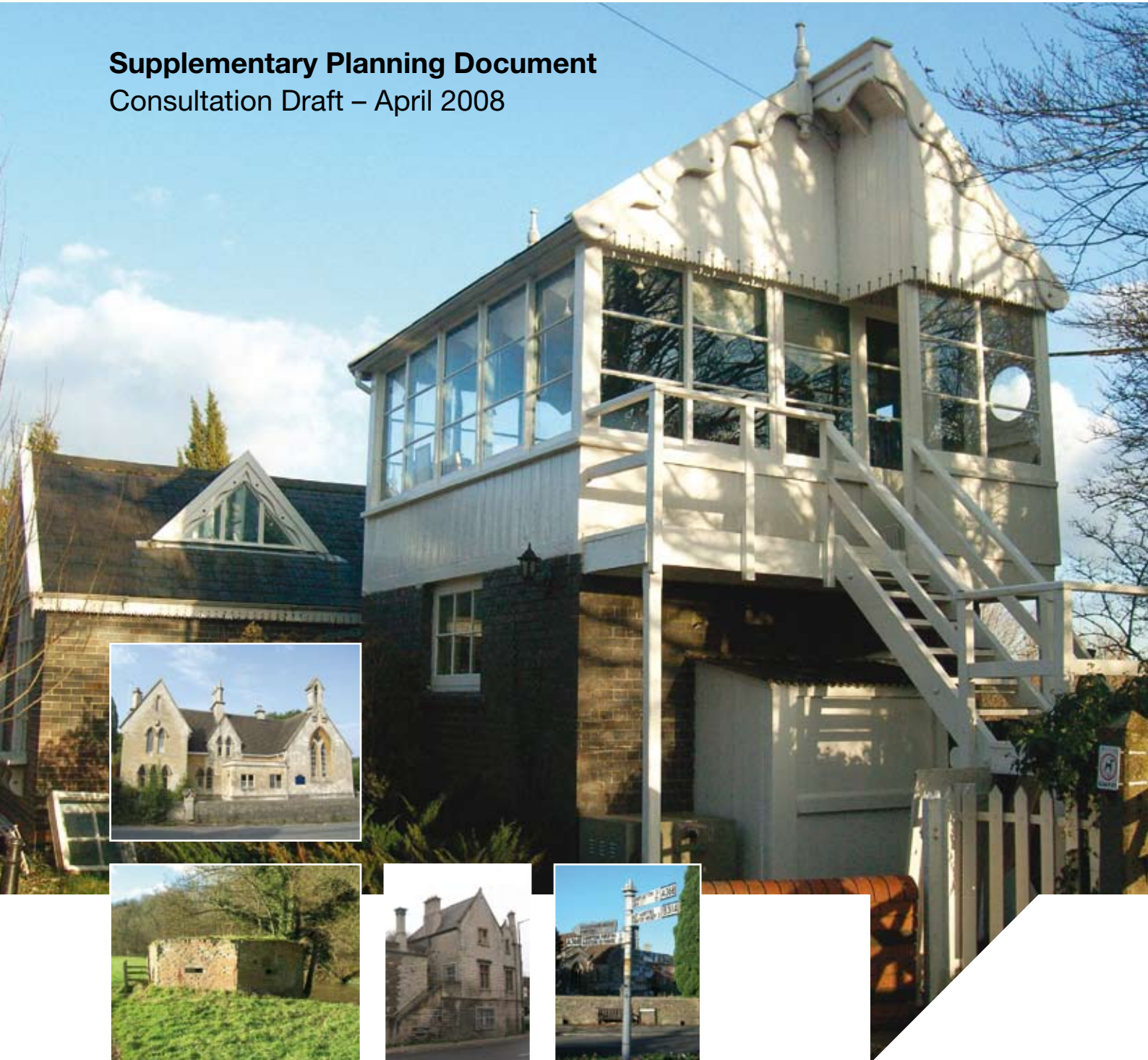


Locally Important Buildings

Supplementary Planning Document
Consultation Draft – April 2008





**“It is fundamental to the Government’s policies for environmental stewardship that there should be effective protection for all aspects of the historic environment.”
(PPG15)**

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Introduction

There are a large number of buildings and structures in Bath and North East Somerset which, while not statutory listed, are of architectural and historic interest or make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of an area. Bath and North East Somerset Council is in the process of preparing a List of these 'Locally Important Buildings'. This would not normally include buildings which are already on the statutory list.

