

5. HISTORIC AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

5.1 Improving the quality of the built environment and protecting historic assets is of critical importance if the character and identity of Hillingdon is to be retained. The policies in this section of the Plan seek to ensure that new development is of high design quality, sustainable design and that it contributes positively to the local environment. Specific policies on householder development, including residential extensions, can be found at Appendix A.

HERITAGE ASSETS

5.2 The London Borough of Hillingdon is an attractive place for both residents and visitors, and heritage assets play an important role in terms of their contribution to the history, culture, character and appearance of the Borough.

5.3 A heritage asset can be a designated or non-designated building, monument, site, place or area. They can include village centres, planned residential developments, historic buildings and built features, such as canals and landscapes, as well as buried or submerged remains.

5.4 The Council maintains a rolling programme of review of heritage assets. Information on this and the current lists of designated and non designated historic assets, as well as links to the Greater London Historic Environment Record, Heritage at Risk, Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans and the Council's Townscape Character Study can be found on the Council's website at:
[www.hillingdon.gov.uk/planning/planning_policies_and_guidance/conservation and heritage](http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/planning/planning_policies_and_guidance/conservation_and_heritage).

5.5 Heritage significance is defined as "the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting".

5.6 The Local Plan Part 1 Strategic Objective SO1 and Policy HE1: Heritage aim to conserve and enhance Hillingdon's distinct and varied environment, its settings and the wider historic landscape. The Council will strongly support the retention of heritage assets and encourage proposals which sustain their preservation, conservation or enhancement, and that of their settings, in the knowledge that they are significant for many cultural, environmental, economic and social reasons.

5.7 Proposals affecting heritage assets will need to be justified, and the applicant will need to demonstrate an understanding of the significance of those assets in an accompanying Heritage Statement submitted with the planning application. Similarly, application drawings will need to show an appropriate level of detail as to how the proposal would affect the heritage asset in terms of its special significance and value as well as its impact on the street scene as a whole.

5.8 The impact of proposals affecting heritage assets, both designated and non designated, will be assessed having regard to the guidance contained within the NPPF, emerging and adopted supplementary planning documents, character appraisals, including the Council's Townscape Character Study and Management Plans and other relevant documents. Architectural design considerations will include proportion, scale, height, massing, bulk, alignment, articulation, materials, the impact on the integrity of the historic fabric, floor plans, architectural features and relationship with the wider setting. The desirability of increasing understanding and interpretation of and public access to heritage assets will also be taken into consideration.

Heritage at Risk

5.9 Heritage at Risk is a collective term applied to designated heritage assets (Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Scheduled Ancient Monuments) that are at risk as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development, or are vulnerable to becoming so. An annual Heritage at Risk Register is published by Historic England and is available on their website: <http://www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/>.

Policy DMHB 1: Heritage Assets

A) The Council will expect development proposals to avoid harm to the historic environment. Development that has an effect on heritage assets will only be supported where:

- i) it sustains and enhances the significance of the heritage asset and puts them into viable uses consistent with their conservation;**
- ii) it will not lead to a loss of significance or harm to an asset, unless it can be demonstrated that it will provide public benefit that would outweigh the harm or loss, in accordance with the NPPF;**
- iii) it makes a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of the area;**
- iv) any extensions or alterations are designed in sympathy, without detracting from or competing with the heritage asset;**

- v) the proposal would relate appropriately in terms of siting, style, scale, massing, height, design and materials;
 - vi) buildings and structures within the curtilage of a heritage asset, or in close proximity to it, do not compromise its setting; and
 - vii) opportunities are taken to conserve or enhance the setting, so that the significance of the asset can be appreciated more readily.
- B) Development proposals affecting designated heritage assets need to take account of the effects of climate change and renewable energy without impacting negatively on the heritage asset. The Council may require an alternative solution which will protect the asset yet meet the sustainability objectives of the Local Plan.**
- C) The Council will seek to secure the repair and reuse of Listed Buildings and monuments and improvements to Conservation Areas on the Heritage at Risk Register, through negotiations with owners, the provision of advice and guidance, the use of appropriate legal action, and through bids for external funding for improvement works.**

Listed Buildings

5.10 Listed Building Consent (LBC) is required for the demolition of a Listed Building or for any alterations, internal or external, that would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. It is a criminal offence not to seek consent when it is required. These controls are in addition to any planning regulations which would normally apply. Listed Building status can also result in the requirement for planning permission where it wouldn't ordinarily be required - for example, the erection of a means of enclosure.

