

## Metropolitan Borough of Sefton

### Advisory Leaflet

# Lord Street

## Conservation Area

### History

Before the 1790s the area was occupied by scattered fishermen's and farmers' cottages set behind a sandy beach and a belt of sand dunes. The growing popularity of sea bathing and the

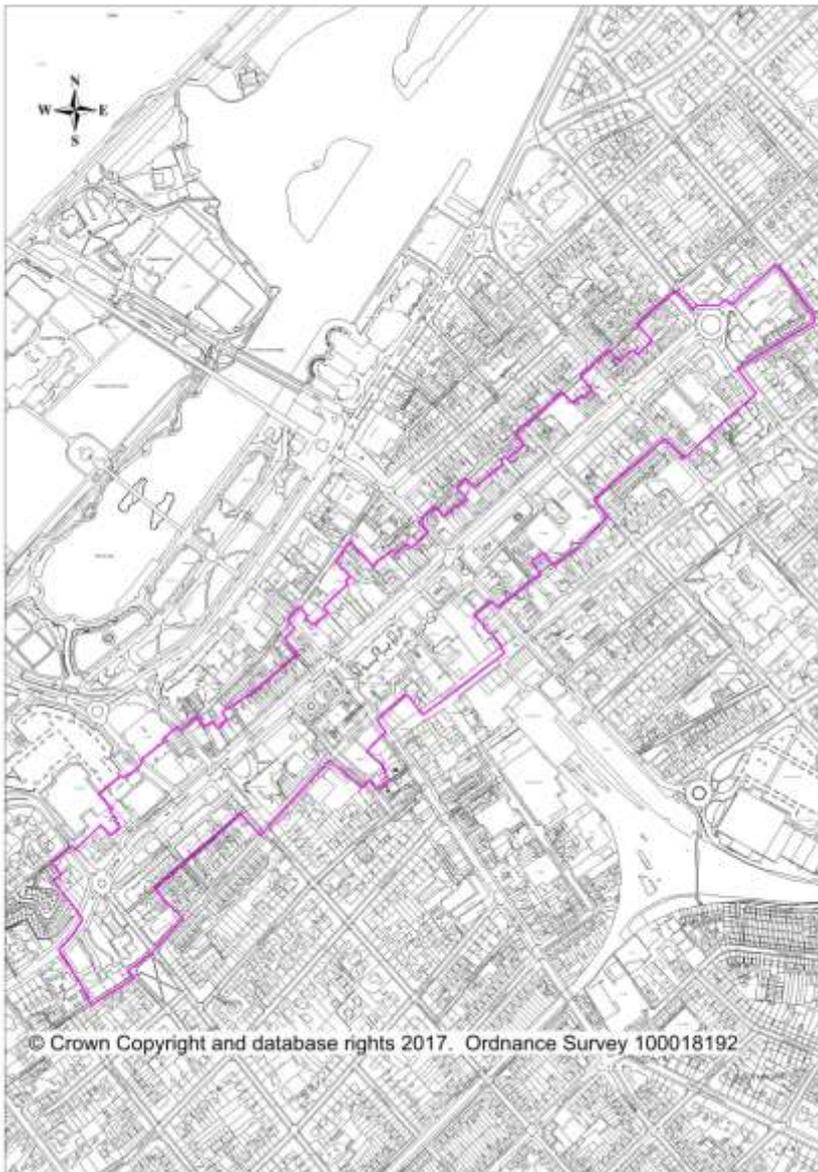
opening of the Leeds-Liverpool Canal led to locals in Churchtown opening up their cottages as lodgings for visitors who would travel to the beach in carts. In 1792 a bathing house was built by Mr Sutton, landlord of an inn in Churchtown, he then constructed a more permanent hotel in 1798 and it

is believed to have been here that the name "South Port" was chosen. Around this time a number of other inns and marine villas were constructed around the area of modern day Lord Street West.

By 1824 the line of Lord Street had been established, development having spread northwards with houses and hotels lining each side of the street. The name Lord Street refers to the two Lords of the Manor (Hesketh and Bold) who collaborated in order to allow the establishment of the street.

Lord Street was originally a dune slack, which is a boggy area behind the dunes. The first buildings avoided this wet area, being built well back from it, this is what accounts for the unusually broad width of the street.

Development gathered pace after 1835 when sea defences were built, protecting the land from inundation and conveniently also constructing an attractive promenade. Grand hotels such as The Prince of Wales, the Scarisbrick and the Bold were constructed. The more easily accessible properties on the seaward side of Lord Street were quickly converted into shops and those on the



landward side with long enclosed gardens remained as dwellings.

