

## EXECUTIVE DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER OR DELEGATED OFFICER

## NOTICE OF DECISION

<b>TITLE OF DECISION:</b> <b>PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF LANCASTER MOOR CONSERVATION AREA</b>	
NAME OF DECISION TAKER:	GINA DOWDING
POSITION AND RESPONSIBILITY HELD:	PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING & PLACE MAKING
CONTACT OFFICER:	JASON SYERS
TELEPHONE:	01524 582302
E-MAIL:	jsyers@lancaster.gov.uk
<b>Details of Decision:</b>  Designation of the Conservation Area for Lancaster Moor as detailed in the Report to Cabinet Member dated 7 January 2022	
<b>Reasons for the decision:</b>  Having read the Report I am satisfied that the area in question is of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, in accordance with our statutory duties under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	
<b>THE DECISION URGENT</b>  <b>PLEASE GIVE REASONS FOR URGENCY BELOW:</b>  The timing of the designation has been influenced by the proposed demolition of the former hospital at Ridge Lea, which is a substantial building and a Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA) now vacant and in disrepair. An application for demolition of the building has been submitted with an imminent determination date. Ridge Lea is an architecturally significant building that positively contributes to the character of the area, with its strong physical and historic associations with the other historic buildings of Standen Park (grade II* listed) and the enlargement of the hospital to the north of Quernmore Road during the late 19C with its fine gothic tower (grade II listed). The loss of Ridge Lea would, therefore, cause considerable harm to the historic and physical character of the area and the loss of an important component of the city's historical development.  While the timing of the designation has been influenced by the proposed demolition of Ridge Lea, the reason for the proposed designation, as explained in the report, is that the character and appearance of area clearly merits conservation area status. The architectural and historic quality of buildings in the area as whole and the superb landscape grounds contribute significantly to its character and appearance and fully warrant preservation and enhancement.	

I can confirm that this decision is urgent as any delay likely to be caused by the Call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests and therefore is not subject to Call-in. The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been consulted. I hereby agree both that the decision proposed is reasonable, in all the circumstances, and to it being treated as a matter of urgency.

Signed: 

Kieran Keane, Chief Executive

I confirm that I have taken account of the options proposed by officers, the various implications set out in the report and the comments of the Monitoring and Section 151 Officers and am authorising the decision as set out above.

SIGNATURE OF DECISION TAKER: *G Dowling*

DATE: 7.1.22

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES			REF NO.	ICMD14
DATE DECISION TAKEN:	7.1.22	DATE RECEIVED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES:	7.1.22	
DATE DECISION PUBLISHED:	7.1.22	IMPLEMENTATION DATE (publication day + 5 working days):	Immediate – call-in waived	

## Lancaster City Council | Report Cover Sheet

Meeting	Emergency report to Cabinet Member	Date	6 January 2022		
Title	Proposed Designation of Lancaster Moor Conservation Area				
Report of	Report of Director for Economic Growth and Regeneration				
Purpose of the Report To advise of the emergency proposals for designation of a conservation area					
Key Decision (Y/N)	N	Date of Notice		Exempt (Y/N)	

**Report Summary** This report relates to the proposed designation of a conservation area for the Lancaster Moor Area, Lancaster to the east of the city centre.

**Recommendations** That the designation of a conservation area be approved.

### Relationship to Policy Framework

Under section 69 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990, the Local Planning Authority have a duty to consider which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and shall designate those areas as conservation areas. Our Local Plan contains policies for the management of conservation areas in response to planning applications for development.

### Conclusion of Impact Assessment(s), where applicable

<b>Climate</b>	<b>Wellbeing &amp; Social Value</b>
<b>Digital</b>	<b>Health &amp; Safety</b>
<b>Equality</b>	<b>Community Safety</b>

No implications

### Details of Consultation

See Section 6 of the report below

### Legal Implications

The powers to designate a conservation area derive from section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. There are certain procedural requirements arising from this as outlined in Section 4 of the report below. If the conservation area is designated there are various powers and duties, in particular, for the Council to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area under section 72 of the 1990 Act.

### Financial Implications

The designation of a conservation area does not have any direct financial implications. However, there are minor implications for resources in relation to planning applications involving demolition, for tree works and an increase in publicity where applications arise. While the proposed conservation area would be quite large, the number of buildings is relatively low in relation to the size. Much of the building stock is already statutorily protected through listing. Likewise, many of the trees are already protected by existing Tree Preservation Orders. The associated costs of the designation are, therefore, not likely to be onerous and can be met from existing resources.

