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New retail and leisure

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IMAX signs to new cinema complex at Houndshell!

Blackpool's new cinema complex will feature one of the largest IMAX screens in the country.

IMAX has signed up to deliver state-of-the-art, immersive movie experiences at the new multi-screen development which will be known as the Backlot Cinema.

The IMAX screen will stand at 10.8m by 19.8m - bigger than two and wider than six double decker buses!

The Backlot Cinema will comprise 9 screens and a total of 850 luxury seats and will be the anchor tenant of the Phase 2 extension Houndshell Shopping Centre in the heart of Blackpool town centre. The Backlot Diner will open with a classic yet contemporary menu including great shakes and craft cocktails.

With a total investment of £20m, the Houndshell development will make a huge difference to the leisure experience for Blackpool residents to enjoy.

Work on site is progressing and on schedule with steelworks taking shape to build the structure that will feature groundbreaking IMAX with Laser technology, as well as IMAX's 12-channel sound technology.

[Read the full story.](#)

Getting building for a better Blackpool

£8.6m in funding was secured from the government's COVID-19 Getting Building Fund for two key town centre projects to boost the town's economic recovery and create jobs for the local community.

The funding, which was approved by Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in October 2020, has kick-started the development at Houndshell Shopping Centre and the regeneration of Abingdon Street Market.

Abingdon Street Market

£3.6m has been used to buy the market and carry out a full internal refurbishment, securing its long term future in the heart of the town centre.

The renovated market is a bright, modern space, with new glazed doors and windows, including:

- A new 250 seating area for socialising and enjoying food and beverages purchased in the market
- Stalls for food produce, food and beverage, artisan stalls and flexible retail units
- Coffee stall and bar area

Abingdon Street Market will also open retail units with a range of products, from fresh produce to handmade crafts and gifts later in the year.



Houndshell Shopping Centre - Phase two development

VIPs and members of the Houndshell development team met back in September 2021 to break ground at Tower Street Car Park at Houndshell Shopping Centre to mark the start of the main contract for Phase Two works on site.

In a style only fitting for the iconic seaside resort of Blackpool, the occasion was marked with a ceremonial first (bucket) and spade in the ground!

Three key deals were signed in February 2021 that enabled the scheme to commence: the council's purchase of Tower Street Car Park, a lease agreement for a new 22,500 sq ft wilko store and a deal with MMC Cinemas for a nine screen, 850 seat, 40,500 sq ft multi-media cinema complex, including the biggest immersive screen in Lancashire.



GRAHAM has been appointed as the lead contractor and CBRE the project manager and cost consultant for the scheme.

The completed scheme will deliver:

- Over 100 jobs created both directly through the scheme and locally
- 0.5 acres of brownfield land developed
- 76,500 sq. ft. of new commercial floorspace
- Approx. over 260 construction jobs created over the build period
- Increase of 1.2m shoppers and visitors to the Houndshell Shopping Centre

Traffic management – from September 2021

There are currently some temporary changes to the road layout around Houndshell Car Park work on the development continues. Anyone using the car park or accessing nearby areas (including the M&S collection point and Winter Gardens staff entrance) may experience increased congestion, especially when events are on in and around the town centre, so please plan ahead.

Keep up to date and read in full by checking our [Road Closures page](#).

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