The Improvement Commissioners were established by an Act of Parliament in 1846. The town hall was built soon after and originally accommodated the police, magistrates and the post office. Cambridge Hall was built in 1868. William Atkinson donated the clock for the Cambridge Hall and also donated the money for the Library and Art Gallery, which was opened in 1878. The landowners and the town's fathers had a vision for Southport as a high class town, and they restricted liquor licenses, while favouring the building of churches and high quality housing.

The Victorian shops and banks that line the seaward side of Lord Street and the street's cast iron verandahs were developed between the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, they form a highly distinctive element of the town centre.

The public gardens were developed from the 1860s onwards on land which had formerly been private gardens and enclosed land. The current gardens were laid out by the Borough Engineer A. O. Jackson between 1919 and 1930, based on the neoclassical designs of the eminent landscape architect Thomas Mawson.

The war memorial, designed by Grayson and Barnish is the central focal point of Lord Street, with the obelisk, colonnades and reflection pools forming an impressive feature that spans the broad junction.

### The Conservation Area

Lord Street Conservation Area was designated in 1973 and was last appraised in 2005.

The Government requires that from time to time we formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. In order to fulfil this obligation, an updated Conservation Area Appraisal for Lord Street, Southport was adopted by the Council on November 16, 2017.

It includes all of the buildings which front onto Lord Street along its full length and extends inland to include the Market Hall on King Street. The Promenade Conservation Area borders it along its length on its north-west side.

Numerous listed buildings are encompassed by the conservation area including 'The Atkinson' and the Town Hall, the war memorial and colonnades, the

Prince of Wales Hotel and a sizeable portion of the shops and verandahs are all listed on the national list of 'buildings of historic or architectural interest'.

There is a consistent nature and hierarchical organisation to the townscape, with shops of regular narrow three storey form fronted by cast iron verandahs lining the seaward side, municipal buildings located centrally on the landward side of the street, houses, and converted former houses being at the extremities of these. A linear series of public and private greenspaces runs the length of Lord Street. Mature trees planted in the pavements and in the greenspaces provide a mature and attractive setting to the buildings.

### Additional Planning Powers

Whilst Sefton Council recognises that for conservation areas to remain "live" and responsive to a changing society, changes must and will occur. Through the planning system the Council undertakes to ensure that changes preserve or enhance the area, and do not result in the loss of character and any harm is balanced against wider public benefits.

Within the Conservation Area the following additional planning powers apply:-

### If a building is a Listed Building additional special controls will also apply.

- Any proposal involving the demolition of any building, wall or other structure within the Conservation Area (with minor exceptions) will require planning permission.
- Anyone wishing to cut down, top, lop or uproot a tree with a stem diameter of 75mm or greater measured at 1.5m above ground level must give the Local Planning Authority six weeks written notice of their intention to do so (a "Section 211 notice" under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) subject to specific exemptions. Within this time the Authority may grant consent for the proposed work, or they may consider making a Tree Preservation Order. It is an offence to carry out tree works without permission.
- There are greater restrictions over 'permitted development' rights for the alteration and enlargement of dwelling houses, and on the provision, alteration or improvement of outbuildings within their curtilage.

- Dormer windows will require planning permission, and in some cases, other changes to roofs and chimneys may require planning permission.
- The cladding of any part of external walls in stone, artificial stone, pebble dash, render, timber, plastic would require planning permission.
- Planning permission is needed for satellite dishes where they are to be located on a chimney, wall or roof slope which faces onto a highway.
- Micro-generation (e.g. wind turbines/solar panels) installations will require planning permission in some cases.
- Some aspects of commercial development and adverts are subject to additional restrictions.

For up to date advice on what needs planning permission go to <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/>  
In determining applications for the development of land and alterations or extensions to buildings within the Lord Street Conservation Area the Council will pay special regard to:-

- The retention, replacement and restoration of historical details and features of the buildings and their grounds including layout, boundary walls and landscaping, shop fronts, historic advertisements and joinery details.
- The design, materials and detail of extensions and alterations to existing buildings which will be expected to be in sympathy with the architectural and historic character of the building as a whole and to the setting of that building.
- The detailed design of any new building (including form, massing, scale and materials) and its integration with its immediate surroundings and the special architectural and visual qualities of the Conservation Area.
- The retention and preservation of existing trees and the provision of further appropriate landscaping.
- The retention and enhancement of views into and out of the area, vistas within the area and

the general character and appearance of the street scene and roofscape.

## Guidance notes for planning applications and use of materials

### Pre-application Advice

You can request advice from Planning Services prior to submitting a formal application. In some cases we make a charge for this service. Forms are available on the Council's website.