### Other Resource or Risk Implications

There are no known implications.

**Section 151 Officer's Comments**

The s151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments to add at this stage

**Monitoring Officer's Comments**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted when preparing this report

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**Links to Background Papers**

Annex 1 - Map of Proposed Conservation Area

Annex 2 – Lancaster Moor – Conservation Area Assessment

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.0 The concept of conservation areas was initiated in the 1967 through the Civic Amenities Act (powers now contained within the 1990 Act – see Section 4 below), which placed a duty on Local Planning Authorities to designate areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. This led to the designation of conservation areas in Lancaster and Morecambe and many other towns and villages in the District. The Council designated its first conservation area in Heysham in 1972 and there are now a total of 38 conservation areas in the District as a whole.

## **2.0 Proposal Details**

- 2.1 We are proposing to designate a new conservation area under these powers for the Lancaster Moor area to the east of the city centre. The proposed location and conservation area boundary is shown in **Annex 1**. The area in question consists of part of the city's 19C suburban expansion for social, health and parkland, which has resulted in some of Lancaster's finest, most distinctive and attractive historic environments.
- 2.2 The timing of the designation has been influenced by the proposed demolition of the former hospital at Ridge Lea, which is a substantial building and a Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA) now vacant and in disrepair. An application for demolition of the building has been submitted with an imminent determination date. Ridge Lea is an architecturally significant building that positively contributes to the character of the area, with its strong physical and historic associations with the other historic buildings of Standen Park (grade II\* listed) and the enlargement of the hospital to the north of Quernmore Road during the late 19C with its fine gothic tower (grade II listed). The loss of Ridge Lea would, therefore, cause considerable harm to the historic and physical character of the area and the loss of an important component of the city's historical development.
- 2.3 While the timing of the designation has been influenced by the proposed demolition of Ridge Lea, the reason for the proposed designation, as explained below, is that the character and appearance of area clearly merits conservation area status. The architectural and historic quality of buildings in the area as whole and the superb landscape grounds contribute significantly to its character and appearance and fully warrant preservation and enhancement.

## **3.0 Justification for designation**

- 3.1 An assessment of the proposed conservation area has been prepared and can be found in **Annex 2**. This helps to provide an assessment of the character of the area that warrants its designation.

## **4.0 Legislative and Policy Context**

- 4.1 The various legislation governing the designation of conservation areas has been consolidated in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Under section 69 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990, the Local Planning Authority have a duty to consider which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and shall designate those areas as conservation areas.

- 4.2 Our Local Plan Development Plan Document in paragraphs 10.30 states that the Council will consider future areas that may be considered suitable for designation as a conservation area. This requires a judgement as to whether an area is of special architectural or historic interest, and the character or appearance of which it is considered desirable to preserve or enhance.
- 4.3 In terms of policy the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 states that, when considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest. This is to ensure the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest. Our assessment of the proposed conservation area in Annex 2, therefore, has been carried out to ensure it justifies designation.
- 4.4 Designation takes effect upon the approval of the proposed boundaries. The designation is sought under the emergency powers provisions given the urgency of this matter and the existing application for demolition of the building. We must then advertise the designation in the London Gazette and local press. Upon designation, we would have to notify Historic England and the Government Office North-West of the designation if approved.

## **5.0 Effect of Designation**

- 5.1 The designation of a conservation area introduces a general control over the demolition of buildings and the felling/lopping of trees and provides a basis for policies designed to preserve or enhance all the aspects of character or appearance that define an area's special interest. In determining applications for development, it is necessary for us to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area under section 72 of the 1990 Act.
- 5.2 Designation would, therefore, help conserve the architectural and historic qualities of the area for the future by ensuring that historic buildings and features are retained and that new development and enhancement proposals takes account of its special qualities.
- 5.3 Our Development Management Development Plan Document was adopted on 30th July 2020. Policy DM 38 deals with conservation areas and would apply to the proposed conservation area if it is designated. The policy seeks to ensure that the qualities and features of the conservation area are considered when determining planning applications to ensure development preserves or enhances its character and appearance, as required by the 1990 Act.

