



UK Tentative List of Potential Sites for World Heritage Nomination: Application form

Please save the application to your computer, fill in and email to:
UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk

The application form should be completed using the boxes provided under each question, and, where possible, within the word limit indicated.

Please read the [Information Sheets](#) before completing the application form. It is also essential to refer to the accompanying [Guidance Note](#) for help with each question, and to the relevant paragraphs of UNESCO's *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, (OG) available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines>

Applicants should provide only the information requested at this stage. Further information may be sought in due course.

(1) Name of Proposed World Heritage Site

Blackpool

(2) Geographical Location

Name of country/region

Lancashire, England

Grid reference to centre of site

SD 3036SE (330631.07, 436366.25)

Please enclose a map preferably A4-size, a plan of the site, and 6 photographs, preferably electronically.

(3) Type of Site

Please indicate category:

Natural Cultural Mixed Cultural Landscape

(4) Description

Please provide a brief description of the proposed site, including the physical characteristics. 200 words

The Lancashire resort of Blackpool has a unique history and heritage as a centre of popular culture and recreation. It has kept a considerable legacy of seaside architecture, public spaces, accommodation and entertainment traditions to merit serious consideration as a potential WHS under the 'cultural landscape' category. Indeed, it is a cultural landscape without parallel in the rest of the world.

The proposed site encompasses those parts that commemorate and perpetuate Blackpool's identity as the world's first working-class seaside resort, including the world famous promenade, the town centre with its high density of heritage buildings, and Stanley Park.

The promenade is a vital historic asset, the main artery of the resort and the centre of its cultural significance, with its 'Golden Mile' attractions, beach-lift, pioneering electric tramway and Illuminations. Other key historic assets include Blackpool Tower and the Winter Gardens - internationally unequalled examples of all-weather leisure complexes; the Frank Matcham-designed Grand Theatre, three pleasure piers (one designed by Eugenius Birch), the Carnegie Library, Grundy Art Gallery and the Pleasure Beach amusement park.

Also of significance are the extensive areas of 19th and 20th century boarding house and hotel accommodation.

(5) History

Please provide a short summary statement of any significant events in the history of the site. 200 words

Blackpool grew quickly from humble origins into a world leader in tourism. Visitors first arrived in the 1730s, increasing rapidly when the railway came in 1846, and rising to over 285,000 annually by 1865.

Annual total visitors trebled to 850,000 between 1865 and 1873, doubled again to 2,000,000 over the next twenty years and to 4,000,000 by 1914. This volume of visitors, many staying for several days, made a dramatic impact on the town's development.

This period saw immense investment in infrastructure, transport, cultural and leisure facilities, including the building of the promenade (from 1868); major entertainment complexes – Raikes Hall (1872), the Winter Gardens (1878), the Tower (1894), three piers (1863, 1868, 1893), the Pleasure Beach (1890s); and the tramway (1885).

The Illuminations began in 1912 and Stanley Park opened in 1926. By the mid 1930s there were around 7,000,000 annual visitors and trade remained strong throughout World War II. This success continued into the 1950/60s.

Throughout this time, the living traditions associated with the resort have continued, particularly in the performing arts, with music, variety, cabaret, dance, magic, comedy and circus, in both traditional and contemporary guises.

Today, Blackpool remains the UK's premier seaside resort, attracting c.10 million visitors a year.

(6) Why do you think this site should be inscribed as a World Heritage Site?

Give reasons. 200 words

Inscription as a WHS would formally acknowledge Blackpool's global status and prestige as the flagship site in the history of the popular seaside resort. Indeed, it would be the first seaside resort to enter the World Heritage List.

Blackpool holds a special place in the national consciousness. However, for those harbouring traditional notions about the content and nature of heritage, Blackpool poses a fascinating challenge. When plans were first revealed to put the resort forward as a potential WHS, many in the heritage sector considered the bid audacious and counter-intuitive, and joined, initially at least, in the widespread media condescension towards the proposal. But once the mirth gave way to serious thought about the economic and cultural significance of the seaside in British society and beyond, it is clear that Blackpool is recognised by academics and cultural experts as an exceptional place, a view endorsed by the millions of people who return each year.

