

Conservation and Heritage Assets

Coventry has over 400 Listed Buildings ranging from the medieval St Mary's Guild Hall to the 1962 railway station that have been selected by the Government as being of national importance. In addition, over 280 buildings have been selected by the Council for Local Listing due to their importance to Coventry. The city also has 16 Conservation Areas (plus a further two proposed through this plan), 20 Scheduled Monuments, 4 Registered Parks and Gardens and thousands of other archaeological sites, historic structures and features recorded on the Coventry Historic Environment Record.

Policy HE2: Conservation and Heritage Assets

1. In order to help sustain the historic character, sense of place, environmental quality and local distinctiveness of Coventry, development proposals will be supported where they conserve and, where appropriate, enhance those aspects of the historic environment which are recognised as being of special historic, archaeological, architectural, artistic, landscape or townscape significance. These Heritage Assets include:
 - a) Listed Buildings and Locally Listed buildings;
 - b) Conservation Areas;
 - c) Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeological sites;
 - d) Registered Parks and Gardens; and
 - e) Other places, spaces, structures and features which may not be formally designated but are recognised as significant elements of Coventry's heritage and are positively identified on the Coventry Historic Environment Record.
2. Proposals likely to affect the significance of a heritage asset or its setting should demonstrate an understanding of such significance using currently available evidence.
3. Development proposals involving heritage assets in general and listed buildings in particular, should acknowledge the significance of the existing building and the area by means of their siting, massing, form, scale, materials and detail.
4. The sympathetic and creative re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged, especially for heritage that is considered to be at risk, so long as it is not damaging to the significance of the heritage asset. The embodied energy present in historic buildings contributes to sustainability.
5. The Council will use its statutory powers to secure the preservation of buildings and other heritage assets that are deemed to be at risk by the national and local heritage at risk registers.
6. Demolition or destruction of heritage assets will be resisted; proposals to demolish a heritage asset will therefore need substantial justification. The

greater the damage to the significance of the asset, the greater the justification required, and the public benefit needed to outweigh such damage.

7. All proposals should aim to sustain and reinforce the special character and conserve the following distinctive historic elements of Coventry:
 - a) The surviving buildings, defences and street plan of the medieval city centre and its suburbs;
 - b) The surviving pre-industrial settlements and landscape features which have been subsumed by the expansion of the city such as Walsgrave, Canley, Binley, Browns hill Green, Coundon Green, Little Heath (Spring Road), Stivichall Croft and Lower Eastern Green (at Dial House Lane);
 - c) The wider Arden rural environment on the fringe of the city comprising field-systems, ancient woodlands and commons which developed over centuries; interspersed with a mix of settlements, farmsteads and smallholdings;
 - d) Buildings associated with the city's industrial heritage; ribbon weaving, watch making, cycle making, motor car manufacturing, brick making, coal mining, synthetic textiles, munitions, aeronautical engineering, canals and railways;
 - e) The Victorian and Edwardian suburbs such as Earlsdon and Stoke;
 - f) Designed landscapes, including historic parks and gardens (both registered and locally listed), historic cemeteries, churchyards and public parks;
 - g) The significant elements of Coventry's ground-breaking post-war reconstruction including its plan, built form, public art works and public spaces; and
 - h) Archaeological remains of all periods from the earliest Prehistoric human habitation to the modern industrial period.
8. Where material change to a heritage asset has been agreed, recording and interpretation should be undertaken to document and understand the asset's archaeological, architectural or historic significance. The scope of the recording should be proportionate to the asset's significance and the impact of the development on the asset. The information and understanding gained should be made publicly available, as a minimum through the Coventry Historic Environment Record.

Where it is considered necessary, the Council will propose buildings for Listing by national government and will also continue to enhance and maintain an up-to-date Coventry Local List of buildings of historic and architectural interest.

Where heritage assets are present on sites allocated for housing in Policy H2, the Council will seek to secure their retention and conservation through legal agreements.

In addition to the national Historic England Heritage at Risk Register the Council will maintain the Coventry Heritage at Risk Register and work with property owners and developers to reduce the number of heritage assets in Coventry that are deemed to be at risk. The Council will use its statutory powers where necessary to secure the preservation of listed buildings with Urgent Works and Repairs Notices. To reflect their historic importance, scale and strategic proximity to the city centre, the sites of Charterhouse and the London Road cemetery are to be designated as a Heritage Park. This is considered further in Policy HE3.

The Council will continue to maintain an up-to-date and accessible Historic Environment Record as the principal evidence base on the city's Historic Environment. Historic Landscape Characterisation and the Arden Design Guidance will be used to inform decisions on historic character and local distinctiveness.