

ENV10 – The Historic Environment

The Council will attach great weight to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment, heritage assets and their setting which make Eden distinctive.

Key elements include:

- Castles, houses and their parks and gardens including Appleby, Brough, Brougham, Dacre, Dalemain, Kirkoswald, Lowther and Penrith;
- Roman sites such as Voreda, and associated archaeology;
- Prehistoric heritage including Long Meg and her Daughters, the henges of Mayburgh and King Arthur's Round Table, and also the numerous megalithic sites, burial cairns and rock arts;
- Conservation areas across the district in particular Penrith and the Settle to Carlisle Railway;
- Remains of historic industrial activity such as sites on Alston Moor including Nenthead and Whitesyke;
- Historic market towns and settlements such as Penrith, Alston, Appleby and Kirkby Stephen; and
- Upland farming landscapes and their buildings.

The Council will require that all proposals for development should conserve and where appropriate, enhance the significance of Eden's heritage assets and their setting. The Council will support proposals that would better reveal the significance of the asset in particular those heritage assets identified as being most at risk. Opportunities for promotion, interpretation and increasing understanding should also be explored.

Development proposals that would result in harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset or its setting will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that the public benefits of the proposal would outweigh the harm, and that the harm is necessary to achieve those benefits.

The Council will require proposals to protect and where appropriate, enhance the significance and setting of Eden's non-designated heritage assets of local interest including buildings, archaeological sites, parks, landscapes and gardens. Where the harm is outweighed by the public benefits of the proposals, the Council will require an appropriate level of survey and recording, the results of which should be deposited with the Historic Environment Record.

Where a development proposal affecting archaeological sites is acceptable in principle, the Council will ensure preservation of the remains in situ as a preferred solution. Where in situ preservation is not justified, the development will be required to make adequate provision for excavation and recording before or during development.

All development proposals affecting the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings (including where there is the potential of unknown archaeological assets) will need to be accompanied by an assessment of the significance of the asset and its setting and how it will be affected by the proposed development. The level of information required will be proportionate to the significance of the asset and to the scale of impact of the proposal. For archaeological assets, this may where necessary include archaeological desk based assessment and field evaluation.

Explanation

- 4.33.1 One of the features that makes Eden so unique is the quality of its historic environment. The district is characterised by many historical assets including, conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and registered parks and gardens. The full list of designated assets can be found on Historic England's website. Eden's historic environment is not only enriched by its designated heritage assets but also the wealth of other assets such as locally important buildings, earthworks and below ground archaeology and the landscape in which it sits. Together all these assets form an irreplaceable resource for understanding the past.
- 4.33.2 Listed buildings are protected by statutory controls, with listed building consent needed to carry out works to buildings. In addition, planning permission can be needed where changes require substantial changes or demolition. This policy therefore sets out the criteria against which such applications will be judged.
- 4.33.3 Conservation areas are legally defined as areas of 'special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. The special character relates to the quality and interest of an area as a whole, rather than just individual buildings. In conservation areas, the normal 'permitted development' rights which enable certain extensions and alterations to be carried out without the need to obtain planning permission are reduced, thereby bringing more development under planning control.
- 4.33.4 Development proposals in Conservation Areas will be required to be of a high quality and sensitive design and should be based on a careful consideration of issues such as scale, density, height and materials.
- 4.33.5 Proposals that will have an impact on any heritage asset, whether designated or not, should be accompanied by an assessment of the significance of the heritage asset and how that significance will be affected by the proposed development. The level of information required will be proportionate to the asset's significance and to the scale of impact of the proposal, and may require, where necessary, archaeological field investigation. Any heritage asset, whether designated or not, that is harmed by a proposal will need to be recorded by the developer to a level that is proportionate to its significance and to the scale of impact of the proposal. The information will need to be made publically accessible in the County's Historic Environment Record.
- 4.33.6 The Council will review existing conservation areas to ensure that they continue to merit their status through their special architectural and historic interest, and will designate new conservation areas where appropriate. To promote the enhancement of conservation areas the Council will carry out appraisals for each conservation area. These appraisals will highlight the special characteristics as well as any problems in the conservation areas and suggest possible solutions.
- 4.33.7 Management plans for each conservation area will also as far as resources allow, be prepared setting out the way in which development pressures and neglect will be managed to ensure the specific character of each area is maintained.

Reason for the Policy

- 4.33.8 The district contains an extensive wealth of heritage assets. These all represent a finite, non-renewable resource that is a significant asset in terms of quality of life and local distinctiveness. The historic environment makes a strong contribution to the attractiveness of the area for tourism and business as well as being a driving force in conservation led regeneration. There needs to be a strong emphasis on the protection and enhancement of these sensitive environments.
- 4.33.9 This policy includes safeguards to make sure that the character and appearance of heritage assets is protected. It also includes the criteria against which development requiring permission involving a conservation area or listed building will be judged.