

Environment

Policy DM25

Development affecting heritage assets

Heritage assets and their settings are an irreplaceable resource. Accordingly the Council will:

- a) **Apply a presumption in favour of preserving or enhancing all designated heritage assets and their settings;**
- b) **Require development proposals likely to affect the significance of heritage assets, including new buildings, alterations, extensions, changes of use and demolitions, to consider their significance, character, setting (including views to or from), appearance, design, layout and local distinctiveness, and the opportunities to enhance them;**
- c) **Only approve proposals that would lead to substantial harm or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset where it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss or the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework are met;**
- d) **Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use; and**
- e) **Require developers to make a proportionate but systematic assessment of any impact on the setting and thereby the significance of heritage asset(s).**

4.77 The historic environment is an asset of great cultural, social, economic and environmental value. It is a non-renewable resource that contributes significantly to our quality of life and to the character of the district. Heritage assets are defined as those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest over and above their functional utility and covers both designated and non-designated assets.

4.78 A heritage asset is defined as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interest. This includes designated heritage assets such as listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens and conservation areas, and undesignated sites that can include archaeological sites, locally listed assets and any asset included on the Devon County Historic Environment Record.

4.79 Where proposed development will have the potential to impact upon a heritage asset or its setting, the Council will require the applicant to submit sufficient information to enable a description of a heritage asset affected and a consideration of the impact of the development upon it. This may take the form of an appropriately detailed desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation. The level of detail required should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on its significance. If physical preservation of a heritage asset in situ is not appropriate or feasible, "preservation by record" may be acceptable and implementation required by a condition attached to planning permission. Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest that are of equivalent significance to a scheduled monument, will be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

4.80 Proposed development that would lead to substantial harm or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset will be assessed against national policy, which requires that such proposals should be refused unless there are substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm, or all of the following considerations apply:

- The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site

- No suitable viable use of the heritage asset can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing
- There is no possibility of conservation as a result of grant-funding or charitable or public ownership
- The harm or loss would be outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use

4.81 Balancing the importance of conservation with the challenge of tackling climate change represents a priority for the district. Proposals for measures to mitigate the effects of climate change that affect listed buildings or buildings in a conservation area can sometimes conflict negatively with the principles of conservation. Therefore prior to determination, the Council will work with applicants to identify feasible solutions that deliver climate change mitigation with less or no harm to the significance or setting of the heritage asset. Where conflict is unavoidable, the public benefit of mitigating the effects of climate change will be weighed against any harm to the significance of the heritage assets affected.

4.82 Further background information in relation to Mid Devon's historic environment can be found within the Town and Village Character Assessment and Conservation Area Appraisals. Where these are available, applications should make reference to how the proposed development contributes towards the priorities set out in these documents. Specific studies may also be relevant to development proposals depending on their location. For instance, where development would affect the setting of Knightshayes Court or Killerton Park, the Council will have regard to The Setting of Knightshayes Park and Garden: A Historic Landscape Assessment (The Parks Agency; Sept 2007), or the Killerton Park Setting Study (Land Use Consultants; final report, April 2013), as appropriate. These documents are available on the Council's website and will be a material consideration when planning applications are determined. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Council to check if their site falls within the setting study areas surrounding Knightshayes or Killerton, and consider the implications of this at the design stage. It should also be noted that the areas covered by setting studies do not represent a finite limit of setting.

4.83 Details of Mid Devon's non-designated heritage assets are on the register of heritage assets, which is available on the Council's website. Further details of heritage assets are available from Historic England and the Historic Environment Service at Devon County Council, which holds the Devon County Historic Environment Record. The Council will publish a local register of non-designated heritage assets.

4.84 Existing registers of heritage assets are not an exhaustive list of heritage assets. The Mid Devon local list is regularly reviewed to take account of new information. A development proposal might draw attention to a heritage asset that had not previously been identified or assessed. The absence of an asset from the heritage asset register at the time an application is submitted does not indicate that the asset has no heritage value.

Policy DM26

Green infrastructure in major development

Major development proposals must demonstrate that green infrastructure will be incorporated within the site as follows:

- Biodiversity mitigation, resulting in a net gain in biodiversity;**
- Flood and water resource management;**
- Green corridors and public rights of way to link the site to the wider GI network, provide walking and cycling opportunities and avoid habitat fragmentation; and**
- New green infrastructure such as the creation of native woodland where possible.**

Where evidence demonstrates that meeting these criteria in full would render the development unachievable, the Council will balance the benefits of the development against the objectives of this