## **6.0 Consultation**

- 6.1 While there is no statutory requirement of the public consultation under the 1990 Act, we would normally seek the views of the local community and other stakeholders affected by the proposed designation. The LPA's Statement of Community Engagement (paragraph 6.34) also provides that:

*"The Council currently consults with the local civic societies and preservation groups to undertake asset surveys of conservation areas, undertake heritage at risk audits and compile a list of locally important heritage assets in their areas."*

- 6.2 Given the application to demolish the significant building at the former hospital at Ridge Lea (received just prior to the Christmas holidays – 13 December 2021), there is

insufficient time for consultation and given the urgent need for the Conservation Area designation, the LPA proposes that decision be made without consultation.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

- 7.1 In accordance with our statutory duties and national policy we have considered the proposal for the designation of a conservation area for Lancaster Moor, as shown on the proposal map in Annex 1 and recommend that the designation of a conservation area under section 69 of the 1990 Act be approved.

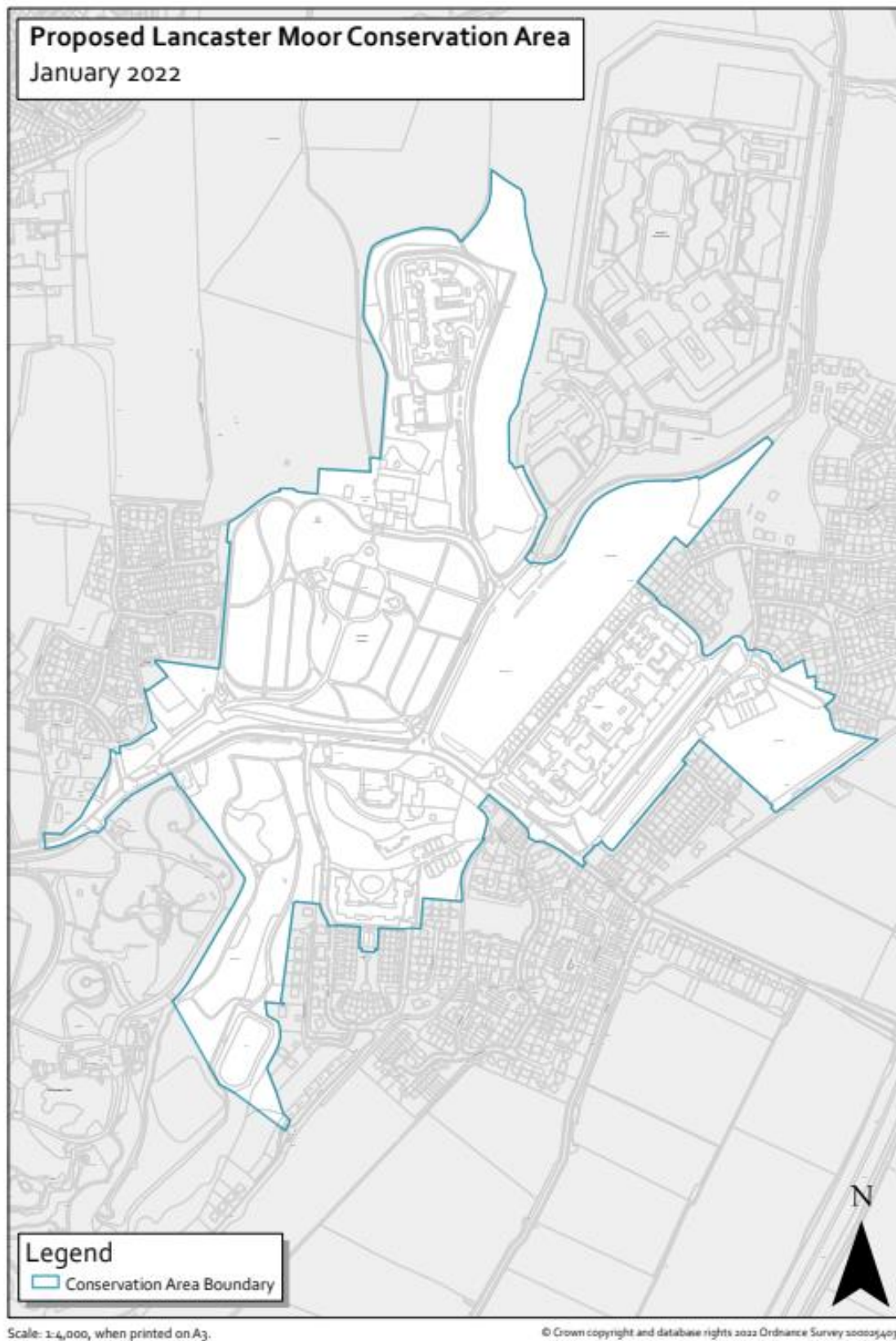
## **8.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)**

