

STANLEY PARK CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

October 2017

Blackpool Council



Stanley Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

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Stanley Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

1. Introduction

The Stanley Park Conservation Area is centred on Stanley Park itself. The Park is listed as Grade II* on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens and was constructed between 1924 and 1926 to designs by Thomas Mawson. The park and surrounding streets were designated a conservation area in January 1984.

The Park is a superb example of an early 20th Century public park with contemporary integral sports and leisure facilities. The Park is relatively untouched with few changes to the overall layout, and little change to the built structures within it.

The streets around the Park contain intact and well preserved examples of high quality interwar housing, many on a large scale with attendant gardens, boundary treatments and public realm features such as wide grass verges and street trees, all laid out to a street plan specified by Mawson. All are contemporary with, and complementary to, the park.

These streets represent all that was good in town planning in the interwar period, demonstrating new thought in how recreation and open space were intrinsically linked with residential development and the creation of holistic environments for health and well-being.

Stanley Park is an important resource within the town. It provides a large number of recreational and cultural facilities for residents of the town and is widely used by residents of the whole Fylde coast. Public support for the Park is strong, with an active Friends group organising entertainment and events throughout the year, as well as allowing the public an important channel of input into the day-to-day running of the park.

In 2005 a £5.5m Heritage Lottery Fund-aided programme of repair, conservation and enhancement was undertaken to help restore the park to its former glory. In addition it enhanced the appeal of the facilities (sport and leisure) within it, bringing an increased number of visitors and a wider appreciation of the beauty, historic and recreational value of this key open space in the town.

The following document is an update of the 2006 Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. It is supported by a number of key documents that have relevance to the historical development of the town and park, and the strategies adopted by the local authority in order to manage change in the conservation area.

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2. Context - Historical Development of Blackpool

Blackpool as a town is first recorded by cartographer Emmanuel Bowen in 1751, and at this time consisted mainly of cottages and Fox Hall. By the end of 1770 the town was becoming fashionable as a sea bathing location for the wealthy. This new 'craze' resulted in the building of the first visitor accommodation.

A growing number of visitors were making the twelve hour horse-drawn coach ride from Manchester to bathe in (and to drink!) the health giving sea waters of Blackpool. Bailey's Hotel opened on the seafront in 1776 and was the first purpose-built hotel in the town.

By the 1840s Blackpool consisted of a small collection of buildings spread along the seafront between Chapel Street and Cocker Square. The majority of the hotels occupied seafront positions, and Blackpool began to grow in a linear fashion with new development following the seafront.

In 1844 the Talbot-Clifton family purchased land from the site of the soon-to-be North Station to the seafront, and laid out the new Talbot Road. This culminated in a grand square (Talbot Square) which was bequeathed to the town in perpetuity. Talbot Square was at the heart of the town from the 1840s onwards. The square survives today, although it is very much dominated by highway infrastructure.

During the 1840s, the town continued to develop along genteel lines catering for the wealthy and privileged. By the time of the opening of the Railway Station in 1846, Blackpool was attracting several thousand well-to-do visitors per year.

The fabric of the town centre as we know it developed from the 1850s onwards, functioning as Blackpool's civic, retail and tourism heart. Today there are a diverse range of buildings within the Town Centre Conservation Area. Amongst them are several listed and locally listed buildings and structures including the Grade I Blackpool Tower, Grade II* Grand Theatre, Winter Gardens and Sacred Heart Church, and Grade II North Pier, Central Library and Grundy Art Gallery, War Memorial and former Post Office.

The development of the railway served to fuel the development of Blackpool which became progressively more accessible to the mill workers of Lancashire and Manchester. The opening of the Winter Gardens in 1878 was almost certainly the town's last attempt at catering for a 'sophisticated' audience.

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By 1893 the street grid and layout of the town centre had been largely completed, and is little different from that which survives today. The 1912 plan shows that Talbot Square, Clifton Street, Talbot Road and Abingdon Street had all been converted to accommodate trams. Other major changes from the 1893 plan included the addition of the Post Office and Town Hall.

From the 1890s through to the 1950s Blackpool developed rapidly, and increasingly catered for the quickly expanding mass holiday market. Much of what we know now as the Unitary Authority area of Blackpool Borough was farmland until the interwar period, when there was a huge development boom in the town. Blackpool at this time was one of the fastest growing towns in the UK, with huge areas under development. After the end of the War in 1918, pressure for new housing and recreational facilities was mounting, and the local authority began to seriously consider the provision of a major public open space and recreational facility. There were few public open green spaces in Blackpool until the development of Stanley Park in 1921, and a lack of recreational facilities which were not aimed at tourists.

