

# Update to the Sevenoaks Historic Environment Review

June 2026

## Summary

The Sevenoaks Historic Environment Review was published in 2017 and has been reviewed to ensure it is still up to date as an evidence-based document for the emerging Local Plan and provide any necessary updates.

The Historic Environment Review still forms a sound basis understanding the District's historic environment, identifying heritage themes and assessing the significance of heritage assets.

The review has identified no fundamental change since the preparation of the Historic Environment Review in 2017, and this is still fit for purpose to form part of the evidence base for the preparation of the emerging Local Plan.

The findings and recommendations in the Historic Environment Review are still relevant and up to date to inform the emerging policies for the historic environment in the Local Plan.

This addendum provides an update and summary to support the Historic Environment Review 2017.

## Background

The purpose of the Sevenoaks Historic Environment Review is to draw together existing information and guidance regarding the District's historic environment, identify heritage themes and assess the significance of heritage assets as part of a comprehensive historic environment review for Sevenoaks District Council.

It brings together all existing evidence and guidance relating to the District's historic environment, providing a consolidated understanding of its heritage assets, their significance, and their settings. The document identifies key historic themes, highlights both visible and less tangible aspects of local distinctiveness and outlines where further research may be needed.

This evidence base is intended to inform future conservation work, shape heritage-related policy in the emerging Local Plan and support wider strategic aims for the historic environment within Sevenoaks District. It also provides a framework for anticipating where currently unidentified heritage assets may be found and for enhancing the management of those already known.

This review comprises:

- Assessment of any updated national policy and guidance.
- Assessment of any changes to the Statutory List.
- Assessment of any changes to the Heritage at Risk Register.
- Update on Local Plan context.
- Assessment of any relevant local policy updates.

## **National Policy and Guidance**

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) updates

The current version of the NPPF was updated in 2024, with minor amendments in 2025.

This revised framework replaces the previous NPPF published in 2012 and revised in 2021 and 2023.

The core provisions of Chapter 16 regarding the historic environment have remained fundamentally unchanged in recent text revisions. No substantial changes to the wording of Chapter 16 for Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment have been made and heritage policies have remained largely untouched in their core provisions. The main administrative updates during this period primarily involved paragraph renumbering. The 2023 update clarified that local planning authorities should give significant weight to energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings. However, it explicitly stated that proposals affecting conservation areas or listed buildings must still adhere to the relevant protections in Chapter 16. The policies in the emerging Local Plan include policies on heritage assets and climate change that reflect any updates.

### Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) updates

As for the NPPF, there has been little change to the PPG for the historic environment. No updates are required.

### Historic England (HE) Local Plan guidance

Of most relevance to the Local Plan are the following Local plan guidance documents:

- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 1 Published 2 July 2015- no update
- The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans, Advice Note 3 Published 30 October 2015- no update.

An update has been published on Local Heritage Listing in 2026 to provide guidance on local heritage lists and the steps involved in creating or revising a list. Sevenoaks has an existing Local List, as well as an updated for nomination and policies in the emerging Local Plan.

There has been additional guidance published energy efficiency and climate resilience. Adapting Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency, published in 2024, provides guidance on retrofit measures for historic buildings to respond to climate change. The policies in the emerging Local Plan include policies on heritage assets and climate change that reflect any updates.

### **Statutory List**

Since 2017, thirteen heritage assets have been added to the statutory list in Sevenoaks District.

One lamp standard has been removed from the statutory list.

### **Heritage at Risk**

The 2025 Heritage Risk Register confirms that there have been no additions to list since 2017. This demonstrates so shows historic environment still well protected in Sevenoaks District.

### **Update on Local Plan context**

The current adopted Local Plan remains unchanged since and 2017 and the primary planning policy documents are the Core Strategy and Allocations and Development Management Plan. In addition, the Council has a number of adopted Supplementary Planning Policy Documents.

The Sevenoaks Historic Environment Review supports the emerging Sevenoaks Local Plan 2040. The emerging plan has been through Regulation 18 consultation, comprising:

- Regulation 18 Part 1 consultation (November 2022 to January 2023)
- Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation (November 2023 to January 2024)
- Regulation 18 Part 3 consultation (October 2025 to December 2025)

The next stages in the process will be Regulation 19 consultation and Examination in Public, with adoption anticipated in 2027.

## **Local Policy updates**

### Conservation Areas

Since 2017 a number of conservation areas within the District has been reappraised and new conservation area appraisal documents have been adopted as part of a rolling programme of period reviews of conservation areas. The updates feature revised character assessments, boundary adjustments, and enhanced design guidance.

The following updated conservation area appraisals have been updated and adopted since 2017:

- Brasted
- Leigh
- Seal
- Shoreham
- Swanley Village
- Eynsford
- Farningham
- Kemsing

Recent reviews have expanded boundaries to include further areas within the conservation areas where these have been found to contribute to the special interest of the area. This represents a positive change in the management of the District's conservation areas since the Historic Environment Review in 2017.

In addition to the conservation area reviews, the Council has adopted the Conservation Area Design Guidance to provide guidance for new developments, alterations, and extensions within a conservation area to preserve and enhance the historic and architectural character of the District's conservation areas.

The Council is committed to the ongoing review of existing conservation areas and identification of new conservation area that meet the criteria for designation. This is supported by policies in the emerging Local Plan.

### Sevenoaks Local List

The Sevenoaks Local List Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted in 2017 Adopted SPD. The Local List contains approximately 460 heritage assets.

Expansion of the Local List is underway, with a new toolkit and nomination form launched in 2025 to simplify additions to the list. This will help in delivering the recommendations of Historic Environment Review by identifying further heritage assets of local interest across the District.

## Site Allocations

As part of setting out a positive strategy for heritage in the District, the Council has reviewed all SHELAA sites against all known designated and non-designated heritage assets in the District and is including wording on heritage in Development Briefs for allocated sites, where relevant. This includes policy priorities and wording for sites that have heritage and/or archaeological sensitivities.