The objectives of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) are to raise the profile of and give recognition to buildings and structures that contribute to the special character of an area; to encourage the preservation and repair of buildings and structures of local importance; to provide information and guidance on the production of the list of Locally Important Buildings; and to provide guidance to the Development Management Team on alterations to a building on the local list where planning permission is required.

The list of Locally Important Buildings can be consulted on the Council's website.

Planning policy context

The preparation and adoption of a 'Local List' is supported by Central Government policy document PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment, 1994 (Section 6.16) and the Review of Heritage Protection –The Way Forward, 2006.

The Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan including minerals and waste policies (adopted October 2007) explains that there are buildings and structures in the district which have not been listed nationally but are of particular local importance for their architectural interest, their contribution to the local environment or their historical associations.

Examples can include farm buildings, mining structures, chapels, former schools, houses, shops, barns, industrial and military buildings, road signs, bridges, pillar boxes, lamp-posts, milestones, telephone boxes, post boxes, gravestones and stiles.

Policy BH5 of the Local Plan states:

Development which affects a building or structure on the list of Locally Important Buildings will only be permitted where:

- i) the architectural interest and integrity of the building is conserved or enhanced;*
- ii) The contribution to the context, local interest or historical associations is not adversely affected.*

A building's inclusion in the Local List is a material consideration in the determination of applications for planning permission.



Many attractive historic buildings in the area are not statutorily listed



Street furniture can make a significant contribution to an area's character



Selection criteria

The process of identification and selection of Locally Important Buildings is encouraged through community participation in the form of local surveys, Village Design Statements, Conservation Area Appraisals, thematic studies and landscape appraisals.

The following criteria are used to assess whether a building or structure merits inclusion on the List:

1. Age and Integrity:

The building or structure is a good example of its period and the style or form has not been substantially altered.

2. Architectural Interest:

The building or structure is a good example of the local vernacular; is a rare or pioneering example of a building type or structure; or was built by a noted local/national architect/engineer/builder.

3. Historical Associations:

The building or structure has an association with a notable person, event or significant phase of local history, or was constructed as part of an historic event.

4. Context:

The building or structure has individual and/or group value or is a landmark building.

5. Local Interest:

The building or structure is part of the cherished local scene.

Not all these criteria will be relevant to every case, but a particular building may qualify for Local Listing under more than one of them.



Traditional cottages can have group value, while churches and mills may be landmark buildings or have historical associations



The Station House, Wellow, is associated with a significant phase in the area's history





This 20th Century telephone exchange is a good example of an unusual building type



Residential and commercial properties can contribute to the cherished local scene



Identifying locally important buildings

Locally Important Buildings are identified primarily by parish and town councils, amenity societies, local history groups, local residents and members of the public who can nominate buildings which meet the criteria for inclusion on the Local List.

Details of how to nominate a building can be found on the Council's Local List webpage.

Adoption of the local list

Buildings nominated for Local Listing are in the first instance assessed against the agreed criteria by the Council's specialist conservation team. Reasonable effort is made to contact owners of buildings which are being considered for Local Listing, who are given an opportunity to comment.

Nominations are then submitted to a panel of experts for consideration and formal adoption. Owners are notified if and when their building has been added to the Local List with an explanation of what this means and how it affects them.



The Bath Press building is a good example of 20th Century industrial architecture

Adding to and removing buildings from the list

The Council will review the list from time to time and consider requests to add or remove buildings from it. Buildings which meet the selection criteria will undergo the same adoption procedure and will be added to the list periodically.

