

Buildings of Significant Local Interest

Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance

Adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan, 1999
Swindon Borough Local Plan 2011 Revised Deposit Draft

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1. Introduction

1.1 Policy ENV3 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan, 2011 states:

“Planning permission shall not be granted for development, including changes of use, where such development would:

a) fail to preserve or enhance the character, appearance or setting of a Building of Significant Local Interest, or

b) damage any of its features of interest.”

1.2 This supplementary planning guidance (SPG) sets criteria for assessing a ‘building of significant local interest’.

2. Background

2.1 Over 1,000 historic and architecturally significant buildings in Swindon Borough have been statutorily listed as being of national value. These are given protection from alteration and demolition under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2.2 However, there are many other buildings of significant local historic or architectural importance which do not have the protection afforded by listed status.

2.3 Government support for the protection of buildings of local importance is contained within Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG 15): Planning and the Historic Environment (1994) which states:

“Many buildings which are valued for their contribution to the local scene, or for local historical reasons, will not merit listing. Such buildings will often be protected by conservation area designation. It is open to planning authorities to draw up lists of locally important buildings, and to formulate local plan policies for their protection, through normal development control procedures.” (paragraph 6.16)

2.4 In accordance with this advice, Policy ENV3 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan, 2011 has been formulated for the protection of buildings which, though not of sufficient quality to merit listing, have significant local interest. This supplementary planning guidance identifies twelve criteria against which a judgement will be made as to whether or not a building possesses the qualities that give it significant local interest.

3. The criteria used to define buildings of 'significant local interest'.

3.1 Policy ENV3 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan shall apply to a building which meets one or more of the criteria given below provided that its historic form and qualities have not been seriously eroded by unsympathetic alteration.

3.2 The criteria include adaptations of criteria proposed by English Heritage by which one may judge whether an "unlisted" building makes a positive contribution to the interest of a conservation area¹. The criteria also reflect the principles of selection, identified in PPG 15², which the Secretary of State applies as appropriate in deciding which buildings merit listing.

1. One which has received an award in recognition of the quality of its architectural design or other significance from a body of recognised local, regional or national standing;

e.g.: The Renault Building, West Swindon (designed by Foster Associates. Civic Trust Award 1984);

Allied Dunbar Training and Development Centre, Foxhill, Wanborough. (Designed by BDP. RIBA Regional Award 1992).

2. One which is the work of a particular architect, builder or developer of local, regional or national note;

e.g.: 148-150 Drove Road, Swindon - built in 1889 by Thomas Turner, a local brick-maker and builder who purchased the clay pits, brick, tile and pottery works in what is now the Queen's Park around 1875. His elaborately ornamented 19th century brick terraces and villas are a particular feature of Swindon;

Victoria Hospital, Okus Road, Swindon (1887-8) designed by a local architect, W.H. Read, who was responsible for the design of several public buildings in the area;

Houses at Cambria Place, Swindon. The manager of the GWR rolling mills, Thomas Ellis, formed a private company in 1863 to build this cottage 'estate' for his mainly Welsh workforce;

¹ 'Conservation area appraisals: Defining the special architectural or historic interest of Conservation Areas.' English Heritage. March 1997. Appendix.

² PPG15 Paras 3.5 and 6.10-6.16.

Gilberts Hill, Dixon Street (1879-81) designed by Brightwen Binyon, a pupil of Alfred Waterhouse, who also designed the grade II listed Town hall in Regent Circus.

3. One which has qualities of age, style, materials or any other characteristics which reflect those of at least a substantial number of the buildings in the locality;

e.g.: Characteristic Edwardian red brick terraces on Goddard Avenue and The Mall, Old Town, Swindon (within Swindon Town Gardens Conservation Area);

Thatched cottages such as 'Eastbrook Cottage' or 'That Hovel' in Bishopstone;

Stone cottages such as Long Row, Castle Eaton.

4. One which relates by age, materials or in any other historically significant way to a nearby listed building and contributes positively to its setting;

e.g.: The Cross Keys Public House, Wood Street (which makes a positive contribution to the setting of the eight listed buildings in the street);

10 & 14, Church Road, Upper Wanborough (which form a short terrace with the listed No.12);

88-98, Victoria Road, Old Town, Swindon (which, together with the listed Nos. 99 and 100, present a relatively unspoiled historic street frontage).

5. One which, individually or as part of a group, serves as a reminder and record of the gradual development of the settlement in which it stands or of an earlier phase of growth;

e.g.: Mid 19th century detached villas, Bath Road. Bath Road was known as "The Sands" at this time - of the 8 earliest villas, 7 survive and 6 are unlisted;

Westcott Place houses (some of the first speculative housing to be built after the establishment of the GWR works);

Houses at Pinehurst Estate (Swindon's first council housing planned by Sir Raymond Unwin to relieve housing shortage after the 1914-1918 War):

6. One which provides a good example of a particular type or form of building, or of an age, architectural style, building construction or design which is locally rare;

e.g.: 1930's 'Marks and Spencers' building, Regent Street, Swindon;

Moonraker's Pub, Cricklade Road, Swindon (a good example of a 1930's 'roadhouse');

W.W. Hunter building, Regent Street, Swindon (unusual decorative brickwork).

7. One which has a significant historic association with established features such as the street- (or former street-) pattern, burgage plots, railways or other transport systems, open-space or landscape features;

e.g.: Surviving 19th century part of Swindon railway station, Station Road, Swindon;

Skew railway bridge over Wilts and Berks canal at Rushey Platt;

Walls to rear of High Street, Highworth (relate to original burgage plots of medieval planned town);

Swindon Corporation Bus Depot, Corporation Street, Swindon;

Crown public house, Stratton (relates to coaching routes).

8. One which has landmark quality, or contributes to the character of an area or the quality of recognisable spaces, by virtue of its function, location, age, design or features.

e.g.: The Chinese Experience, West Swindon;

Windmill Hill Business Park, Phase 1, West Swindon;

The Allied Dunbar Tri-centre office buildings, Swindon town centre;

WH Smith's distribution depot, Greenbridge;

David Murray John Building, Swindon town centre.

9. One which reflects the traditional functional character of, or former uses or industries within, the area in which it is located;

e.g.: Brookhouse Farm, Middlelease Drive, West Swindon (former farmhouse);

GWR weighhouse, Penzance Drive (now incorporated within new brewery for Archers);

Former 'Vorda Works', Brewery Street, Highworth

10. One which has significant historical associations with local people or past activities or events;

Richard Jeffries house, Victoria Road;

Alfred Williams' (the 'hammerman poet') cottage, South Marston;

British School, Brewery Street, Highworth.

11. One which contributes to the character of an area or to the setting of the local scene by forming a focal element in a group, park, garden or other townscape or landscape, or by sharing particular architectural forms or details with other buildings nearby;

e.g.: The Falcon Inn (principal architectural focus of Falcon Terrace);

The Ship Public House, Wescott Place, Swindon;

Burmah-Castrol Bowl, Town Gardens, Old Town, Swindon.

12. One which is associated with a designed landscape such as walls, terracing or garden building, and is of identifiable importance to the historic design;

e.g.: Lodge to Eastrop Grange, Highworth;

Walls enclosing Faringdon Road Park, Swindon;

