

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.

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 substantial harm or total loss of significance without providing substantial public benefit that outweighs the harm or loss~~ 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