3. Brief History of Stanley Park

The park and its surrounding urban context were laid out during this interwar phase of Blackpool's development. It was always seen as an antidote to the hustle and bustle of the Golden Mile on the Promenade.

There had been discussion about the provision of open space for residents in the town from the early 1900's to meet the demands of a rapidly growing population. Between 1870 and 1900, the population of Blackpool rose from around 5,000 to 48,000, putting pressure on infrastructure and housing. The great interwar housing boom was therefore the culmination of an existing growth trend.

A number of pieces of land had been offered to the Council, and there was a proposal to extend the Raikes Hall Pleasure Gardens lying to the west of Whitegate Drive for public use (the land there was later to be developed for housing). The issue came to a head at the end of the Great War, when Alderman Sir Albert Lindsay Parkinson purchased a large plot of land on what is now the park site, and persuaded the Council to buy it off him at the same price he had paid. The Council added to this through compulsory purchase and also received gifts of land from, amongst others, Sir John Bickerstaffe, T.M. Watson and William Lawson. This left the Council with a total of 288 acres.

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In 1922 the Council commissioned architects TH Mawson and Sons of London and Lancaster to prepare plans for a major public park and supporting housing development. The Mawson practice was well established for landscape architecture, but they were also practising town planners. (They advised the government of Greece on the re-planning of Athens). Thomas Mawson, the head of the practice, was President of the Town Planning Institute at the time he was designing the Park, and was intensely active in the Town Planning Movement.

Stanley Park was perhaps the most ambitious public park project of its time to be developed by an English municipality, ranking in importance with contemporary public parks across Europe and America. The park and surrounding housing were planned to complement each other. This technique, known as 'site planning', had been used on several other public schemes such as Regents Park and Sefton Park.

The site originally consisted of agricultural land and was devoid of trees and landscaping. There were few buildings on the site, just a few small houses, dilapidated farm buildings and a brickworks on its western edge. Archive OS maps showing the disposition of the land before the park development, and the new layout of the Park area after development are included at appendix 2.

When looking at the development of the park, the landscape architects felt it was critical that local residents and visitors should be able to access the extensive facilities within the park with minimal difficulty. To facilitate this, the Park's access points and gates were all chosen carefully to correspond with existing or planned pedestrian and vehicular routes.

A key part of the scheme was the development of housing at the periphery of the Park estate. The encircling tree-lined boulevards and roads, and the building plots lining them, were seen as an integral part of the Park's development. The funds from the sale of the building plots were used to offset the considerable expenditure undertaken by the Council in laying out the Park and urban environment.

The Park was officially opened by Lord Stanley, Earl of Derby, in 1926, and remains one of the largest public parks in the country being approximately 256 acres.

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4. Character of the Conservation Area

The Conservation Area is large but, consisting mostly of the Park, is relatively simple in character. Character falls into two distinct areas:

i) Character Area 1: The Park

The park's key significance lies in its completeness as an early 20th Century designed landscape. The original design utilized the natural contours of the land, a shallow bowl shape with undulating edges, to create vistas into and out of the park. Strategically placed buildings and landscape features around these contours make clever use of the topography.

Key Buildings, Features and Facilities

Italian Garden

The Italian Garden is the centrepiece of Stanley Park. Thomas Mawson stated in his report to the Blackpool Corporation that "for scenic effect, an Italian Garden is to be placed at the very heart of the park".

The proposed pavilion (now café), its terrace, the Italian Garden and promenade fronting the lake, result in a complete design concept following the traditions of the most important continental parks.

The Italian Garden has, at its centre, an Italian marble fountain with four seahorses. This was donated in October 1926 by John Magee of the Bolton brewing company Magee Marshall and Co Ltd. Trees, shrubbery, lawns and bedding planting contribute to the colour and formality of this garden.

Where the steps from the terrace meet the Italian Garden there are two lion statues. The 18th century copies of the Medici Lions at the Palazzo Pitti in Florence, sculpted by John Cheere of London, were also donated by John Magee, but were first sited at Stowe House in Buckinghamshire. They have now been returned under a long-term loan agreement with the Council, and the replacement statues here have been cast by Cheere expert Rupert Harris, Her Majesty's Conservator of Sculpture for the Royal Collections.

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Italian Garden

Boating Lake and Lake Terrace/Promenade

The lake terrace lies alongside the easterly side of the Italian Garden and contains formal bedding areas, lawns and a viewing area. A series of steps links the Italian Garden to the lakeside 'promenade' which in turn meets the water's edge which is complete with landing stages.

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View of lake from terrace

Arguably, this is one of the most attractive parts of the park as it provides an interface between gardens, promenade and water and provides attractive views towards the peripheral woodland areas of the park from the lakeside terrace or, at the lower level, from the promenade.

