

A strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of Birmingham's historic environment

Key principles:

- Birmingham's historic environment is an asset that does not stifle regeneration and growth.
- The historic environment makes a positive contribution to local distinctiveness and can add value to regeneration, design quality and sustainability.
- Heritage assets that are currently non-designated may nonetheless have a high significance in a local context because of their contribution to character.
- The importance of those types of heritage assets which are rare in the city is recognised in addition to those which are particularly characteristic and therefore better appreciated.

Strategic priorities:

- Reduce the adverse impact of regeneration on the historic environment
- Use design solutions to maximise the contribution made by the historic environment to regeneration, while retaining the significance of heritage assets.
- Identify and address heritage assets at risk.
- Maintain and develop a comprehensive Historic Environment Record.
- Maintain a local list and review criteria to ensure that it includes all types of heritage assets.

How will this be achieved?

- Increased understanding and appreciation
- Expertise and high quality design
- Prioritising and working with others to make the most of resources
- Demonstrating the positive contribution of the historic environment to regeneration and design quality.

Increased understanding and appreciation:

- Make information about Birmingham's historic environment widely available.
- Prepare Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans, particularly concentrating on conservation areas at risk from development that is inconsistent with their character.
- Facilitate training and information provision to BCC members and officers and local groups.
- Identify and promote best practice in Birmingham and beyond in accordance with the standards of appropriate professional institutes.
- Produce a Historic Environment SPD.

Expertise and high quality design

- Play a proactive, positive and constructive role in the development management process, including the preparation of local development orders.
- Ensure that protection and enhancement of the historic environment is included in local development documents, development briefs and masterplans and that opportunities are identified.

- Ensure that design and conservation is presented as a joined process
- Maintain close working with developers and their agents and with community groups.

Prioritising and working with others

- Identify heritage assets at risk and work with other organisations, including the Heritage Strategy Group, to bring the assets into economic use while retaining their significance.
- Identify and prioritise opportunities to protect and enhance heritage assets in developments which have a major impact on the historic environment because of their scale, such as HS2, Enterprise Zones and proposed Green Belt development.
- Identify and prioritise opportunities to protect and enhance groups of assets through design as part of regeneration, including the Jewellery Quarter, canals and their settings, and other historic townscapes and landscapes.

Demonstrating the positive contribution: some examples

- The Beorma development respects and incorporates the medieval burgrave plot divisions in the design of the new building and the public realm.
- Moat Square in the Southern Gateway offers an opportunity to inform and enhance design quality by reasserting the medieval manor house and moat in the context of new development.
- The QE Hospital plaza protects and interprets the nationally important archaeological remains of Metchley Roman fort through an innovative landscape scheme integrated into surrounding developments.