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. A building can be only removed from the list with the agreement of the panel.

Consulting the list

A hard copy of the List of Locally Important Buildings is held by the Council and may be consulted at the Council Offices at Trimbridge House, Bath. Information about the Local list is available on the website.

Protection of buildings on the local list

There is no statutory protection for buildings on the Local List outside Conservation Areas, however, alterations, extensions, and changes of use may still require planning permission. Within Conservation Areas the demolition of unlisted buildings requires Conservation Area Consent. The inclusion of a building on the Local List is a material consideration in the determination of applications for planning and Conservation Area Consent.

Some alterations can of course be made to properties without the need for express planning permission. Locally important buildings can have their special character harmed by unsympathetic alterations undertaken under existing permitted development rights, for example the removal of original windows and doors or the loss of traditional roofing materials.

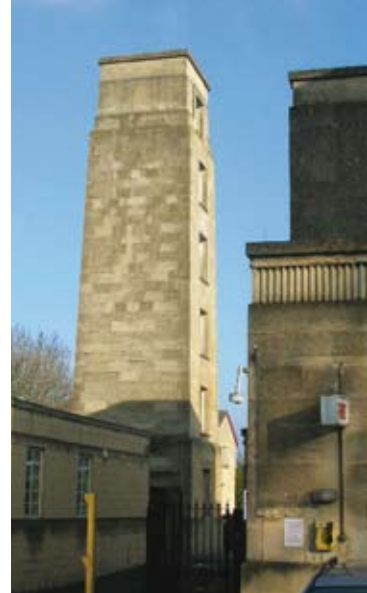
Article 4 directions

Unsuitable alterations to buildings in can be prevented where appropriate by the serving of a Direction under Article 4 of the General Permitted Development Order (1995). An Article 4 Direction can remove permitted development rights for specific works where there is a threat to the character of the building or the area. Such a direction would result in express planning permission being required for alterations to (for example) windows, doors and roofing materials which have a material impact on the appearance of the building.

The Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan states:

The local planning authority may also issue a Direction under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 to withdraw permitted development rights for development which materially affects the external appearance of dwelling houses such as doors, roofs and frontages, if this is considered appropriate.
(Section C3.46)

The Council will consider the use of Article 4 Directions to control inappropriate alterations to buildings on the List of Locally Important Buildings.



The 1930s Fire Station is a landmark building



19th Century former Malt House

Demolition

Planning permission or other relevant consents will not normally be granted for the demolition of a building on the List of Locally Important Buildings.

Proposals for the demolition of locally listed buildings must normally 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 substantial benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from demolition.

Redevelopment proposals for buildings on the Local List should consider how such buildings can be incorporated into the development rather than demolished.

In cases where permission is granted for the demolition of a locally listed building, the Council may require that provision is made by the developer to accurately record the building prior to demolition. Where redevelopment is in accordance with Local Plan policies, there will be an expectation that the building is replaced with one of equal or greater architectural merit.

Sustainability

Sustainable development has become a government priority. Defined as 'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'¹, it includes the adaptation and reuse of historic buildings.

Many traditional buildings which survive in our towns and villages are robust, adaptable and, with regular maintenance, could survive almost indefinitely.

Materials used in the construction of traditional buildings were generally locally sourced, with a high proportion of renewable resources. Where primary resources, such as clay and stone, are used, they can be repaired or reused, reducing whole-life cycle costs to a minimum.

When the energy used in demolition, site remediation and the construction of new buildings is considered, there is a strong environmental argument for promoting the reuse of the historic built stock.

Buildings and structures with architectural or historic interest, including those of local importance, are also a finite cultural resource which, once lost, cannot be replaced. The identification and conservation of Locally Important Buildings can boost pride in the local area and help preserve and enhance the historic environment for the benefit of future generations.