Important elements of the lakeside scene are the boathouses and bandstand, both locally listed, located opposite each other at the head of the lake, and both adjoining the lakeside promenade.

In the report of Thomas Mawson and Sons to Blackpool Corporation in 1922 it states:

“No park of such aptitude is complete without a sheet of water for scenic effect and recreation. Fortunately, the lie of the land in this case is such that it will be easy to obtain a lake great both in size and beauty and interest in its surroundings”.

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Comparison of the master plan for Stanley Park in 1922 and the map of the park as it is today, illustrates how the two are almost identical. The lake, which covers an area of approximately 22 acres, utilises a natural depression which is fed by a dyke. The location of the lake forms a backdrop to the golf course to the north, and provides equally attractive views over it from the East Park Drive Boulevard. Surface soil stripped to create the lake basin was subsequently used to raise, or in some cases completely create, mounded areas around the periphery of the water.

Bandstand and Auditorium

The bandstand and its auditorium occupy a prominent position adjoining the lakeside promenade. The auditorium provides the viewing public with entertainment set against a backdrop of the lake and the green spaces of the park beyond, and is constructed of graduated rustic sandstone steps forming a semi-circle around the bandstand facing the lake.

The bandstand is based on a 'classical temple' design and was designed by E.P. Mawson. It was first used on 1st July 1929. Its architectural features include stylised Corinthian columns, the architrave, frieze and cornice (entablature). The bandstand has a copper roof and finial, and the columns sit on a circular podium.



Bandstand and auditorium

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Bowling Greens and Pavilions

The laying out of recreational facilities was a compromise between convenience, in terms of location, and a need for economical use of landform, thereby helping to keep down the costs of construction. The site chosen for the bowling green had been an old brickworks, and the land was generally level where clay excavation had produced a 'shelf'. The surrounding embankments were planted to provide protection from north-easterly winds whilst allowing the greens to be fully open to the sun.



Embankment to the north east of the bowling greens

The shelters spaced around the greens are designed in the Classical style to match other buildings in the park. Many of the buildings within the Park were designed by the Park architects, with some additions designed by the Council's own architects working closely with Mawson throughout. The use of an overall uniform style of design makes them complementary to the whole character of the Park development both internally and to its external surroundings.

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Bowling green shelter

Gates and Gate Lodges – Mawson Drive

The main gates were carefully chosen by Thomas Mawson to be situated on the axis of Mere Road, which continues in the form of Mawson Drive. The lodges flank the entrance to the park and are rustically styled to look like cottages, faced in roughcast render with sweeping Westmorland slate roofs. The gates themselves are of fine wrought and cast iron and consist of a screen frame containing two pedestrian gates and a pair of full height leaves across the vehicular access drive. The over-gate section of the screen incorporates the name of the park in bold lettering.

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Gates and gatehouses from end of Mere Road

Cocker Clock Tower

The clock tower occupies a strategic position within the park, situated on the north-south axis linking the South gate with the Italian Garden. Being some 26 metres high, the tower stands above the tree plantations of the park and is visible over a wide area, thereby providing a point of reference.

In 1926, the Corporation of Blackpool invited architects to submit designs for a monument for this site. Lionel Budden, who, at the time, was Assistant Professor of Architecture at Liverpool University, submitted the winning entry for this design competition.

The clock tower not only has a practical use, it has a civic stature. The clock face is over 2 metres in diameter and the viewing platform beneath offers extensive views over the park and beyond.

The clock tower design is based on a classical design incorporating pilasters, segmental pediments around the doors, rusticated stonework, gabled pediments, consoles, cornices and a finial. There are two bronze lion head drinking fountains at the base of the clock tower, which is dedicated to Dr William Cocker who was the first mayor of Blackpool following its Incorporation in 1876.

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Cocker memorial clock



Cocker memorial from Garden of Remembrance

Café Building

Mawsons' plan for Stanley Park proposed, at its very centre, an Italian Garden and social centre which were conceived as a composite piece of design. The four storey social centre, proposed on the site of the present café, would stand in its elevated position overlooking the Italian Garden and linked to it by a broad staircase, or steps, reminiscent of a country mansion, thereby enjoying a commanding presence over its terraces and formal garden.

Perhaps regrettably, the proposed social centre was one aspect of the park scheme never to materialise due to escalating costs. However, in view of the growing popularity of the park, the Corporation came to the conclusion that the site should be developed as a café. The building was designed by Chief Architectural Assistant J.C. Robinson, in an art deco style, and was opened in 1937.

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Stanley Park café is symmetrical in design and, despite being only single storey, the giant stone entrance feature and pronounced vertical windows increase the sense of height and scale. This is demonstrated by comparing the height of the door to the height of the windows on each wing of the building.