Making the case for such a unique site requires a unique bid: one that is firmly grounded in the criteria for inscription but also one that embraces changing perceptions of the heritage of the recent past and further stimulates the debate about world heritage, popular culture and the engagement of communities normally beyond the reach of UNESCO.

(7) Please say why the site has Outstanding Universal Value and specify the main features which underpin its importance. 200 words

Blackpool is genuinely important on the global stage as a pioneering town for popular tourism. Tourism is arguably the world's most pervasive and dynamic industry, whether viewed in terms of employment, cultural change or environmental impact. The beach holiday, a significant component of tourism in its modern incarnation, is a British invention, and Blackpool its most compelling example.

Blackpool was a product of the world's first industrial revolution, associated with the Lancashire cotton industry, and has no credible challengers for the title of the world's first working-class seaside resort. Its OUV, lies in the trajectory of its development and the nature and extent of the surviving evidence 'on the ground' - the extraordinary built heritage.

Importantly, it is not a cultural 'full stop'. It has constantly been in flux, at the forefront of innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship (as expressed enduringly in the town's motto, 'Progress'), remaining true to its core identity and sustaining its unmistakable atmosphere of fun and excitement.

Above all, Blackpool represents a continuing cultural tradition of popular entertainment, constantly adapting to meet the changing desires of modern day audiences. Indeed, the idea of continuing change that builds on living traditions is essential to the character of the place.

(8) Outstanding Universal Value

Please state which of the [10 UNESCO criteria for Outstanding Universal Value](#) the proposed site meets, and describe briefly why the criteria were chosen. Please see criteria note at the end of the form.

UNESCO criterion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Why was this criterion chosen? 100 words
(i)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(ii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

UNESCO criterion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Why was this criterion chosen? 100 words
(iii)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Blackpool was the first resort in the world to set out its stall to cater overwhelmingly for a working-class cultural identity. The resort became the 'playground' for many of the northern manufacturing towns in Britain, and a place to escape the daily grind and 'get away from it all'. The popular tradition of the seaside holiday is a key cultural export that the British gave to the world. Blackpool pioneered the working-class incarnation of this phenomenon. It is the epitome of the seaside holiday.
(iv)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Blackpool has an impressive ensemble of surviving architectures and built environments dedicated to seaside leisure. The sheer scale, breadth and ambition are unique. It contains the most pleasure piers. The Tower is a national icon. The Winter Gardens 'the most magnificent palace of amusement in the world'. The Grand Theatre and Tower Circus are two of only twenty surviving Frank Matcham designs. Pleasure Beach retains the world's largest number of historic amusement park rides. The electric tramway still performs its original functions as public transport system and tourist attraction. The Illuminations is the world's first and longest surviving show of its kind.
(v)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reclaimed from the dunes and beach-land, Blackpool's historic seafront is the first example of mass-interaction with the coastal environment for leisure, recreation and amusement. The seven miles' stretch of the town's promenade, and the sea defences associated with it, created the main artery of the resort and represent the physical manifestation of this environmental interaction on a grand scale. It is still evolving to meet the needs of contemporary residents and visitors, whilst still performing its original function.
(vi)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Blackpool is a unique cultural landscape – a meeting point and melting pot of contested and contradictory spaces and a living, evolving expression of the industrial archaeology of the popular seaside holiday and entertainment industry. Evolving is the key word here. It has continued to adapt to the changing holiday market whilst retaining its cultural traditions with annual events like the Illuminations (1912), the world's largest Magic Convention (1946) and the international Blackpool Dance Festival, complemented by contemporary offers, such as Showzam festival of new variety, Wordpool literature festival, the World Firework Championships and new public artworks.
(vii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

UNESCO criterion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Why was this criterion chosen? 100 words
(viii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(ix)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(x)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(9) Authenticity (for cultural or mixed sites only)

Authenticity concerns the current state of conservation of a cultural or mixed site; especially whether its importance, its Outstanding Universal Value, is still obvious from its physical condition. Please outline the condition of the site. 200 words

The features outlined in Section 4 have retained their original usage, ensuring that Blackpool retains much of the infrastructure first associated with its status as the birthplace of popular tourism.

