of a pipe or culvert). Because of a sudden onset, the impacts of this form of flooding can be severe.’

The Lee Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study states there is limited flooding in North Cork City (Blackpool) along the Glen, Bride and Kiln Rivers. The Glen Bride Kiln River Improvement Scheme has reduced the flood hazard along these watercourses. The capacity in the culverts in Blackpool Village is sufficient to deal with 50 year floods. The screens are being regularly maintained. ‘The key principle is to avoid inappropriate types of development that would create unacceptable risks from flooding and therefore significant developments will be required to assess flooding impacts.’

(See also “Lee Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (CFRAMS)” for more information (<http://www.leecframs.ie/>).



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