View of Stanley Park Café from Italian Gardens

Blackpool Model Village

The Model Village was opened in 1968 and is located on a two and a half acre landscaped garden site on East Park Drive. The village is a classic example of its genre, with models ranging from a Scottish castle to a complete Cornish fishing village.

Blackpool Cricket Club

Blackpool Cricket Club was the first officially to use a town name in their title (Blackpool Cricket Club was originally the Victoria Cricket Club until 1878) and had always played on a ground on this site.

The development of the Park saw the re-laying out of the ground and a new Cricket Pavilion, opened by Lancashire President Sir Edwin Stockton on 5 August 1925 before the rest of the park was complete. The site also includes a ladies pavilion, erected on the site of the old wooden striped pavilion in 1933.

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Stanley Park Cricket Club

Stanley Park Golf Course

The 96 acre golf course was designed by renowned course designers Colt and Mackenzie who designed over 300 courses all over the world. When the course was being planned, Mawson advised the Council that to create a course of any real quality the Council needed to purchase a further 50 acres, which it duly did.

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Clubhouse, Stanley Park Golf Club

The course also contains the Woodland Garden, designed as a shelter-belt, but now with mature trees used as a wildlife habitat and a quiet oasis. The edge of the woodland walk area offers good views across the north end of the Park.

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ii) Character Area 2: Residential perimeter

The immediate setting of the park consists principally of its residential perimeter: North Park Drive, East Park Drive, West Park Drive, South Park Drive and the northern end of Whinney Heys Road. The latter includes the Conservation Area's only listed building, the Grade II* Chapel of Our Lady of Lourdes.



Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes

It was originally intended that the park be entirely surrounded by housing but, due to the increased development of residential property along the borough's coast, East Park Drive saw only partial development at its southern end. All of the roads are generally wide, and all of the buildings benefit from front gardens. These factors, together with the wide grass verges and street trees, give the conservation area a distinct suburban leafy character.

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Grass verges and trees on North Park Drive

North Park Drive

The houses on North Park Drive are the best of all the residential development in the area around the park. They tend on the whole to be larger (mainly detached) and, whilst they vary in general style, are all tied together with a unified palette of materials typified by the use of mullioned windows, soft or textured brick, varied roof silhouettes, often with attractively curved roof profiles clad in Westmorland Slate, and interesting chimney forms.

It is in these houses most of all that a contemporary interpretation of the Arts and Crafts style is in evidence, along with a quality of construction typical of the inter war period in Blackpool. Many are clearly adapted from Norman Shaw and Lutyens models.

The houses are generally elevated above road level, and the low boundary treatments and landscaped front gardens give the road an open aspect which makes a significant contribution to the leafy character of the conservation area. Some of the driveway entrances have been widened to allow easier vehicular access, but where this has been handled sensitively it has had a low impact on the character. However, where widening of the driveway has been undertaken with increasing the hardstanding to maximise off-road parking, this has had led to a loss of greenery from front gardens, which has had a negative impact on character.

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West Park Drive

West Park Drive consists of large semi-detached pairs of houses in a wide variety of styles from Swiss Cottage to Sussex Arts and Crafts. There are also short terraces of 4-8 houses in groups along the road, following similar styling groups and all using the construction palette in evidence on North Park Drive.

The sheer variety of styles on West Park Drive makes the development architecturally interesting, and provides a streetscape with a character unique in Blackpool.



North end of West Park Drive

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South end of West Park Drive

These buildings have shorter front gardens than the other perimeter streets, and the majority of the boundary walls at the northern end of the street are intact giving the street a more enclosed feel than in other parts of the conservation area. However, where there are double yellow lines on each side of West Park Drive there is a marked increase in the widening of driveways with associated loss of front garden greenery.

South Park Drive

South Park Drive brings together East and West Park Drive, with the boundary being at the junction of Preston Old Road. The buildings are a mix of detached and semi-detached housing and continue the established material and stylistic palettes used in the rest of the conservation area. The busy transport route and lack of on-street parking has also contributed to some driveway widening and loss of front garden greenery. This is mitigated to a large extent, however, by the presence of street trees.

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East side of South Park Drive



Junction of South Park Drive, East Park Drive and West Park Drive

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East Park Drive

East Park Drive is the least developed of the Park's peripheral streets. It divides the Park from the Zoo, Golf Course and the Herons Reach Hotel and Golf Course. The houses on the Drive are akin to those on West Park Drive, tending to be semi-detached. These all follow the established material and stylistic palettes used on North and West Park Drives, and also benefit from long front gardens. Again, driveway widening is a feature on this busy main road although most gardens have retained planting to some degree.