5.11 Buildings are listed in their entirety, which means that both exterior and interior features, such as walls, ceilings and staircases are protected. The conservation of original plan forms will be an important consideration, and original architectural features such as joinery and fireplaces will also be protected, as will later additions to the building. Also, any object or structure fixed to the building, and any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1 July 1948 is also considered as listed. Listed Buildings have restricted permitted development rights with regards to garden structures and means of enclosure.

Policy DMHB 2: Listed Buildings

A) Applications for Listed Building Consent and planning permission to alter, extend, or change the use of a statutorily Listed Building will only be permitted if they are considered to retain its significance and value and are appropriate in terms of the fabric, historic integrity, spatial quality and layout of the building. Any additions or alterations to a Listed Building should be sympathetic in terms of scale, proportion, detailed design, materials and workmanship.

B) Applications should include a Heritage Statement that demonstrates a clear understanding of the importance of the building and the impact of the proposals on its significance.

C) The substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a statutory Listed Building will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances when the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable use of the building, no viable use can be found through marketing, grant-funding or charitable or public ownership and the loss is outweighed by bringing the site back into use. In such circumstances, full archaeological recording of the building will be required.

D) Planning permission will not be granted for proposals which are considered detrimental to the setting of a Listed Building.

Locally Listed Buildings

5.12 The Local List of Buildings of Architectural and Historical Importance (Local List) recognises local heritage assets of architectural or historic importance. Local heritage assets are considered as non designated heritage assets under the NPPF and can include buildings, structures and features of local interest. They are an important element of the rich history of the Borough and reinforce local distinctiveness and sense of place.

5.13 Any site or structure that meets the designation criteria can be added to the Local List, particularly if it can be shown that it contributes to the character of an area and is valued by local residents. The following are the criteria for including buildings, structures or features on the Local List:

- authenticity
- architectural interest
- townscape significance
- historic interest

More detailed criteria can be found on the Council's website: <http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/article/20547/Local-list>

5.14 The Local List includes farm buildings, residential and commercial properties, local landmarks, modern offices, educational buildings and churches. Street furniture and other structures can also be included in the Local List, for example, boundary markers, post boxes, memorials, lamp posts, artwork and statues.

Policy DMHB 3: Locally Listed Buildings

A) There is a general presumption in favour of the retention of buildings, structures and features included in the Local List. The Council will take into account the effect of a proposal on the building's significance and the scale of any harm of loss when considering planning applications, including those for major alterations and extensions. Proposals will be permitted where they retain the significance, appearance, character or setting of a Locally Listed Building.

B) Applications should include a Heritage Statement that demonstrates a clear understanding of the importance of the structure and the impact of the proposals on the significance of the Locally Listed Building.

C) Replacement will only be considered if it can be demonstrated that the community benefits of such a proposal significantly outweigh those of retaining the Locally Listed Building.

Conservation Areas

5.15 Planning applications for development in Conservation Areas should be supported by a Heritage Statement, which demonstrates how the proposals have adopted a design-led approach to take account of the special character of the area. Proposals should also take account of the Council's Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, where these are available and other relevant assessments including the Hillingdon Townscape Character Assessment.

5.16 The Council aims to enhance Conservation Areas through its own initiatives and by encouragement and advice to owners who may wish to alter or improve their properties. The following will be particularly important:

- extensions or alterations should not be out of scale with the original building, and should respect the property's original design;

- side extensions should normally be set back from the original building line and retain gaps between buildings to avoid a terraced effect;
- the original plan and form of the building should be respected, and there should be a relationship between new development and the roof form and proportions of the original structure.
- materials and detailing should match those of the existing property (e.g. existing features, window shapes and sizes, brick arches and eaves details) and features of interest should be retained;
- boundary treatment should be in keeping with the street scene in terms of its height and materials;
- backland development is unlikely to be acceptable;
- appropriate landscaping, both hard and soft should be provided; and
- shopfronts should be of good quality design and materials with appropriate advertisements and signage (see Appendix B: design guidance for shopfronts).

