7 Core Policies - Historic and Built Environment

7.1 The Borough has a diverse and in some parts distinct character and the Council will seek to protect and enhance its best features. Important buildings, townscape, open areas and waterside environments will be protected and improvements sought to those areas where the environment is poor. The Council will strive to ensure that all new development is of a high design quality, that it is sustainable and contributes positively to the local environment, creating attractive, safe and vibrant places to live and work.

Main Challenges

7.2 Table 3.1 in Chapter 3 identifies six main challenges relating to the historic and built environment:

- The need to maintain the historic character, identity, suburban qualities of the Borough's places, buildings and spaces;
- The need to conserve and enhance the historic significance of the Borough's heritage assets and settings;
- Pressure for high density residential developments;
- Loss of local characteristics through unsympathetic design;
- Balancing new sustainability requirements to combat climate change whilst protecting the existing character of places, in particular within conservation areas; and
- Demand for large scale commercial/ mixed use developments particularly in the southern part of the Borough on the fringe of Green Belt and/ or Conservation Areas.

Heritage

7.3 Hillingdon has a wide variety of historic assets; these include archaeological sites, traditional village centres, canals, historic buildings and landscapes. There are also extensive areas of good quality "Metro-land" suburbs, which are an important feature of the Borough.

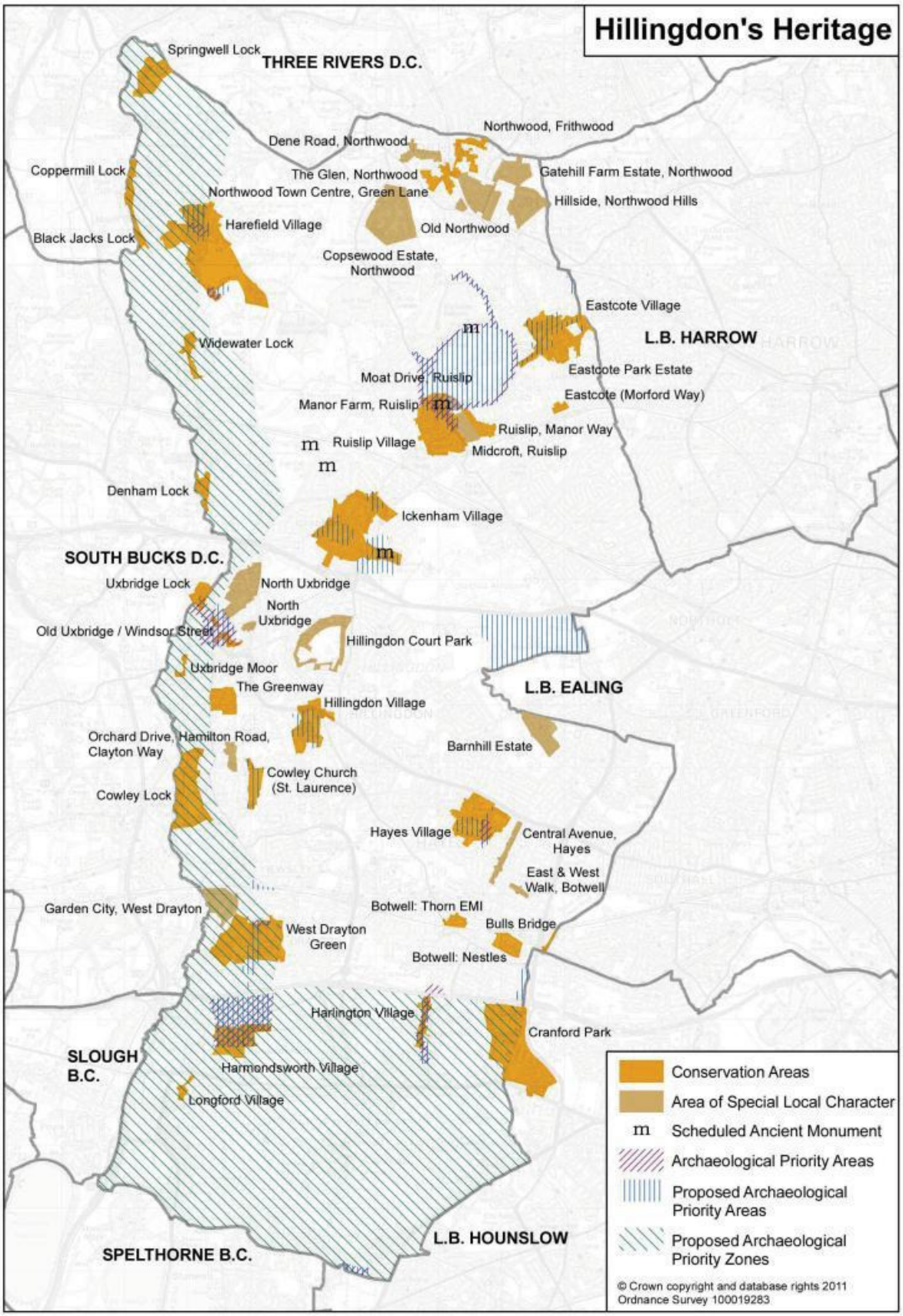
7.4 There is evidence to confirm that parts of the borough, such as Harmondsworth and Harefield were occupied in prehistoric times. Up until the 20th century, the borough was mainly rural in character; today it is predominantly suburban, with its main urban centre at Uxbridge. This was an important market town that took advantage of the stage coach route between Oxford and London in the 18th century and developed further with the building of the Grand Junction Canal, the Great Western Railway and more recently the Metropolitan and Piccadilly Lines. There are also a number of smaller town centres across the borough, such as Northwood, Ruislip, Eastcote, Hayes, Yiewsley and West Drayton. Most of these were originally villages, some dating back to medieval times, which grew as local transport links developed.