South east side of East Park Drive

Zoo

Blackpool Zoo opened on the 6th July 1972 on the site of the old Blackpool Aerodrome. Some of the original buildings survive including an interesting art deco style hangar. The Zoo now houses a nationally important collection of animals including lions, tigers and elephants as well as a new Dinosaur Safari.

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Public Open Spaces

The park is the main public open space in the Conservation Area, and by its nature provides varied and extensive facilities for events and activities. Key areas in this respect are the Bandstand (where regular summer concerts are still held) and the wide terrace in front of the Art Deco Café, overlooking the Italian Garden.

There is a small open space on the corner of East Park Drive and Weymouth Road which is managed for wildlife by volunteers and the Park's Service.

Vistas Within the Conservation Area

The regular street pattern and the central location of the Park create a series of views through the surrounding residential development to the park. The rise of the land towards the coast prevents views of the sea, but the Tower is visible in a virtually straight line along Mere Road from the main gates of the Park (to the west), and is seen in glimpses from other points in the surrounding streets. Views of the park effectively dominate all axial approach roads, which were laid out under Mawson's guidance to achieve maximum effect.

The Park itself contains a number of important landscape vistas. It is designed in the classic manner, with vistas, views and buildings around every corner. There are few areas within the Park that do not have a view of one of the key features within it.

Landmark Buildings

Landmark buildings within the Conservation Area are almost exclusively in the Park itself. These include: Stanley Park Bandstand, The Art Deco Café, and the Cocker Clock Tower. The exception to this is the grade II* listed Chapel of Our Lady of Lourdes on Whinney Heys Road (see appendix 3).

Soft Landscaping

In addition to the park itself, many streets are tree-lined and soft verge treatments are common. Streets are generally wide, but not so wide as to undermine the sense of neighbourhood.

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Soft landscaping opposite houses on East Park Drive



Housing on East Park Drive with wide grass verges

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5. Improvement Potential

The residential properties within the Conservation Area are generally very well maintained. Development has occurred mainly to the side and rear of properties in the form of extensions, although some properties have widened their driveways and added railings to the tops of boundary walls. Most still retain their original plot layout and key features such as garden walls, gateposts and external design form. The majority of windows are now upvc, and many of the front doors have also have been replaced with modern alternatives, although some good examples of original doors remain. These should be used to inform designs for replacing inappropriate modern designs when the opportunity arises.



Examples of original doors in the Conservation Area

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The relatively high level of intactness is due to the Article 4 direction order in force since the conservation area was designated (attached at appendix 4) which has removed permitted development rights for certain works to visible elevations.

Nevertheless, changes in permitted development legislation have led to some loss of character, and a new article 4 direction order was introduced in 2014 in order to respond to these changes to prevent development which could undermine the character and appearance of the conservation area (attached at appendix 5).

The most intrusive features in the townscape are the heavy traffic and associated traffic management signage and road markings, which may prove difficult to remedy.



Day-to-day management and future development of the park itself needs to be balanced with responsible stewardship. The Conservation Area Management Plan sets out how this can be achieved.

Stanley Park Conservation Area
Appraisal and Management Plan

Part 2

**Stanley Park Conservation Area
Conservation Area Management Plan**

Stanley Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

1. Introduction

This report has been prepared by Blackpool Council and forms part of the Council's commitment to increasing the understanding, and care, of Blackpool's historic built environment.

An online public consultation was carried out from 17th July to 31st August 2017. In addition, copies of the draft management plan and feedback sheets were made available in Central Library and at the Stanley Park Visitor Centre. There was also a drop-in session at the visitor centre on Saturday 5th August so that members of the public could ask questions about the proposed management plan. Feedback from the consultation has been included in this final version of the management plan.

2. Stanley Park Conservation Area

Summary of Conservation Area Value

The Stanley Park Conservation Area is centred on Stanley Park itself. The park is listed as Grade II* on Historic England's Register of Parks and Gardens and was constructed between 1924 and 1926 to designs by Thomas Mawson. The park and surrounding streets were designated a conservation area in January 1984.

The Park is a superb example of an early 20th Century public park with contemporary integral sports and leisure facilities. The Park is relatively untouched with few changes to the overall layout and little change to the built structures within it.

The park itself contains a number of buildings of local interest in addition to the pleasure grounds, boating lake sports facilities and key tourist attractions. These attractions include Blackpool Model Village, Stanley Park Golf Course and Blackpool Cricket Club.

The streets around the Park contain intact and well preserved examples of high quality interwar housing, many on a large scale with attendant gardens, boundary treatments and public realm features, all laid out to a street plan specified by Mawson. All are contemporary with, and complementary to, the park.

