



CHAPTER 1



INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 The Inner Resort Neighbourhoods of Blackpool, including Foxhall are experiencing significant economic and social challenges as a result of long term and continuing decline in Tourism.

1.1.2 Policy RR8 of the adopted Local Plan sets out the Councils intention to bring about sustainable regeneration and transformation of the Inner Resort Areas, and the Blackpool Local Development Scheme (LDS), (adopted in March 2007) provides for the preparation of an Area Action Plans under the new Local Development Framework (LDF) for the following areas:

- Foxhall
- North Beach; and
- South Beach

1.1.3 The LDS places particular emphasis on the early development of an Area Action Plan (AAP) for the Foxhall Resort Neighbourhood. This neighbourhood is a relatively small, discrete area with an identifiable community framework that will best enable the Council to pilot its AAP approach within the structures of the Local Development Framework.

1.1.4 The Foxhall area is in decline and faces serious environmental, social and economic problems. This is highlighted by the fact that, amongst other issues, Foxhall falls within the 10% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas in England. These issues will be discussed further in the following chapters. Responding to the need to tackle and reverse this decline, Blackpool Council has embarked on the preparation of an AAP with the intention of developing a new vision and role for the Foxhall area to help direct public and private sector investment to create a new and sustainable neighbourhood over the next ten to twenty years.

1.2 Purpose of this Document

- 1.2.1 One of the “Tests of Soundness” for Development Plan Document’s (DPDs) as set out in Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning (PPS12) is that their proposals must be “Justified” and “founded on a robust and credible evidence base”.
- 1.2.2 In accordance with this requirement this document sets out the comprehensive evidence upon which the Vision, objectives and proposals of the Foxhall AAP have been based.
- 1.2.3 The evidence base set out in this document is expected to change and evolve as the Plan progresses. Changes and additions will be made as required up to the publication of the Final Plan before it is submitted to the Secretary of State for independent Examination.

1.3 The Foxhall AAP Neighbourhood Profile (Evidence Base)

- 1.3.1 The preparation of an AAP must follow a structured, rigorous and analytical approach, as detailed within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and related Government Planning Policy Statements such as PPS12 and the accompanying online Plan Making Manual prepared by the Planning Advisory Service.
- 1.3.2 This guidance aims to ensure that the AAP production process is robust, with planned intervention being responsive to identified need, transparent decision-making and community / stakeholder involvement at the centre of the process.
- 1.3.3 In response to such requirements, and in order to gain a full understanding of the physical, social and economic characteristics of the area and to inform the development of regeneration proposals, it is essential and indeed a required part of the planning process that a robust evidence base is assembled.
- 1.3.4 The development of a comprehensive and measurable evidence base is a fundamental first step in the production of a “sound” AAP. Analysis of this evidence base has informed the Issues, and options, and the choice of the preferred Strategic or Preferred Option
- 1.3.5 The evidence base is based on a methodical rationale, to enable information to be collated and reviewed consistently. This is critical as the evidence base will be subject to constant monitoring and review, both as a statutory requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and as part of Blackpool Council’s duty to update information and make note of any shifts in trends occurring within the Borough.

1.3.6 The Neighbourhood Profile evidence base for the Foxhall AAP contains information that has been obtained from a wide range of sources including the 2001 Census, Borough-wide and area specific studies and discussions with key stakeholders. The evidence base seeks to present as accurate a portrait of the Foxhall area in light of the fact that such work will clearly only serve as a 'snapshot' of the situation at the time the work is undertaken.

1.3.7 The evidence base will be the basis for:

- Understanding current issues facing Foxhall
- Appreciating the potential of the area
- Developing viable and sustainable regeneration proposals for the future of Foxhall

1.3.8 It is not intended that this evidence base document which sits behind the AAP, will be a static document, but will instead be updated and amended as the Council progresses through the planning process leading up to the adoption of the AAP. Upon adoption of the AAP, it is intended that the evidence base be reviewed as part of the statutory annual monitoring process to ensure that the information it contains remains relevant.

1.4 Structure of Document

1.4.1 The remaining chapters of this document set out the evidence used to justify the Foxhall AAP by topic or subject area as follows:

- Chapter 2: Location and Spatial Context
- Chapter 3: Community Profile
- Chapter 4: Historical Development
- Chapter 5: Townscape & Heritage
- Chapter 6: Housing
- Chapter 7: Tourism and the Economy
- Chapter 8: Transport and Movement
- Chapter 9: Sustainability and the Environment
- Chapter 10: Community Infrastructure
- Chapter 11: Policy and Regeneration Context
- Chapter 12: Utilities Infrastructure

1.4.2 Each Chapter includes a summary of the key facts and issues emerging from the evidence base. Key sources of information are also referenced as appropriate.