Blackpool Council has undertaken various studies to assess the authenticity of the proposed site. This began with commissioning Prof John Walton, the internationally renowned academic historian of seaside resorts, to research the development of Blackpool to understand its historical and cultural significance. This work helped decide the category and criteria under which inscription would be sought.

At the same time, Prof Vanessa Toulmin of the National Fairground Archive has explored the wealth of entertainment heritage, strengthening Blackpool's spirit and living traditions.

English Heritage has funded a number of intensive surveys of historic areas resulting in a suite of nine Historic Townscape Characterisation Reports and associated detailed mapping.

Blackpool Council is pursuing a policy of encouraging and part funding the compilation of Conservation Management Plans for key listed buildings, in both public and private ownership; a process accelerated by the recent purchase by the Council of the Tower and Winter Gardens. It is intended that all conservation areas will have Management Plans in line with WHS guidance.

(10) Integrity

For cultural or mixed sites, please state how much original fabric is included in the proposed site, and its condition. For guidance on how the test of integrity is met for natural sites under criteria (vii) – (x), please refer to the OG 90-94. Information Sheet 6 also provides help on this point. 200 words

The proposed WHS site relates to the resort's core entertainment and accommodation zones as they were in the early 20th century. The characterisation reports focused on the promenade, guest house and civic/commercial districts of the town and were used to define the proposed WHS boundary. There are features and buildings in other locations within the town that add to the demonstration of OUV, but comparative geographic remoteness excludes them from the proposed site.

The reports conclude that much of the fabric of the resort at this period is still extant, albeit with later alterations which vary in intensity depending on proximity to the promenade or commercial centre. For example, the Grand Theatre has been restored and developed in consultation with the Theatres Trust and English Heritage. Street patterns have been preserved, even in areas of later development. Where historic buildings and spaces have been adapted, to take account of changing tastes, preferences and conventions, they do not compromise their essential purpose.

Blackpool is a living and working town that has grown dynamically and organically. Its buildings are a legacy of continuous embellishment and improvement. It is this capacity for change, within inherited parameters, that is essential to the nature of its authenticity and integrity.

(11) Are there other examples of this kind of site already on the World Heritage List?

Yes No

If yes, please list. 100 words

There are no seaside resorts on the World Heritage List.

(12) What distinguishes this site from other similar sites?

150 words

It is the scale, speed and ambition of Blackpool's development that differentiates the resort from any rivals. From the late nineteenth century especially, Blackpool far-outpaced its competitors in terms of its tourism infrastructure, entertainment provision and the enduring commercial success of its various enterprises. The only plausible UK rival is Margate, popular with lower middle-class Londoners in the later 18th century, but much smaller.

There are no convincing European or African equivalents.

In the USA, Coney Island was a day-tripper resort, lacking an accommodation sector. It fell into terminal decline in 1960s. Atlantic City was a later developer but has lost its visible, tangible traditions and architecture.

The world's largest resorts, Mar del Plata in Argentina and Queensland's Gold Coast in Australia were later developments, lacking Blackpool's distinctive surviving infrastructure and entertainment traditions.

(13) How does the site contribute to meeting UNESCO's priorities for a balanced World Heritage List?

200 words

Under the typological framework analysis of the World Heritage List, Blackpool sits within two under-represented categories – modern heritage and cultural landscapes. Both are relatively small in number and percentage. They are equally small on the Tentative List. Even analysing the distribution of these categories by region they remain small when the European/North American region is considered.

Generally, when taking into account the chronological-regional framework, the later periods, into which Blackpool would fall, remain under-represented.

The thematic framework contains a number of categories very relevant to Blackpool, none of which have large numbers of properties allocated to them. These include:

Expressions of Society

Interacting and Communicating

- Music, dance, sports
- Literature, artistic references and theatre

Creative Responses and Continuity

- Domestic habitat
- Recreational architecture
- Towns established in the 19th and 20th centuries

Developing Technologies

- Urban transport systems
- Streetlighting

Blackpool’s contribution to the World Heritage List would be as the:

- First working-class seaside resort
- Embodiment of the living tradition of the seaside holiday
- Evolving expression of the industrial archaeology of the seaside holiday and popular entertainment industries

(14) What benefits do you think World Heritage Site inscription would bring?