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Problems which Threaten the Conservation Area

Modern doors, upvc windows and rainwater goods have often replaced original materials. Some front gardens have been lost to hard-standing for cars, and boundary walls have been shortened to widen driveways. Front gardens and relatively low boundary walls in the Conservation Area contribute to the essential character of the public realm and should be retained wherever possible. Re-planting in front gardens will be encouraged, and high fences will not be permitted. Applications for microgeneration measures such as solar panels, which could affect the character of the conservation area, have not been received so far.

Side extensions in the past have narrowed the spaces between some houses. These spaces together with the front gardens and boundary treatments contribute to the setting of the individual houses, and should be retained.

Although there is some variety in the design and materials of buildings which creates interest, the overall palette of materials and colours is consistent, and these should be maintained. In future, repairs and alterations to houses and other buildings within the Conservation Area must comply with the Conservation Area Guidance document which is available on the Council website <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Libraries-arts-and-heritage/Documents/Conservation-area-guidance.pdf> . Planning permission may be required and you should contact the Built Heritage and Conservation Team for advice on 01253 476332 or email builtheritage@blackpool.gov.uk



Attractive and well-maintained pair of semi-detached houses on North Park Drive

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The lack of an operational budget has been a major problem within the park itself, coupled with anti-social behaviour issues ranging from repeated vandalism to dog owners allowing fouling in and around the park. In many ways, the sheer size of the park is a problem.

Covering approximately 256 acres, the park contains upwards of 40 buildings in various states of repair.



Former disused tennis pavilion which suffers from repeated vandalism

In some cases, the lack of a suitable and sustainable use also contributes to the decline and disrepair of park buildings.

Some of the issues related to poor condition and disintegrating infrastructure within the park were tackled under the 2005 HLF £5.5m restoration scheme. However, more recent financial restraints and staff cutbacks have exacerbated the problem of ensuring a sustainable future for the park. Many buildings are still in disrepair, and development pressure in recent years has led to the creation of additional facilities such as a new adventure playground and the BMX track. The latter in particular was a high profile and controversial development which has had a visible impact on a low lying area of the park. Whilst developments like these are sometimes controversial, they have been undertaken to widen the appeal of the Park to include modern day uses in order to increase visitor numbers.

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View of BMX track from East Park Drive

Currently there are a number of areas – the bandstand including theatre and surrounding walls, clock tower, the lake including bridges, Italian gardens steps and balustrading, tree stock, buildings around the bowling greens, tennis courts and toilets - needing urgent repair which, even in isolation, will require substantial financial input.

The lack of clean and adequate toilet provision was a recurring issue raised in public consultation responses. The toilet facilities provided near to the visitor centre and bowling greens are closed by 3.30 p.m., and the only other facilities within the park are in the café, which itself closes at 4 p.m. and only available for customers. There were several complaints about the condition and cleanliness of the existing toilet block.

One respondent was aware, and critical of, proposals to convert the ladies toilet block into a unisex Danfo block.

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Male and female toilets at the entrance to the bowling greens



Missing balustrade on café terrace

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Steps down from Italian Garden in need of repair (recently repaired and re-opened to public)

Vandalism was also a recurring theme in public consultation feedback, with the suggestion that security should be improved to prevent anti-social behaviour within the park. At the drop-in session in August it was pointed out that, when the organisers of one event in the park provided security patrols for the duration of the event, there were no incidents of anti-social behaviour.

Comments were also received on the poor condition of the lake in some parts, with areas overgrown with weeds. Lack of some general maintenance with regards to grass cutting was also mentioned.

A regular visitor with children commented that the lake could be used as an educational resource, citing Martin Mere as an example. Provision of a classroom/visitor centre with educational resources could provide a new use for a redundant building, supported with interpretation boards and activities.

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3. Conservation Area Objectives

Given the relatively limited problems caused by managing change and built quality issues within the Conservation Area, the current objectives are:

- Supporting and working with the Parks Service to ensure the continuation of restoration works within the park to address the widest number of areas possible relative to funding; although the 2005 HLF grant addressed many issues there is now a backlog of repairs which are unable to be tackled due to financial cutbacks, and which are beginning to impact on the public's enjoyment of the park. The Built Heritage and Conservation Team will assist in seeking to identify funding and/or encouraging community groups to do the same to add to the overall mix of restoration, conservation and amenity enhancement within the park area.
- The issues raised by the public consultation will be included in discussions regarding funding priorities.
- Guidance on appropriate forms of repair, alteration and extension of buildings within the Conservation Area have been produced to accompany guidelines of workmanship and materials to enable residents to alter and develop their properties sensitively and in an informed manner.
- The park's encircling boulevards were intended to be lined with trees, and re-planting of trees where necessary will be welcomed. Trees in private gardens may be pruned as necessary, but should be retained unless the roots are causing damage to property. Trees removed for the latter reason should be replaced in another part of the garden wherever possible.
- The Built Heritage and Conservation Team will work with the Highways Department to ensure that, when works are being considered, surface materials, street furniture design, signage, tree planting, traffic management measures etc., are such that they preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. In due course a design code for highways works in Conservation Areas will be produced in conjunction with the Highways Department.
- A heritage trail was produced a few years ago by the Blackpool Civic Trust in partnership with the Council to raise awareness of historical and design significance of the park, and the links between the park and its surrounding urban context. It may be useful to update the trail to include more information on the many individual buildings with the assistance of volunteers.