<b>Option 1:</b> That the conservation area designation is approved.
<b>Advantages:</b> The designation would be consistent with our statutory duties under Section 69 of the 1990 Act and would give appropriate protection to the special architectural and historic interest of the area.
<b>Disadvantages:</b> None
<b>Risks:</b> None
<b>Option 2:</b> That the conservation area designation is not approved.
<b>Advantages:</b> None
<b>Disadvantages:</b> The special architectural and historic interest of the area would not be preserved and enhanced, including historic buildings and other features which contribute to this. An unlisted building that is important to the character of the area is under threat of demolition and designation may result in its loss.
<b>Risks:</b> That the special architectural and historic interest of the area is not preserved and enhanced and that historic buildings and other features in the area, including the building currently under threat of demolition, may be lost.

## **8. Officer Preferred Option (and comments)**

- 8.1 The officer preferred option is Option 1.

## Annex 1 – The proposed Lancaster Moor Conservation Area boundary





## Lancaster Moor Conservation Area (Proposed) Conservation Area Assessment

The proposed Lancaster Moor Conservation Area covers an area of Lancaster to the east of the city centre in an elevated location that, as the name suggests, was previously open moorland.

The present leafy surroundings represent a historically important phase of the city's suburban expansion during the Victorian period into the surrounding countryside. During the 19th century the city was expanding in all directions and sites on the outskirts became the focus for development associated with the emerging concerns over health, social provision and leisure facilities. This high moorland location was developed for the provision of hospital buildings, cemeteries, and parkland. The physical legacy of this growth is a related group of very fine historic buildings and spaces, within a green and spacious environment.

The first development in the area came very soon in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when powers were granted for the establishment of hospitals in local areas. The Lancashire County Pauper Lunatic Asylum was established, with the development of the Lancaster Moor Hospital. Standen Park Hospital was built 1811-1816. It is one of the earliest hospitals to be built under the new powers. The building is grade II\* listed, in the Georgian style and is a building of very high significance. It is set within expansive grounds which include other historic buildings some of which are listed, including Saint Michaels church to the north.

Lancaster Moor Hospital enlargement on a separate site to the north of Quernmore Road and Standen Park, was completed in 1882. Listed at grade II, it is a building at the high point of Victorian Gothic Revival style, with its remarkable soaring tower visible widely in the local area. This striking building is also located in generous, leafy grounds and includes recreation fields to the north-west and a cricket pitch with a pavilion to the east. Both Standen Park and Lancaster Moor Hospital enlargement have since been converted for residential accommodation and developed in their grounds for housing over the last few decades. This housing was largely to fund repairs to the Listed buildings, although significant areas of landscaping to the buildings frontages and principal elevations was preserved.

Ridge Lea is a building of similar form and Gothic architectural character. It is located to the north of the two other hospital sites, again in generous grounds surrounded by woodland. It was constructed in 1916 and is unusual in its continued use of the Gothic style, which is very late for this architectural style. The building has a very distinctive character, employing Dutch gables and is well constructed with some fine stone detailing and architectural features. The building is, in poor condition with some loss of lead flashing and stone details but is still capable of conversion to other uses. The hospital conversions of the other Lancaster Moor buildings illustrate the potential.

One of the defining aspects of these three sites is their location within a green and leafy environment. Previously this area was moorland, notably without trees, but these areas were planted in order to create an idealised picturesque environment. The access to nature, the countryside and fresh air away from the dense and polluted city Centre was, at the time, seen as an essential aspect of the care, health and rehabilitation of patients who attended these facilities. Perambulation routes of footpaths within the grounds were a particular feature of their historic character. The resulting environment is therefore highly distinctive

and extremely attractive with a great number of trees and woodland providing a fine setting for these impressive historic buildings.