Guidance on alterations and extensions

It is hoped that the unique qualities of Locally Important Buildings recognised through inclusion in the Local List will encourage owners to take pride in their care and conservation. Owners and occupiers can have the satisfaction of being involved in the conservation of a building which is recognised as being of value, for the benefit of present and future generations. Alterations and extensions which respect the character of your property can also add to its value.

The Council nevertheless recognises that buildings often need to be altered or adapted for changing needs and aspirations. Where alterations are proposed, an understanding of a building's architectural or historic interest can help inform the most appropriate approach. This will be particularly important where the proposals are outside the control of the Council (minor works for which permission is not required) and in such cases this document and the guidelines noted below can form the basis for good practice by owners.

Planning permission will not normally be granted for alterations, extensions or development which adversely affects the architectural or historic character of the building or its setting. It is recommended that proposals to alter and repair buildings of local importance should be drawn up and carried out by professionals who have experience of working on historic buildings.

The following guidelines will also be used as appropriate in the assessment of alterations to a building on the Local List where planning permission is required.



Inappropriate joinery can detract from a building's historic character

Research:

Proposals for alterations should seek to conserve the architectural or historic character of the building, so it is important to identify features which contribute to the character of the building or site. A specialist historic building researcher can often explain the history of a building and this can help inform future changes.

Repairs:

Where historic fabric has deteriorated, repair rather than replacement should always be the first option, as genuine historic materials give authenticity to a building and are often examples of traditional materials and workmanship. This is also a cost effective approach. Where repair is not possible exact copies should be made, for example traditional sliding timber sash windows should be replaced with timber windows of the same detail and finish.

Restoration:

It may be appropriate in some cases to reinstate historic features which have been lost in the past, or remove unsympathetic additions. Where restoration is proposed it must be based on a thorough understanding of the building and supported by evidence of the original details.

Extensions:

Extensions should be designed to conserve or enhance the appearance, scale and character of the building. They should normally be subservient to the host building in height and massing. If a traditional approach is adopted then attention to historic detailing, materials and workmanship is important. If a contemporary style is adopted the materials, quality, detailing and design should complement the existing building.

Joinery:

Original joinery details such as timber sash and casement windows and period doors (panelled or planked) contribute to the character of a building and the street scene and should be retained wherever possible. Modern details such as UPVC windows and doors, doors with integral glazed fanlights, and stained or varnished joinery is not normally appropriate. Period windows and doors were normally painted.

Integral double glazing is normally incompatible with traditionally detailed windows because of the thickness of the timber sections required to hold the glass and the changes to the glazing bar detail to accommodate this. Alternatives such as upgrading existing windows with weather seals or installing secondary glazing can be a more sympathetic as well as economic solution.

Roofs:

Natural slate or clay roll tiled roofs and chimneys all contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of an area. Concrete tiles and slates have different weathering properties and are often heavier, requiring additional strengthening of the roof timbers which may be harmful to the character and fabric of Locally Important Buildings.

Roof lights and dormer windows on traditional buildings can affect the character and may not be appropriate. Roof lights should be kept to a minimum and located on the rear elevation of a building where possible. Special conservation roof lights fitted flush with the roof slope can reduce the visual impact.

Interiors:

The internal plan form of the building can give a clue to its age and how the building was used, and is often characteristic of particular buildings types. Original partitions and features such as doors, fireplaces, floorboards, panelling and plasterwork should be retained.



Note the contrast between the traditional timber sash window (right) and the plastic imitations (left)



Replacing slate with concrete tiles and adding rooflights can detract from the appearance of traditional buildings



Unusual cast iron railings add interest to the street-scene



Inappropriate pointing can permanently damage stone walls

Materials:

In many cases, much of the character of a building is derived from the use of traditional natural materials such as stone, slate or clay tiles and timber for windows and doors. The use of traditional materials and workmanship for replacements, repair or new works is encouraged.

