

**Test Valley Revised Local Plan
DPD
2011 – 2029
Regulation 22 – Submission to
Secretary of State**

**Policy E9- Heritage
Topic Paper**

June 2014

REVISED LOCAL PLAN
POLICY E9- HERITAGE TOPIC PAPER

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In light of the increased recognition of the historic environment within national planning policy, the Revised Local Plan has been modified to take account of the role the historic environment plays within the Borough and how policies can be written to ensure that the historic environment is conserved and enhanced.
- 1.2 The purpose of this paper is to provide background justification to the inclusion of a heritage policy within the Revised Local Plan document.
- 1.3 This paper sets out the background and context that underpins the creation of proposed heritage policy, E9, within the Revised Local Plan.

2 Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework provides clear guidance on how policies should be written with the aim of conserving and enhancing the historic environment and how decisions should be made with this in mind too.

NPPF paragraph 17(Core Planning principles)

Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.

- 2.2 Significance in the context of heritage is defined as: *The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological architectural artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage assets physical presence but also from its setting.*

Paragraph 126

Local planning authorities should set out in their local plans a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.

Paragraph 128

In determining applications local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise.

Paragraph 157(plan making)

Local Plans should contain a clear strategy for enhancing the natural built and historic environment.

Paragraph 169

Local planning authorities should have up to date evidence about the historic environment in their area and use it to assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment. They should also use it to predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest. Local planning authorities should either maintain or have access to a historic environment record.

As well as the NPPF, The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 the following legislation must be taken into account when making decisions regarding the historic environment.

National Planning Practice Guidance (2014)

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG, 2014) provides guidance on conserving and enhancing the historic environment. The Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide (English Heritage, 2012) which was originally written to support PPS5 remains a valid and a Government endorsed document pending Government's review of guidance supporting national planning policy.

3 Context

3.1 The Borough's historic built and natural environment is one of its many assets. Within the Borough there are 36 Conservation Areas and 2,249 listed buildings along with Registered Historic Parks and Gardens and Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The historic environment is important to the character of the borough and is appreciated by residents and visitors. It is therefore considered appropriate to include a policy which looks to protect these assets whilst reflecting national guidance.

3.2 Sources of information on the Borough's heritage assets are contained within the Hampshire County Council's Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, Hampshire Archaeology and Historic Record as well as the Historic Landscape Assessment.

4 Revised Local Plan

4.1 The proposed Heritage policy (policy E9) has been written taking into account the principles set out in the NPPF. It is underpinned by a positive focus on the role of the natural historic and built environment and has been written taking into account the amendments suggested by English Heritage at the regulation 18 consultation stage.

4.2 Comments were received on the heritage policy during the regulation 19 consultation. These comments can be viewed in the Schedule of Officer Responses. English Heritage believe that this policy is based on an adequate relevant and up to date evidence base. Detailed comments have also been made to other aspects of the Revised Local Plan.

4.3 The proposed wording and sub text is provided below:

Historic Environment

7.69 The Borough's historic environment is one of its many assets. It comprises a number of heritage assets¹⁰⁵ including individual buildings, groups of buildings, conservation areas, designed parks and gardens, archaeological sites and historic landscapes. All the Council's designated and undesignated heritage assets, as well as being important in their own right, contribute to the quality of life in the Borough and its attractiveness for economic development, particularly tourism which support the local economy

7.70 The aim of the Council is to conserve and enhance the historic environment for the benefit of future generations. This will be achieved by:-

- Resisting the loss of or harm to heritage assets;
- Positively considering proposals which secure the future of heritage assets;
- Recognising and managing pressures to adapt historic buildings to the demands of modern living through guidance leaflets and pre application advice;
- Recognising importance of heritage assets individually through the putting forward for listing buildings and structures and the designation and review of conservation areas;
- Maintaining and monitoring the register of buildings and other structures at risk which are either disused and/or neglected, working with others to consider opportunities and proposals to bring them back into an appropriate sustainable use, and where necessary using legislative powers to address specific issues.
- Raising awareness of the importance of heritage assets and how by applying best practice the sensitive adaptation of buildings can be achieved.

Policy E9: Heritage

Development and/or works affecting a heritage asset will be permitted provided

that:

a) It would make a positive contribution to sustaining or enhancing the significance of the heritage asset taking account of its character, appearance and setting; and

b) the significance of the heritage asset has informed the proposal.