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- Nationally accredited heritage tour guides run walking tours around the park to raise awareness, understanding and enjoyment of its heritage.
- A photographic record of the conservation area was made as part of the production of the conservation area management plan. This will serve as a baseline survey for the area, and will be used to monitor unauthorised change. Further surveys will be undertaken from time to time.
- A key benefit of applying the Conservation Area objectives will be improvements to the built and natural heritage which will have the potential to attract more residents and visitors into Stanley Park.

4. Planning Policies

Normal conservation planning policies apply within the Conservation Area. The Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2012 – 2027) was adopted in January 2016. Certain policies in the Saved Blackpool Local Plan have been superseded by policies in the Core Strategy; other policies in the Saved Blackpool Local Plan will remain in use until Part 2 of the new Local Plan is produced. The Saved Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 was adopted in June 2006 and the majority of its policies saved by direction in June 2009.

Any new development will be required to protect and enhance the character, quality and setting of existing conservation areas and notable buildings of heritage value. In addition, the Council will also have full regard to the following documents when making decisions regarding the Stanley Park Conservation Area:

- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which provides the main legislative policy base for the conservation of the historic environment.
- The National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy guidance, which replace all previous planning policy and guidance for the built environment.

5. Planning Measures

Blackpool Council is committed to using its statutory powers in support of the Stanley Park Conservation Area and to help to make sure that its conservation policies are put into practice.

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Control of New Development

Statutory Powers

- Where necessary the Council will take enforcement action against unauthorised development where it has a detrimental impact on the character of the Conservation Area.
- Where necessary the Council will deploy the resources necessary to serve Urgent Works and Repair Notices on property owners who neglect historic buildings.
- Where necessary the Council will issue new Article 4 Direction Orders where permitted development rights need to be removed as a result of changes in legislation.
- In extreme cases the Council will apply for a Compulsory Purchase Order and take ownership of a property where a mutually acceptable negotiated position cannot be reached.

6. Design Guidance and Conservation Standards

The Council is committed to achieving a high quality of design and materials for all new development within the Conservation Area.

All projects will be required to build on the quality inherent in traditional buildings and ensure that new works pay the same attention to the quality of design and materials. Projects within the Stanley Park Conservation Area will be required to have regard to the Council's Conservation Area Guidance document in order to ensure that the highest standards are achieved, be they part of repair, reinstatement or new development works.

Quality Assurance Measures for Conservation Areas

The quality of character within the Conservation Area will be maintained using the following measures:

- Encouraging applicants to appoint an Architect (preferably RIBA) to provide a full or partial service in designing any alteration or extension works.
- Encouraging the appointment conservation specialists and tradesmen with experience of similar types of work.

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- The Conservation Officer will provide assistance and guidance to applicants upon request. Pre-application fees for site visits are applicable but planning applications for work which is required as a result of removal of rights through an article 4 direction order are free of charge.
- Drawings illustrating the proposals are to be submitted both at pre-application stage and for planning approval. Planning applications should include a heritage statement describing the significance of the conservation area, details of the proposed works, and an assessment of the impact of the proposals on the property and the conservation area as a whole. Guidance is available on the Council website at <http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Planning-environment-and-community/Documents/Heritage-Statement-Guidance.pdf>
- Conservation Area Guidance and workmanship specification guidelines will be available on the website as resources for all applicants.
- The boundaries of the Conservation Area will be reviewed every 5 years, and the article 4 direction order will be updated as required in line with any changes to permitted development legislation.
- The Conservation Area will be monitored, and enforcement action will be taken against works undertaken without the appropriate planning permission which have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

7. Training and Education

Training

Blackpool Council will take responsibility for ensuring that its own staff are appropriately equipped with any additional training required to deliver the objectives for the Conservation Area. The Council employs a fully qualified Conservation Officer.

Education

The Council, as part of its Heritage Strategy will work to widen the appreciation of the heritage of the Conservation Area.