External Walls:

The pointing of walls in historic buildings should be carried out with care and only where it is genuinely necessary. Lime based mortar to match the original historic mortar will normally give the best result. Hard cement based mixes should be avoided as they can be damaging to stone or brick and often look unsightly.

Painting of external brick or stone walls should be avoided as this can harm the underlying fabric of the wall and detract from its appearance. In those cases where the building was intended to have a traditional lime wash or rendered finish this should not be removed to expose the stonework or brick. Repairs should be undertaken using a traditional lime based mix.

Boundary details:

Walls, fences and railings can contribute to a building's character and new boundary features should be of an appropriate design. Existing details such as historic or traditional walls, railings, footpaths and planting (where appropriate) should be retained.

Services:

Lead or cast iron rainwater goods are traditional details which can make a significant contribution to a building's character. The provision of new services such as external vents, gas and electricity meter inspection boxes, external rainwater goods and pipes needs careful consideration as such features can have an impact on the appearance of historic buildings.

Other fixtures:

The siting of TV/satellite dishes, solar panels and other external fixtures requires careful consideration as they can have a marked visual impact on the character and appearance of a building.

Setting:

Alterations to a locally listed building should not harm its setting. This means that consideration should be given to the location and design of new buildings within the grounds of locally listed buildings (such as garages and outbuildings). The setting of a locally listed building may include land outside the building's curtilage and could include adjacent land, important views or the wider street scene.

Industrial and Farm Buildings:

Alterations proposed to historic industrial buildings or farm outbuildings should retain the functional character of the existing buildings. Domestic details such as small paned windows with glazing bars, ornate panelled doors, numerous new window and door openings and roof lights can look out of place and detract from the original character of the building.

Commercial buildings:

Many historic commercial properties have interesting shop fronts. These should be repaired and painted in the traditional manner. Signage on historic buildings should be carefully considered as modern internally illuminated box signs, poorly detailed and located projecting signs and excessive advertisements can detract from the appearance of the building and the street scene.

Excessive or poorly detailed signage and roller shutters can spoil traditional shop-fronts



The character of this group of traditional farm buildings in a rural setting could be easily harmed by unsympathetic alterations

Other guidance

In addition to the above notes Planning Policy Guidance 15 (Planning and the Historic Environment) Annex C contains guidance notes on alterations to listed buildings. While the buildings on the Council's List of Locally Important Buildings are not statutorily listed the guidance in the Annex can equally apply to all buildings of architectural or historic importance and may provide a useful reference for owners and agents. www.communities.gov.uk

The following organisations also provide publications, pamphlets and advice relating to conservation and the repair of historic buildings.

English Heritage

Customer Services Department,
PO Box 569, Swindon, SN2 2YP
+44 (0) 8703331181
www.english-heritage.org.uk

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)

37 Spital Square, London E1 6DY 0207 3771644
www.spab.org.uk.

Georgian Group

6 Fitzroy Square, London W1T 5DX
08717502936
www.georgiangroup.org.uk

Victorian Society

1 Priory Gardens, Bedford Park,
London W4 1TT
0280 8994 1019
www.victorian-society.org.uk.

The Twentieth Century Society

70 Cowcross Street,
London, EC1M 6EJ
020 7250 3857
www.c20society.org.uk

The Building Conservation Directory
www.buildingconservation.com

Further information

If you are in any doubt about whether planning permission or any other consent is required for the works you wish to carry out, please contact **Council Connect** on 01225 394041

If you have any questions about Locally Important please contact:

Heritage and Environment Team

Trimbridge House, Trim Street,
Bath, BA1 2DP

historic_environment@bathnes.gov.uk
01255 477632

The Local List can be consulted on the Council's Web Site which will be updated as appropriate.

www.bathnes.gov.uk/bathnes/environmentandplanning/conservation/locallyimportantbuildings

This document about Locally Important Buildings can be made available in a range of community languages, large print, Braille, on tape, electronic and accessible formats from Planning Services on 01225 394100