

Sevenoaks District Council

DRAFT Local List Supplementary Planning Document

Introduction

Sevenoaks District contains many historic and modern buildings and structures, which, while not on the statutory list of buildings which are considered to meet strict criteria that afford them statutory protection, are of local architectural and historic interest or make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of our District.

This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is intended to raise awareness and enhance protection of the many unlisted but interesting and locally notable historic assets which make up the historic environment of Sevenoaks District. The Local List does not provide any additional planning controls but buildings on the list have the status of heritage assets and their conservation is an objective of the NPPF.

The inclusion of a building or structure on the list will be a material consideration the Council will take into account when considering planning applications. This means that when a planning application is made for a property on the Local List, or an application which will affect the setting of a locally listed building then any proposed alterations or extensions will be looked at with regard to the potential impact of any development on the heritage significance of that property, including its setting.

The Planning Policy Context

National context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the national policy context for plan making and decision taking. Paragraphs 126-141 in Section 12 of the NPPF are concerned with conserving and enhancing the historic environment and in particular the importance to be attached to the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets when considering development proposals.

Local context

At the District level, the Core Strategy development plan document adopted in February 2011 contains Strategic Policy SP1- Design of New Development and Conservation. Policy SP1 includes the paragraph:

The District's heritage assets and their settings, including listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological remains, ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, historic buildings, landscape and outstanding views will be protected and enhanced.

The Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP) adopted in February 2015 gives further definition to the conservation and enhancement of Heritage Assets. At paragraph 2.12 Locally Listed Buildings are specifically identified as representing a Heritage Asset.

The first part of Policy EN4 - Heritage Assets states:

Proposals that affect a Heritage Asset, or its setting, will be permitted where the development conserves or enhances the character, appearance and setting of the asset.

Applications will be assessed with reference to the following:

- a) the historic and/or architectural significance of the asset;*
- b) the prominence of its location and setting; and*
- c) the historic and/or architectural significance of any elements to be lost or replaced.*

Selection Criteria

The designation of 'local interest' shall apply to a building that meets one or more of the criteria given below provided that its historic form and qualities have not been seriously eroded by unsympathetic alteration. The selection criteria are based on those in the Good Practice Guide for Local Heritage Listing by Historic England.

1. If the building was built before 1840, does it survive in anything like its original external condition?
2. If it was built between 1840-1899 (Victorian), does it retain its original features? Is it of sufficient quality to distinguish it from other buildings of that period locally?
3. If it was built between 1900-1919 (early 20th century), does it retain its original features? Is it of sufficient quality to distinguish it from other buildings of that period locally?
4. If it was built between 1920-1938, is it an outstanding example of the style of the period?
5. If it was built between 1939-1945, is it a rare surviving example of a wartime structure?
6. If it was built after 1945, is it a building of exceptional quality and design?
7. Was the building or structure designed by an architect of national or local importance?
8. Has the building received a national award or recognition?
9. Is it an example of a style of building that is unique to the local area?
10. Is it a group of buildings that together are a good surviving example of an historic architectural style, particularly one associated with Kent?
11. Does the building or structure exhibit important characteristics of design, decoration or craftsmanship? For example, a mural, or clock or decorative tile work on an otherwise undistinguished building.
12. Is it a good early example of a particular technological innovation in building type and technique?

Historic Interest

13. Is the building or structure associated with an important national or local historic figure or event?

14. Is it a building, structure or item of street furniture which has an important association with the development of the town or its social or cultural history? For example, schools, churches, public buildings, mileposts, boundary markers and old letter boxes.

15. Is it a building, structure or item of street furniture which has an important association with the history of the area's local economic development? For example, agricultural, industrial, commercial or transport buildings and structures.

16. If a structure such as a wall, terracing or garden building, is it associated with a historic landscape or is it of identifiable importance to the historic design or development of the area?

Contribution to townscape

17. Is it a significant landmark building, folly or curiosity?

18. Does the building or group of buildings contribute significantly to the townscape, street scene or appearance of the area?

19. Is it a rare surviving example of street furniture that contributes positively to the local area?

Identifying locally important buildings

The Local List includes a range of buildings and structures that together make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the District. The list is launched with buildings within the town of Sevenoaks because of the extensive survey work organised and undertaken by members of the Sevenoaks Society.

For future additions to the Local List across the wider District it is envisaged that local history groups, local residents and members of the public will survey and nominate buildings and structures that meet the criteria for inclusion on the Local List. Buildings nominated for Local Listing are in the first instance checked against the agreed criteria by the Council's specialist conservation team. The assessments undertaken by the Sevenoaks Society have all been carried out to the agreed criteria and subsequently moderated by an external panel of specialists arranged by the Sevenoaks Society.

Reasonable effort will be made to contact owners of buildings that are being considered for Local Listing, with an explanation of what this means and how it affects them. They will be given an opportunity to comment and this will be taken into account when the proposals are put forward to Cabinet for adoption. Owners will then be notified if and when their building has been added to the Local List.

Adding to and removing buildings from the list.

