

Motion:

That Council calls upon the Cabinet immediately to initiate the process of designating the area of Cliftonville highlighted in the accompanying plan, and listed below, as a conservation area to ensure that the architecture and quality of housing in these areas is protected for generations to come:

- Northdown Road
- Eastern Esplanade area
- Ethelbert Road-Athelstan Road area
- Edgar Road-Sweyn Road area
- Grotto Gardens-Clifton Place area
- Norfolk Road-Warwick Road-Surrey Road area
- Streets adjoining the above

The architecture of Cliftonville West is outstanding and as good as anything we have in this country. It should be preserved by designating it as a Conservation Area. I believe that residents want it but are being let down by this administration's failure to act.

Conservation appraisals, cynically released by this administration one hour before a public meeting held by Laura Sandys on this subject, have been completed on key areas and provide compelling evidence of the benefits such designation could have. We can coordinate improvements to neglected buildings and front boundaries, doors and windows, communal spaces, unsightly satellite dishes, pavements, street lighting, street furniture, parking and much more. And we can more effectively preserve our amazing heritage.

It is sobering to think that if this administration had not kept these appraisals under wraps for the last two years but had acted upon them instead, we would probably not have seen the demolition of the Ethelbert Rd Baptist Church. But now it's gone, and gone forever. We should have been guardians of that heritage. We should not be standing aside whilst it is swept aside.

Conservation areas are proven to promote regeneration, they encourage pride and community engagement and, crucially, they attract money from a variety of sources: grant funding for individuals to make improvements, Heritage Lottery Funding, Homes and Communities Agency

funding and potentially huge European money via the proposed LEP Coastal Property Renovation Fund.

This council cannot regenerate Cliftonville on its own. We need outside sources of funding and in my view this outweighs concerns about the cost of council intervention.

I am not claiming that it is a magic bullet to solve every issue affecting the area but it can be another tool to add to those already introduced by this council under the Conservatives, such as Selective Licensing, the Margate Task Force, and Live Margate.

We need action now. I know that there are plans to undertake a Thanet-wide heritage strategy, but don't use this as another excuse to put off action in Cliftonville.

I cannot set out a whole conservation area strategy in three minutes, but I can demand action - I can call upon this administration to stop avoiding the question, stop finding excuses, stop finding problems and start finding solutions and most important of all - start to listen to the residents of Cliftonville.

Much of the work has been done. Just get on with it.