Policy DMHB 4: Conservation Areas

New development, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, within a Conservation Area or on its fringes, will be expected to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. It should sustain and enhance its significance and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. In order to achieve this, the Council will:

A) Require proposals for new development, including any signage or advertisement, to be of a high quality contextual design. Proposals should exploit opportunities to restore any lost features and/or introduce new ones that would enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

B) Resist the loss of buildings, historic street patterns, important views, landscape and open spaces or other features that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area; any such loss will need to be supported with a robust justification.

C) Proposals will be required to support the implementation of improvement actions set out in relevant Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans.

Areas of Special Local Character

5.17 Areas of Special Local Character (ASLC) are non-designated local heritage assets, that have a character and identity which local residents value and the Council wishes to preserve or enhance. They are chosen on the basis of their local architectural, townscape or historic merit, which helps mark and celebrate the area's special quality. The criteria for ASLCs differ from Conservation Area selection criteria in that they recognise particularly good examples of more familiar types of development as opposed to the more outstanding quality required for Conservation Area designation. ASLCs are shown on the Policies Map and are listed on the Council website, with detailed maps of each area provided.

5.18 Within Areas of Special Local Character new development should complement existing materials, design features, architectural style and building heights predominant in the area. Extensions to dwellings should respect the symmetry of the original buildings and be subordinate in nature. Additional development in the form of backland development is unlikely to be acceptable.

Policy DMHB 5: Areas of Special Local Character

A) Within Areas of Special Local Character, new development should reflect the character of the area and its original layout. Alterations should respect the established scale, building lines, height, design and materials of the area.

B) Extensions to dwellings should be subservient to, and respect the architectural style of the original buildings and allow sufficient space for appropriate landscaping, particularly between, and in front of, buildings.

C) The replacement of buildings which positively contribute to the character and local importance of Areas of Special Local Character will normally be resisted.

5.19 There are special policies applying to the Gatehill Farm Estate and Copse Wood Estate in Northwood. In these areas new development will be expected to conform to the vernacular styles predominant in the area, have traditional roof forms and architectural features and relate appropriately to their landscaped settings.

5.20 In the Copse Wood Estate, most trees are protected by Tree Preservation Orders. The Council will normally refuse applications for tree felling unless the tree is in poor health.

Policy DMHB 6: Gatehill Farm Estate and Copse Wood Estate Areas of Special Local Character

Within the Gatehill Farm and Copse Wood Estates, new houses should:

- i) be constructed on building plots of a similar average width as surrounding residential development;**
- ii) be constructed on a similar building line (formed by the front main walls of existing houses) and be of a similar scale, form and proportion as adjacent houses and reflect the materials, traditional roof design, design features and architectural style predominant in the area;**
- iii) ensure that boundary treatment is unobtrusive and of the natural materials appropriate to the character and appearance of the estate;**
- iv) ensure that new dwellings retain an absolute minimum of 1.5m distance to side boundaries;**
- v) preserve the mature trees including boundary planting to reinforce existing landscaping and Estate settings;**

Archaeology

5.21 Hillingdon is rich in archaeology and its archaeological remains are an important and valuable local and national resource. Archaeology contributes positively to the quality of life, character and distinctiveness of local communities and as such can attract interest, promote community involvement and provide a sense of local and national identity.

5.22 Significant prehistoric sites at Three Ways Wharf, Uxbridge and more recently at Heathrow Terminal Five have been excavated. The excavations at Heathrow have highlighted the Borough's potential for providing important information about the changing landscape of London from prehistory through to modern times.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs)

5.23 There are currently five Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the Borough as shown on Map 7.1 of the Local Plan Part 1. These comprise three mediaeval moated sites (Ickenham Manor, Pynchester Moat and Brackenbury Farm), an early mediaeval motte and bailey castle (Ruislip) and Park Pale (Ruislip), an earthwork forming the boundary of the mediaeval deer park. These sites will be protected in accordance with national guidance.