The Council will, as part of the survey and designation of Conservation Areas, also assess and nominate buildings for inclusion on the local list. The Council will consider requests to add or remove buildings from the Local List as part of a process of review. Buildings and structures that meet the selection criteria will be subject to formal public consultation.

Requests for a building to be removed from the Local List must be supported by evidence to show that the building or structure is no longer of special interest and therefore no longer merits inclusion on the list.

Demolition

The implication of Policy EN4 - Heritage Assets in the ADMP is that planning permission or other relevant consents, when required, will not normally be granted for the demolition of a building identified on the Local List.

Proposals for the demolition of locally listed buildings will normally only be permitted where the applicant is able to demonstrate clear and convincing evidence that the building is no longer of local importance, that it is beyond repair, restoration or reuse, or that the proposed redevelopment would produce benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from demolition. Where a planning application proposes demolition of a locally listed building on the grounds that it is beyond repair the supporting evidence will be rigorously assessed.

Where, exceptionally, permission is granted for the demolition of a locally listed building, the SDC may require that provision is made by the developer to accurately record the building prior to demolition.

Where redevelopment is permitted in accordance with the conditions outlined above and with Local Plan policies, there will be an expectation that the building is replaced with one that is of an equal or higher standard of design and incorporates sustainability features.

Where a locally listed building is demolished without planning permission or the submission of a prior approval application, it will normally be a requirement of any subsequent planning application on the site that the property is rebuilt.

Article 4 Directions

The Council could use Article 4 directions to remove the permitted development rights of individual properties, but that would need to be very carefully considered and clearly justified on a case by case basis.

Further Information

Good Practice Guidance is being included within the Sevenoaks Neighbourhood Plan to help provide owners of heritage assets on the Local List with good practice when developing plans for extensions or alterations to those buildings. It is recommended that owners contact Sevenoaks District Council at an early stage for pre-application discussions.

The Local List can be viewed on the Sevenoaks District Council web site at www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

A hard copy of the Local List will be kept in the reception area at the Council Offices, Argyll Road and at Sevenoaks Library.

If you are in any doubt about whether planning permission or any other consent is required for any works you wish to carry out please contact the Development Management Team on 01732 227 000 e-mail planning.preapplication.advice@sevenoaks.gov.uk

If you would like to nominate a locally important building or structure please carefully consider the building against the criteria set out within this document. You will need to produce a brief overview of why the building meets this criteria before contacting the Conservation Team at conservation@sevenoaks.gov.uk If you are a local group interested in surveying an area within the District and would like to discuss setting up a Local List Project Team please contact the Strategic Planning Team.

Appendix 1 The Local List

This appendix has been published on the internet as it consists of over 300 pages. A limited number of paper copies have been printed off and are available on request. A copy has been placed in the Members' Room.

Link to view

<http://cds.sevenoaks.gov.uk/documents/s28609/07%20Appendix%20to%20appendix.pdf>

Appendix 2 Case Study - Sevenoaks Society

The Sevenoaks Society failed in an attempt to save a local public house and their representations were dismissed by the Planning Inspector on the basis that the building was not locally listed. That decision prompted the Sevenoaks Society to realise that there was a real risk of locally valued buildings being lost unless there was a Local List.

Another local group, Sevenoaks Conservation Council made representations to Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) that it should deal with local listing and appeared at the public hearing into the Core Strategy to argue that it should contain some provision relating to local listing. SDC said it would accept the inclusion of an aim to have a local list and thus it was that the Core Strategy, adopted in February 2011, para 5.1.2 has an aim to have a local list.

In January 2013 the Sevenoaks Society formed a project team to begin planning the research and format of the Local List. At the outset, significant help was received from the Historic England document 'Good Practice Guide for Local Heritage Listing'. It contained examples of what some local authorities had done and they were able to obtain further information about them from their websites. From that information, the Selection Criteria was formulated and a draft proposal put together to run the project which was put to SDC. The proposal was accepted together with the Selection Criteria.

Two pilot studies were undertaken and that experience led to some relatively minor changes to the Selection Criteria and gave confidence to proceed with the project. The project team expanded to include a local historian and a member who could organise the data management. It was agreed with SDC that because the project was estimated to take several years the project would be carried out in two tranches. This would help to keep the volunteers motivated and give publicity to the second tranche, hopefully attracting more volunteers.

Volunteers were recruited to carry out the historical research and to survey all the roads within the Sevenoaks Town Council area. Prompt sheets were designed for the surveyors to help the volunteers in making their assessments. Over the course of the project at least 20 volunteer surveyors have been involved and were crucial to the success of the project. Once the assessments of an area were completed the results were presented to the Selection Panel to adjudicate on the proposals. The panel consisted of a representative from Historic England, Kent County Council, SDC (Conservation Officer) and Sevenoaks Town Council together with a local architect and a local historian.

Once the first tranche was complete the information was handed over to SDC to begin the formal process of adoption of the buildings, structures and spaces to become the beginning of SDC's Local List.

The Local List Project Team secured the support of Sevenoaks Town Council for the project and STC bestowed several grants and the use of a meeting room for the regular Selection Panel meetings.