The Lancaster Cemetery site was established in 1855. The site is registered as a grade II Park and Garden and was designed by the prominent Lancaster architect Edward Paley. It includes three chapels of different denominations and formally laid out burial grounds in an elevated location with stunning views towards Morecambe Bay and the city centre. The three chapels are grade II listed, as is the lodge adjacent to the cemetery entrance. The Crimea monument is also grade II listed. It is a beautiful and picturesque environment with informal landscaping complementing the formal arrangement of the site.

To the north of the cemetery is a small Farmstead known as Stone Row. This has historic buildings dating from the 18th and 19th century together with more modern 20th century buildings. It is understood that the farm was used by the hospital in the treatment of patients and later by the nearby prison. A distinctive cobbled road provides the approach to the Farmstead.

Williamson Park Conservation Area includes part of southern portion of the former Standen Park grounds, known as Fenham Carr and consists of woodland with footpaths and now forms part of the public park. However, the northern portion is undesignated. It has similar qualities to the existing designated area to the south.

The designation of the new conservation area would complement the existing Williamson Park Conservation Area designation and create a large and coherent area benefitting from conservation area designation. The designation of a conservation area would recognise the historic importance of the former hospitals and the cemetery to the history of social provision within the city and the realisation of idealised and picturesque environments. The designation of Williamson Park yet the lack of designation for the wider area is inconsistent as the latter has similar historic qualities and character.

There is, therefore, very strong justification for designation. Indeed, it is remarkable that these buildings and their distinctive surroundings have never previously been recognised with a designation in this way, although it is likely that this is because both hospitals already benefitted from listed status, while the cemetery was recognised as a registered park in garden.

The creation of the conservation area would also give justified protection to Ridge Lea and help encourage its repair and conversion.

## **Heritage Assets within the Conservation Area**

### BOUNDARY WALLS, RAILINGS, GATES AND GATE PIERS AT LANCASTER MOOR HOSPITAL

- **Heritage Category:** Listed Building
- **Grade:** II
- **List Entry Number:** 1391761

### MOOR HOSPITAL, NEW BLOCK

- **Heritage Category:** Listed Building
- **Grade:** II

- List Entry Number: 1195079

#### CRIMEA MONUMENT IN LANCASTER CEMETERY

- Heritage Category: Listed Building
- Grade: II
- List Entry Number: 1298304

#### LANCASTER CEMETERY LODGE

- Heritage Category: Listed Building
- Grade: II
- List Entry Number: 1212683

#### WATER CLOSET CUBICLE IMMEDIATELY SOUTH OF WEST PORCH OF CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL, MOOR HOSPITAL

- Heritage Category: Listed Building
- Grade: II
- List Entry Number: 1195077

#### MOOR HOSPITAL, BLOCKS 40,41,42,44 AND 46

- Heritage Category: Listed Building
- Grade: II\*
- List Entry Number: 1289436

#### WESTERN MORTUARY CHAPEL AT LANCASTER CEMETERY

- Heritage Category: Listed Building
- Grade: II
- List Entry Number: 1298305

#### CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL, MOOR HOSPITAL

- Heritage Category: Listed Building
- Grade: II
- List Entry Number: 1289454

#### NORTHERN MORTUARY CHAPEL AT LANCASTER CEMETERY

- Heritage Category: Listed Building
- Grade: II
- List Entry Number: 1212689

#### BOUNDARY WALLS, RAILINGS, GATES AND GATE PIERS AT LANCASTER MOOR HOSPITAL

- Heritage Category: Listed Building
- Grade: II
- List Entry Number: 1391761

#### EASTERN MORTUARY CHAPEL AT LANCASTER CEMETERY

- Heritage Category: Listed Building
- Grade: II
- List Entry Number: 1195078

#### WATER CLOSET CUBICLE IMMEDIATELY NORTH OF APSE OF CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL, MOOR HOSPITAL

- Heritage Category: Listed Building
- Grade: II
- List Entry Number: 1289423

#### LANCASTER CEMETERY

- Heritage Category: Park and Garden
- Grade: II
- List Entry Number: 1001567

#### RIDGE LEA

- Heritage Category: Non-Designated Heritage Asset
- Grade: Unlisted

#### STONE ROW

- Heritage Category: Non-Designated Heritage Asset
- Grade: Unlisted

(Please note that the list of Non-Designated Heritage Assets is not definitive)