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Heritage Trail

Heritage trails for the Park have been devised covering both the natural and built heritage of the Park and its surrounding urban context. They are available to download on the Friends of Stanley Park website. <http://www.friendsofstanleypark.org.uk/StanleyParkEcoWalk.html>

8. Consultation and Involvement

The aim of the statutory consultation process for the designation of the Conservation Area was to introduce the concept of statutory protection to the building owners within the proposed boundary of the area and to open discussion about what they themselves felt about the processes and ideas inherent in statutory control. The designation of the Conservation Area in 1984 received wide support both from the stakeholder groups and local residents.

Conservation Area Management Plans are seldom successful unless they secure the full backing of local communities. A good partnership between the Council (as owners and maintainers of the Park) and both Blackpool Civic Trust and the Friends of Stanley Park has been established for some time. The Conservation and Built Heritage Team have liaised closely with the Parks Team in the production of this document, and would like to thank them for their input.

The partnership is now working to involve wider community groups from outside the Conservation Area itself in recognition of the fact that the Park and the Conservation Area as a whole are joint community assets. This approach will help ensure that projects are sustainable in the long-term and that no stakeholder is disenfranchised in the decision-making processes.

9. Putting the Management Plan into Practice

The Conservation Area Management Plan will be put into practice by Blackpool Council, which will take responsibility for developing and implementing the Conservation Area Management Plan. The team responsible for advancing the Conservation Area Management Plan will be the Built Heritage and Conservation Team.

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10. Commitment to the Management Plan

Blackpool Council will deploy its corporate resources and staff skills to support the delivery of the Management Plan.

The Conservation Area will be regularly monitored to identify any unauthorised works, which may be subject to enforcement action. In addition, the boundaries of the Conservation Area will be reviewed within two years of the publication of this management plan in order to determine whether they should be amended.

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APPENDIX 1

STANLEY PARK CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY MAP

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APPENDIX 2

HISTORIC MAPPING

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APPENDIX 3

LISTING DESCRIPTION

SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES, WHINNEY HEYS ROAD

Grade 2* - Listed 30.06.1999

War memorial thanksgiving chapel, with vestries and entrance steps. 1955-7 to the designs of F.X. Velarde; Eaves and Co, builders. Portland stone, with copper-clad roof and fleche. Near rectangular plan of four bay church with single bay narthex and sanctuary apse at their respective ends, with projecting vestries at East end. West end blind, with over round-arched timber double doors a relief of the Holy Trinity by David John, who also sculpted the pinnacles at each corner of the building, which depict our Lady appearing to St Bernadette, Christ appearing to St Margaret Mary, St Thomas of Canterbury and St Edward the Confessor.

Those at West end are set on fluted buttresses. Rectangular panels of glazing, filled with alternating square and lozenge tracery patterns of red and blue glass. Circular motif to tracery in round-headed little vestry windows. Central fleche with gilded bands contrasting with the copper, and central cross motif, surmounted by cross. York stone steps between stone flank walls to entrance

The interior is equally magnificently appointed. Round-arched arcades clad in gold mosaic, with cross motif, support ceiling of vivid blue, red and gold. Tiled floor with cross motif. Raised sanctuary reached up marble steps in apse with round-arched opening.

Sanctuary floor of marble with mosaic panels. Bronze altar rails of art deco design, related in style to glazed screen at west end of church, which is finished in lacquered bronze. Altar and reredos of gris mouchete stone carved by David John. The Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, patron saint of the Diocese of Lancaster, was conceived by the Right Reverend Thomas E. Flynn, Bishop of Lancaster, as a thanksgiving chapel to the diocese's relatively unscathed survival through World War 2. In September 1945 Bishop Flynn wrote: "During the war as the danger became more acute, and one diocese after another suffered terrible losses of life and property, I asked for earnest prayers to our patroness, Our Lady of Lourdes and we were marvellously spared. The thought was in my mind during that period of anxiety that after the war I should ask the diocese to make an offering to God to show our gratitude".

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The shrine cost £50,000 to which every parish in the diocese subscribed. Blackpool was chosen for its central position and ease of access to visitors; a local builder, William Eaves, donated the site.

The shrine was tended by nuns of the Congregation of Adoration of Mare Reparatrice. Most recently the shrine has been attended by the Blessed Sacrament of Fathers.

Velarde's work was described in the opening literature as "although original in design (having) its roots in the Ancient Romanesque Architecture". While his St Teresa, Upholland, of the same date, shares the combination of modern sculpture, gilded mosaic and round-arched detailing found here, the shrine has a perfect, diminutive jewel-like quality that transcends conventional church formulas.

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APPENDIX 4

ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION TO WHICH ARTICLE 6 APPLIES

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APPENDIX 5

ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION TO WHICH ARTICLE 5 APPLIES

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APPENDIX 6

Specification guidelines for materials and craftsmanship