

- 7.29 Development proposals at an early stage should refer to sources of information on the historic environment such as the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project, The Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record, The National Heritage List for England, the South Oxfordshire Heritage Impact Assessment, and, where relevant, Conservation Area Character Appraisals to ensure that proposals are based on an understanding of the significance of any heritage assets that may be affected. Development proposals should also take into account the principles set out in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide and other relevant guidance.
- 7.30 In some circumstances, further surveys and analysis may be required prior to any application being determined. Heritage Statements, Statements of Significance, and Impact Assessments should be produced in line with current best practice and relevant national guidance.
- 7.31 The Council will monitor buildings or other heritage assets at risk through neglect, decay or other threats, proactively seeking solutions for assets at risk through discussions with owners and willingness to consider positively development schemes that would ensure the repair and maintenance of the asset, and, as a last resort, using its statutory powers. The Council will work with relevant stakeholders to encourage better understanding of the heritage assets on the Historic England “Heritage at Risk” Register. Where appropriate the Council will encourage Heritage Partnership Agreements, particularly for Listed Buildings on any ‘at risk’ register.
- 7.32 The Council will support Neighbourhood Development Plans where they seek to assess their heritage assets and add to the evidence base.

Listed Buildings

Policy ENV7: Listed Buildings

- 1. Proposals for development, including change of use, that involve any alteration of, addition to or partial demolition of a listed building or within the curtilage of, or affecting the setting of a listed building will be expected to:**
 - i) conserve, enhance or better reveal those elements which contribute to the heritage significance and/or its setting;**
 - ii) respect any features of special architectural or historic interest, including, where relevant, the historic curtilage or context, such as burgage plots, or its value within a group and/or its setting,**

- such as the importance of a street frontage or traditional shopfronts; and
- iii) be sympathetic to the listed building and its setting in terms of its siting, size, scale, height, alignment, materials and finishes (including colour and texture), design and form, in order to retain the special interest that justifies its designation through appropriate design, with regard to the South Oxfordshire Design Guide.
2. Development proposals affecting the significance of a listed building or its setting that will lead to substantial harm or total loss of significance will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that demonstrably outweigh that harm or loss or where the applicant can demonstrate that:
- i) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
 - ii) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
 - iii) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
 - iv) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.
3. Development proposals that would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of a listed building will be expected to:
- i) minimise harm and avoid adverse impacts, and provide justification for any adverse impacts, harm or loss of significance;
 - ii) identify any demonstrable public benefits or exceptional circumstances in relation to the development proposed; and
 - iii) investigate and record changes or loss of fabric, features, objects or remains, both known and unknown, in a manner proportionate to the importance of the change or loss, and to make this information publicly accessible.
4. Changes of use will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the new use can be accommodated without any adverse effect on the significance of the building and its setting.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 5 & 7.



- 7.33 A “Listed Building” is a building, object or structure fixed to the building or within the building’s curtilage that has been judged to be of national importance in terms of architectural or historic interest and included on a special register, called the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.
- 7.34 When a building is listed, it is listed in its entirety, which means that both the exterior and the interior are protected which includes interior features and fabric such as staircases, panelling, roof structures, floors, walls, fireplaces, doors etc. In addition, 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 has done so since before 1 July 1948, are treated as being part of the listed building.
- 7.35 Many listed buildings, due to their age and construction, have features which could support roosting bats. To ensure compliance with relevant legislation, species survey information will be required, and ecological conditions applied to consents granted, in instances where proposed works to listed buildings would be reasonably likely to impact roosting bats.