### Planning Applications

Heritage and Design and Access statements may be needed to support your planning application; these should include an explanation of what the significance of the property is and what impact the works have on that significance. Outline Applications will not usually be considered.

### Demolition

There will be a presumption in favour of the preservation of buildings of individual or group value. Accordingly demolition or redevelopment of any such building will normally be resisted. Any consent to demolish would normally be conditional on the building not being demolished before a contract is made to carry out redevelopment. This is to avoid gap sites developing. The redevelopment must be of a high standard of design.

### New Development on Vacant Sites

Any new development should be conceived with the original layout, historic architectural character and scale of the area in mind. Early discussions with Planning Services are advised prior to detailed design work being commenced. The services of a qualified architect are strongly recommended.

### Conversion of existing buildings

Where planning permission is sought to convert buildings to new uses, the new use should relate to the historically established mix of uses. Encouragement will be given to proposals that re-use vacant upper floors for residential or commercial uses. Types of uses which are not traditionally part of the Lord Street frontage will be considered on their own merits, however night-time only uses and amusement arcades are unlikely to be viewed favourably.

Attention will be paid to the building's external appearance, character of the building, use of materials, the layout of gardens and car parks and the position of bin stores. The internal layout of the building should be carefully considered particularly if the building is a listed building.

Every effort should be made to minimise external alterations such as fire escapes and new windows (including dormer windows). Where external changes are required changes should be made to non-prominent elevations. Alterations or extensions should use carefully chosen materials that match/complement the building. Again, the services of a qualified architect are strongly recommended.

### External Alterations to existing buildings including extensions

The following deals with some of the details of alterations and extensions to buildings:

#### Shop Fronts

Historic shop fronts should be retained and repaired, where they are beyond repair, their details should be replicated. When non-historic shop fronts are being replaced care should be taken to check for historic features, these should be retained, repaired, reinstated to view and ideally the original shop front design restored.

New shop fronts should incorporate traditional details such as a stall riser, pilasters and corbels in traditional proportions. Entrances should be recessed. Traditional materials such as timber, copper, brass and painted finishes are preferred, as this enhances the historic character of the buildings. Strong dark colours or very dark stained finishes are likely to be the most appropriate.

#### Advertisements

Signage that relates to historic past uses such as painted on signs or relief lettering which has been built into elevations should be retained.

Where consent is required, new advertisements on shops will be usually be restricted to one fascia sign per elevation and either one projecting sign or one hanging sign under the canopy. No signage will be allowed above the ground floor or gutter line of the verandahs, unless there are historical reasons for doing so. Uses in upper floors can be advertised using traditional gold lettering painted on windows. Signage should relate only to the name of the occupants of the property or their function.

All advertisements should be designed to harmonise with the building or structure to which they are attached. Architectural details should not be obscured or overshadowed. Boxy signs which project forward of fascia boards should be avoided, traditionally signwritten fascias are preferred. Internally illuminated signage will not be accepted.

Hanging signs beneath verandahs should be restricted in size, to avoid overbearing the historic structure. Preferably these should not exceed 1500mm width and 400mm deep and maintain a clearance of 2300mm above the pavement.

'A' boards and signs attached to the columns of the verandahs will not be viewed favourably, as these clutter and harm the historic character of the street scene.

#### Security shutters and grilles

No new roller shutters will be accepted on shop fronts or windows, as these poorly relate to shop fronts and create a 'dead' frontage in the evenings and when the businesses are closed.

Traditional metal gates set within recessed doorways, reinforced stall risers, laminated safety glass and alarm systems are likely to viewed as appropriate physical security options.

#### Verandahs

These are a defining feature of Lord Street's character, they must be retained and repaired. They are susceptible to rust and decay and require annual maintenance to keep the ironwork, gutters and downpipes in appropriate condition. In undertaking maintenance work no sandblasting should be used on the decorative elements, rather these should be rubbed down with a wire brush to remove the rust, and a proprietary paint system used; the verandahs should be painted in black and white. No work should take place in wet or damp conditions.

Making sure that the verandahs are in good condition ensures that they enhance the street scene and provide a welcoming appearance for visitors to the town centre, as well as reducing long term costs associated with major repairs.

Most of the verandahs are listed buildings. **Listed Building Consent** will be required for any additions or changes to the fabric of a listed verandah.

### Pavement Cafés

These are generally encouraged. They should be sited in front of verandahs so as not to impede the flow of pedestrians. Tables and chairs must be of high quality construction and appearance. Any boundaries should avoid the use of visually solid PVC barriers as move around in the wind and harm the visual openness of the street scene. Use of planters, posts and bars is preferred. Signage on pavement cafes should be minimised.