Please indicate the main opportunities and benefits.

Education	☒	Tourism	☒	Regeneration	☒
Conservation	☒	Protection	☒	Other benefits	☒

Please describe. 100 words.

Blackpool Council will put WHS philosophy at the centre of its thinking, planning and delivery to:

- safeguard and sympathetically develop the town's built heritage, living traditions and historic collections.
- act as a driver for sustainable regeneration
- raise quality in new development and the public realm
- lever inward investment
- redefine the resort's destination marketing
- build the visitor economy, supporting job creation and new enterprise
- raise civic pride, build aspirations, and encourage community cohesion
- actively engage communities, including young people, through life-long learning activities, as both participants and heritage 'ambassadors'.

(15) Are there any known threats to the proposed World Heritage Site?

Yes No

Please indicate any proposed developments, or other potential impacts on the site.

Impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please describe. 100 words for each issue.
Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There are a number of development projects in Blackpool, some on the edge or within the boundaries of the proposed WHS. These projects, however, fully take into account the heritage context and the key criteria enshrined within the statement of OUV. A good example is the renewal of the tramway infrastructure, a move which will allow continued use of the historic rolling stock alongside new trams and will deliver a sustainable transport offer for the town into the next century.
Environmental	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The coastal strip on which Blackpool sits is fairly extreme in terms of weather. Storm flooding has been an issue in the past, but the recent investment by DEFRA in new sea defences, combined with a new promenade featuring activity-based headlands, has mitigated this risk, whilst also underpinning the cultural traditions set out within the statement of OUV.

Other	☒	Patterns of ownership have also been an issue, particularly with regard to the key listed buildings within the proposed WHS area. This has been mitigated through Blackpool Council's acquisitions policy which has moved assets like the Grade I-listed Tower and Grade II*-listed Winter Gardens into public ownership; a move which complements existing ownership of other key listed buildings within the town.
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(16) Legal Protection

Please list any legal and other protections, including cultural and natural designations, which cover the whole or part of the proposed site. 200 words

The legal protections offered specifically to built heritage assets within the proposed boundary are:

- Listed building status (Grades 1, II* and II)
- Conservation area designation
- Article 4 directions (Stanley Park Conservation Area and sections of the promenade)
- Open Spaces Act 1906
- County of Lancashire Act

The Open Spaces and the County of Lancashire Acts are very relevant to the sea front. Both seek to protect the open space of the promenade in subtly different ways, preventing commercial development or other interventions not in the best interests of the public.

The characterisation process has highlighted three potential new conservation areas which will help to extend controls across the proposed site, particularly within its northern, eastern and central sections. Development within any new or existing conservation area will be controlled using enhanced Article 4 Directions to protect those characteristics that form part of the statement of OUV.

In addition there are the standard statutory planning controls across the whole site which offer some additional protection when dealing with incremental change or in controlling changes to residential buildings with permitted development rights.

(17) Ownership

Please list the main owners of the site, where possible.

Blackpool Council is the predominant owner. It owns:
Blackpool Tower
Winter Gardens
Stanley Park
Promenade
The Illuminations
Tramway
Some of the key buildings on the original 'Golden Mile'.
The public realm

Do the owners support the application? Yes No

A statement of support from the principle owners of the proposed site should be attached to the application, preferably electronically.

(18) Local Authority support for the site

Please list all Local Authorities with an interest in the proposed site.

Blackpool Council

Does the proposed site have local Authority support? Yes No

Please attach a statement of support from each one in relation to the application.

Please indicate whether the site is included in the local plan/s by specific policies.

Yes No Partly

Please describe. 200 words.

Working to secure WHS status is included within the Blackpool Strategic Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy, a strategic action in support of Goal One - Improve Blackpool's Economic Prosperity, objectives 1. Create high quality all-year round reasons to come to Blackpool, and 2. Establish Blackpool as the sub-regional centre of the Fylde Coast.

Achieving WHS status is a key outcome in the Blackpool Council's Heritage Strategy and the draft Culture Strategy for the Fylde Coast, featuring as a key objective under Theme Four - Coast - Repositioning the classic resort offer of the Fylde Coast for the 21st century.