Development which will result in the substantial harm to or loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset will not be permitted unless:

c) it is outweighed by the substantial benefit to the public of bringing the site back into use; or

d) its conservation can not be achieved by either a viable alternative use, support from public ownership or funding from other sources;

Development which will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset will be considered against the public benefit of the proposal and securing a viable use. The merits of a development affecting an undesignated heritage asset will be balanced against the scale of the harm or loss, either directly or indirectly, to the significance of that heritage asset.

Where the loss of a heritage asset is agreed the Council will need to be satisfied that there are approved and detailed plans and delivery mechanisms for the proposal's implementation.

7.71 Heritage assets are irreplaceable and should be retained wherever possible. However, the Council recognises that some change may be necessary to ensure the asset is continued to be used and retained in its current or alternative use. This will need to be undertaken sensitively having fully recorded, understood and appreciated the significance of the heritage asset. Any proposals will need to demonstrate that any changes are justified and the loss or harm is minimised.

7.72 To show an understanding of the significance of the asset the Council will expect the following assessment to have been carried out:

- an analysis of the asset to establish their significance both as a whole and specific parts effected by the proposal;

- an assessment, where appropriate, of the contribution made by the setting of the asset to its significance;

- demonstrate that the assessment has informed the proposed development.

- that the detailed design, scale, layout, materials and architectural or historical features would be appropriate and sympathetic.

7.73 The assessment should be proportionate to the importance of the asset and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal. Where an asset is to be lost, either wholly or in part, it will be expected that its significance will be recorded in a manner proportionate to its importance and impact.

7.74 Development106 can have a significant impact on a heritage asset as a result of poor design (such as extensions and alterations) which has not taken account of the significance of it, for example its historic character or the pattern of development. Even small additions or alterations may be inappropriate as they may not complement the existing appearance, materials or finishes. This is the case for both external and

internal additions and alterations.

7.75 The setting of heritage assets is often essential to their character. The setting can be the immediate surroundings but may often include land some distance away where the context of the heritage asset can be appreciated. Insensitive development or changes to the landscape can affect the significance of the asset and the ability to appreciate it within its surroundings. Proposals for development will need to address their impact on the setting and seek to preserve those elements that make a positive contribution to the significance of the asset. In considering proposals which affect listed buildings the Council has a statutory duty to consider the impact of development on their setting.

7.76 Non designated heritage assets do not have statutory protection but have a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions¹⁰⁷. This can include locally listed buildings¹⁰⁸, landscapes non scheduled archaeological remains and Hampshire County Council's register of local historic parks and gardens. These assets and features (the use of Cob in construction) still play an important role in the historic character of that area. The merits of any proposal would need to be balanced against the harm or loss to the significance to the undesignated asset.

7.77 The landscape of the Borough can also be considered a historic asset. The landscape has evolved through past processes, such as agricultural practices, which help make the character of the countryside. Hampshire County Council has produced the Historic Landscape Assessment¹¹⁰ which identifies historic landscape types. The impact of development on the characteristics of the historic landscape will need to be taken into account.

7.78 The harm or loss of part or whole of a heritage asset will need to be justified as such assets are irreplaceable and should be retained wherever possible and feasible. Where the proposal seeks the substantial harm or loss of a designated heritage asset the Council will require evidence that there are considerable public benefits to justify its loss or that there are no other mechanisms for supporting the retention of the asset. The merits of an alternative use may be considered where this would retain the asset providing it would not result in the loss of its important elements. It would also be important to ensure that any alternative use is capable of funding the conservation of the asset. Should the substantial harm or loss be agreed the Council will require a clear indication that the development will and that the loss of the asset was justified.

7.79 The Council would support proposals which would result in an enhancement of the Conservation Area or its setting through the alteration or replacement of those buildings which do not make a positive contribution. Proposals should demonstrate that they will make a contribution to the character and quality of the conservation area which is at least equal to or better when compared with the existing.

7.80 Within conservation areas not all buildings contribute to its significance as a designated heritage asset. Proposals which result in the loss of such buildings and are replaced by development which preserves or enhances the conservation area will be supported. In those case where the building(s) does make a positive contribution to the significance of the conservation.