### Windows

There are a number of types and styles of original windows in the area. They should be retained and renovated where possible. If all or part of any window needs to be replaced it should match the original design. Care should be taken to ensure that 'reveals' are retained. This is important for practical (weather protection) reasons as well as aesthetic reasons. If additional windows are essential they should be restricted to non-prominent elevations. Their size and proportion should relate to existing windows and the age and architectural design of the property.

When repairing/replacing windows care must be taken to retain and restore details. Imitation 'leaded' lights should always be avoided whilst aluminium and UPVC windows have a different surface finish, are likely to detract from the character of the building.

Restoration of windows to their original proportions and restoration of bay windows should be undertaken where these have been lost.

### Dormer windows

New dormer windows are not generally accepted on principal elevations, especially where these are not a current or historic feature of the street scene. Any new dormer windows should be well-proportioned, designed to complement the character of the building and kept to non-prominent elevations. Cladding must match roofing materials.

### Wall surfaces

Brickwork and stonework should not be painted or rendered. Areas of brickwork requiring renewal should be repaired or replaced in their original form or pattern. Brick pointing should be compatible with existing construction, which is generally flush finish. Repointing should be carried out using soft lime mortar without cement, this is to prevent softer bricks from deteriorating over the longer term.

Where stonework is to be cleaned, professional advice should be sought, as the incorrect choice of treatment can result in damage.

Historic brick, terracotta and tile features such as keystones, corbels, finials etc. should be retained. Over-cladding of the original finishes is unlikely to be permitted for practical as well as aesthetic reasons. If missing or damaged, stucco or plaster mouldings and similar details should be replaced in their original form or pattern. Care should be taken to use the correct mixes and finishing coats.

In redecorating, the use of bright obtrusive colours should be avoided.

### Roofs

Original rooflines and profiles should be maintained. Any renewals or repairs should use reclaimed or new materials to match the original roof covering. Care should be taken to retain roof features such as decorated ridge tiles, finials, eaves and gable details.

### Chimneys

In most cases the original chimney stacks and pots form an integral part of the design of buildings and create an interesting roofscape. It is important, therefore, to opt for repairing rather than dismantling stacks if no longer in use. If the stacks become unsafe, then they should be taken down and rebuilt to the original height and design, taking care to replace chimney pots.

### Satellite Dishes and Aerials

Aerials and satellite dishes should be discreetly located, avoiding main street elevations.

### Doors

Original doors should be retained and repaired wherever possible. Replacements should be to a sympathetic design, wooden moulded and raised and fielded panelled doors are likely to be the most suitable. 'Georgian' style doors with semi-circular fanlights and featureless modern doors should be particularly avoided. Care should be taken to repair details around openings such as architraves, thresholds, transoms and overlights.

### Porticoes and Porches

Where these features are of historic interest, they should be retained and repaired as necessary. Mineral felt or other similar materials should not be used. Where new porches or porticoes are

proposed they should be appropriately designed with materials that are sympathetic to the age and style of the building. Where porches or porticoes are not part of the original design of the building, their addition should be avoided.

### Gardens, Boundary Walls, Fences, Gates and Gate Posts

Original brick and stone boundary walls including their stone or terracotta copings should be retained and repaired, or rebuilt to their original design using reclaimed or matching materials. Boundary walls and gateposts should not be painted, this detracts from their appearance and can trap moisture leading to their accelerated deterioration.

Wooden fences and railings should not be installed where these were not part of the original design. The street scene can be softened, and privacy enhanced by the planting of shrubs and hedging.

Openings in boundary walls should be kept to a minimum. Gates fronting Lord Street should be in authentic designs appropriate to the age of the site, and painted in traditional colours, avoiding the use of metallic paints. Gates to the rear yards behind the commercial premises should be in simple solid vertically boarded designs, painted in strong dark colours.

Gardens should not be paved over as this adversely affects the street scene. Where gardens have previously been paved over to form car parking areas it is beneficial to the street scene to re-introduce hedging and planting.

### Services

Cast iron guttering and downpipes should be replaced in cast iron to the same pattern. Some particularly elaborate examples add greatly to the architectural interest of buildings.

Care should be taken in the siting of burglar alarms, heating flues, meter boxes and bin store locations so as not to detract from principal elevations.

### Maintenance

It is strongly advised that owners and tenants keep their property in good repair and condition. Regular and thorough maintenance can help avoid major structural repairs that can develop through neglect, and also contribute to the creation of a popular and attractive commercial environment.

### Website & email

[www.sefton.gov.uk/planning](http://www.sefton.gov.uk/planning)

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