It is one of Blackpool Council's Corporate Plan's Key Actions and features in all relevant Directorate Business Plans.

The Core Strategy does not contain specific World Heritage policies. However, Policy Statement R3 does relate directly to the resort's built, social and cultural heritage, recognising the importance of combining the town's rich legacy with new innovation and development. It is acknowledged that the Core Strategy is a live document and will be modified, if appropriate, as part of the WHS bidding process.

(19) Stakeholders

Please list the main parties with an interest in the site. 100 words

Blackpool Council
Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Development Company
Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board
Blackpool Pleasure Beach
Blackpool Transport
Range of entertainment and theatre operators (e.g. the Theatre Liaison Group, Merlin Entertainment)
Range of major hotel owners (Hilton, Barcelo, Britannia, Best Western)
Range of small private hotel and guesthouse operators (represented by StayBlackpool)
Businesses (e.g. Business Improvement District, Business Leadership Group, Blackpool Association of Family Attractions)
Blackpool Heritage Forum
Local communities (e.g. Blackpool Civic Trust, Blackpool and Fylde Historical Society, community and faith groups)

(20) How will the Site be managed?

Please outline the management arrangements for the proposed World Heritage Site, including where the responsibilities lie. 200 words

Effective partnership working will be crucial, as the management plan will be wide-ranging and difficult to achieve without co-operation and a joined-up approach.

The Blackpool World Heritage Steering Group was established in 2006. We intend to maintain and develop this group to encompass a wide range of interests. This will include all the major stakeholders plus relevant national and regional organisations and appropriate advisors. It will be the responsibility of the steering group to develop and monitor a thorough and robust management plan. In particular, it will recognise and make clear the shared responsibilities needed for the effective delivery of the plan.

Blackpool is currently considering two potential structures. The first is the WHS co-ordinator model positioned within the local authority. The second is the independent model. As well as ensuring appropriately experienced professional staff, both models will harness the passion, energy and expertise of local volunteers.

Blackpool Council is already in conversation with a number of UK World Heritage Sites who operate different governance and management arrangements and a series of study visits are being organised to investigate the different options further.

(21) Funding: the nomination

Please indicate how the preparation of the nomination would be funded.
100 words

Considerable work relevant to the nomination has already been funded and completed (see Q9 for details).

Further resources are committed for:

- Conservation Management Plans for the Tower, Winter Gardens and Stanley Park, and conservation and development of the Carnegie Library.
- Further characterisation studies
- New conservation areas, statutory listing and local listing

In addition:

- Blackpool Council will provide dedicated officer time.
- Steering group partners will provide a range of expertise and consultancy support
- Several UK sites have offered knowledge and expertise
- Funding will be sourced from English Heritage, NWDA, business sponsorship, etc

(22) Funding: management

Please outline how the future management would be funded. 100 words

- Blackpool Council has ownership of the key heritage assets and will manage them in accordance with the WHS management plan.
- Blackpool Council is committed to supporting the management of the site through existing officer resource
- The management plan will be embedded into the work programmes of the key partners and delivered as part of their core business
- External funding and/or business sponsorship will be sought for specific projects as appropriate
- Partnership and strategic commissioning opportunities will be explored
- Volunteering opportunities will be created to optimise community engagement and ownership, and create efficiencies wherever possible.

Name and Contact Details of Applicant

Name	Heather Morrow
Status	Head of Heritage
Address	Blackpool Council Progress House Clifton Road Blackpool FY4 4US
Telephone	
Email	

Completed applications should be forwarded, preferably in electronic format, to the World Heritage Team, Department for Culture, Media and Sport at the following email address: UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk

Any material that cannot be sent electronically should be sent to the following address:

World Heritage Team, Department for Culture, Media and Sport
2-4 Cockspur Street
London

SW1 5DH

The closing date for applications is 11th June 2010

UNESCO's criteria for the assessment of Outstanding Universal Value (para 77 of the Operational Guidelines)

- (i) represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
- (ii) exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
- (iii) bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
- (iv) be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
- (v) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
- (vi) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.
- (vii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;
- (viii) be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
- (ix) be outstanding examples representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;
- (x) contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.