7.5 The Council has a rolling programme of heritage asset designation. At present the Borough contains:

- 30 Conservation Areas (with Appraisals for Longford Village, Harmondsworth Village, Ruislip Village, The Glen and Eastcote Park Estate and Management Plans for The Glen and Eastcote Park Estate)
- 14 Areas of Special Local Character (ASLC)
- 409 Statutory Listed Buildings
- 292 Locally Listed Buildings
- 5 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs)
- 9 Archaeological Priority Areas, totalling approximately 210 hectares and forming 1.8% of the Borough
- There are 37 entries in English Heritage's 'Heritage at Risk' Register of which 26 are buildings, 9 are conservation areas and 2 are Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- 1 entry in the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens (Church Gardens, Harefield, Grade II)
- 1 Article 4 Direction (Daisy Cottages, West Drayton Green).

7.6 A further 10 Archaeological Priority Areas (APAs) have been identified for designation and in addition, 2 new Archaeological Priority Zones (APZs) will be designated. The latter have been designed to allow wider areas of archaeological potential to be considered. The new designations shown on Map 7.1 will be defined in the Policies Map and Site Specific Allocations LDD.

Map 7.1 Hillingdon's Heritage



Strategic Objectives:

- SO1: Conserve and enhance the Borough's heritage and its setting by ensuring new development, including changes to the public realm, are of high quality design, appropriate to the significance of the heritage asset, and sensitive to the wider historic environment.

Related Policy: HE1

Policy HE1: Heritage

The Council will:

1. Conserve and enhance Hillingdon's distinct and varied environment, its settings and the wider historic landscape, which includes:
    - Historic village cores, Metro-land suburbs, planned residential estates and 19th and 20th century industrial areas, including the Grand Union Canal and its features;
    - Designated heritage assets such as statutorily Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Scheduled Ancient Monuments;
    - Registered Parks and Gardens and historic landscapes, both natural and designed;
    - Locally recognised historic features, such as Areas of Special Local Character and Locally Listed Buildings; and
    - Archaeologically significant areas, including Archaeological Priority Zones and Areas.
2. Actively encourage the regeneration of heritage assets, particularly those which have been included in English Heritage's 'Heritage at Risk' register or are currently vacant.
3. Promote increased public awareness, understanding of and access to the Borough's heritage assets and wider historic environment, through Section 106 agreements and via community engagement and outreach activities.
4. Encourage the reuse and modification of heritage assets, where appropriate, when considering proposals to mitigate or adapt to the effects of climate change. Where negative impact on a heritage asset is identified, seek alternative approaches to achieve similar climate change mitigation outcomes without damage to the asset.

Implementation of Policy HE1- how we will achieve this

The Council will seek to:

1. Ensure appropriate specialist advice and guidance is available, by preparing character appraisals, management plans and design guidance for its designated areas and historic assets, in partnership with the local community, guided by the Conservation Forum and where possible, aided by English Heritage.
2. Regularly review and update its web based Historic Environment Record (HER) and designations as required, and update character appraisals and management plans for conservation areas, ensuring national and local interest groups, and residents are consulted.
3. Pro-actively manage heritage assets, including those considered "At Risk" by English Heritage, working with heritage groups and partners where appropriate, to ensure buildings and structures such as those at Eastcote House Gardens, RAF Uxbridge and Breakspear House are repaired and reused.
4. Promote the Borough's heritage by continuing to ensure that it is included in the London Open House event; to improve the interpretation of historic assets, such as Manor Farm, Ruislip; and to recognise local schemes of exceptional quality or innovation by, for example, applying for Civic Trust and Green Apple Awards.
5. Include more specific guidance relating to historic buildings and other conservation matters, in the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2- Development Management Policies and supporting guidance contained within the forthcoming Heritage Strategy Supplementary Planning Document, together with the relevant Area Action Plans.
6. Where the loss of a heritage asset is justified, ensure that there will be a commitment to recording the structure and to disseminating this information to enable increased understanding of the heritage asset. Copies of these documents will where appropriate be deposited with local libraries and the Greater London Historic Environment Record (HER).

Monitoring - how we will measure success of Policy HE1

- The number of listed buildings removed from English Heritage's 'Heritage at Risk Register' will be monitored under Local Indicator LO20 of the Annual Monitoring Report.
- The percentage of conservation areas with appraisals and management plans will be monitored under Local Indicator LO19 of the Annual Monitoring Report and BV219b.
- The numbers of historic buildings open to the public on a regular basis.
- The number of applications refused on listed building or conservation grounds and upheld at appeal.
- With the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy the Council will look to promote improvements to the public realm, notably where this might benefit the setting of its local historic heritage assets.