

# Development plans 'priority' over Liverpool's World Heritage status



Developments including Everton FC's new stadium plans were "more important" than keeping Liverpool's Unesco World Heritage status, said the city's mayor. Unesco has warned the city council it risked losing its status next year over concerns of overdevelopment. Liverpool mayor Joe Anderson said he would be prepared to lose the World Heritage tag to "secure a future for our city... with secured jobs". Unesco said Liverpool had until February to defend its status. In 2004 Liverpool Waterfront helped earn it World Heritage status - which covers six areas of the city including the Pier Head, Ropewalks and William Brown Street.

In 2012 Unesco added Liverpool to a list of sites which could lose their status. The Unesco committee agreed on Tuesday the city's status was still in danger after the council had ignored previous recommendations against further development. In its latest report, Unesco said the city risked "systemically excluding heritage concerns and conservation outcomes". However, Mr Anderson said the £1.5bn regeneration of the waterfront, which includes the stadium plan, would create 25,000 jobs and took precedence over the World Heritage accolade. "It is more important we secure a future for our city... for our grandchildren... and protect our city than protect a derelict site." He said visitors did not go to Bramley Moore Docks. They went to Mathew Street, on The Beatles' tours or on visits to listed buildings. Mr Anderson urged Unesco to visit the site and the rest of the city "to see what we've done to cherish our

heritage". "We've spent just under £500m in protecting listed buildings in the city and we continue to nurture and protect them."

Frank McKenna of Downtown in Business said Liverpool would be better without World Heritage status. "The row we have with them now on an annual basis is actually more damaging to the city than any benefits we get." The badge probably attracts few if any visitors... and potentially is a barrier to a hugely impressive and much needed regeneration of north Liverpool." Everton hopes to begin work on a new ground in 2020 and is set to launch the next phase of a public consultation. A spokesperson for the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport said: "Heritage led regeneration has brought new life to many buildings in Liverpool, and we wish to encourage development which protects the historic character of the city. "We are working closely with Liverpool to address the concerns of the World Heritage committee regarding development in the city centre."