

Report to:	PLANNING COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Carl Carrington, Head of Planning, Quality and Control
Date of Meeting	30 August 2017

CONSERVATION AREA GUIDANCE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To seek formal approval for the Conservation Area Guidance.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To approve the Conservation Area Guidance.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To assist in the good management of Blackpool's conservation areas and provide additional resources for applicants in making decisions about changes and developments to assets within conservation areas.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

3.3.1 Increase levels of 1-1 support to applicants – This is in fact the ideal, but would be resource intensive, particularly where clear guidance would help applicants 'self-serve' regarding minor matters or understanding when to contact the Conservation Officer.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool"

5.0 Background Information

5.1 As the number of conservation areas in Blackpool grows the number of enquiries about what is permitted within them increases. This guidance will reduce the number of general enquiries and allow clients the ability to 'self-serve' in line with the Council's Channel Shift Agenda, reducing general enquiries and making the Council approach to development in conservation areas clearer.

5.2 The document has no policy status, but offers guidance both in principle and covers where certain materials or standards of construction/fitting are required.

5.3 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.4 List of Appendices:

5.4.1 Appendix 6a: Draft Conservation Area Guidance.

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 As the guidance holds no status as policy, and is in line with national guidance and that of comparable local authorities, there are no legal considerations.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 The publication of guidance will relieve pressure on the conservation service as it allows applicants to understand the general principles and approach applied to conservation areas in Blackpool. This will allow the Conservation Officer to spend more time with more complex or challenging applications to achieve the best planning outcome.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 As the national legislation governing conservation areas is deemed to have met the legal tests around equality, there are no equalities considerations.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 There are no financial considerations.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 Blackpool continues to be a leader in the northwest in the way in which it responds to and manages its historic built environment and has built up a reputation as being pro-active in this field. Not having this type of guidance leaves the Council open to

censure.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 There are no ethical considerations.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 Consultation with Blackpool Civic Trust and Blackpool Winter Gardens Trust is underway, but in line with the Built Heritage Strategy, they have already expressed support for clearer guidance for conservation areas.

13.0 Background papers:

None