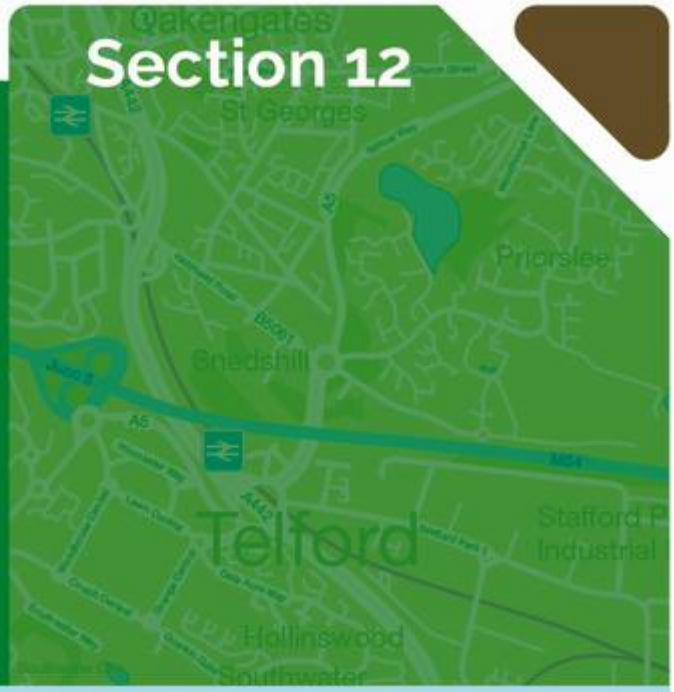
Section 12

Historic environment







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12.1 Telford and Wrekin has a rich and diverse heritage. This includes a World Heritage Site, listed buildings, seven conservation areas, scheduled monuments, historic parks and gardens, historic settlements, landscape features and archaeological remains. The historic environment contributes to local distinctiveness and creates a high quality environment which is important to our general quality of life and provides a focus for inward investment and regeneration.

12.2 The historic environment connects people with the land around them, bridging nature with cultural identity; it enables people to understand the past use of their area and to build a future that respects our heritage in all its diversity. It takes the form of multiple different features ranging from historic homes, places of industry, places of cultural importance, landscapes and a number of other historically important sites and areas.

12.3 The NPPF requires local authorities to support applications that sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets. Applications for development which are consistent with their conservation value are considered a sustainable form of development as this helps provide social, economic and cultural benefits to the local community and for future generations. Proposals that seek to alter heritage assets should be considered as part of the wider overall quality of place.

Figure 31: Madeley War Memorial



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Heritage assets

12.4 Heritage assets include buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration and protection in planning decisions, because of their heritage interest. These include both designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets identified by the Local Planning Authority (including local listing). Within Telford and Wrekin heritage assets include:

- The Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site
- Listed Buildings
- Conservation Areas
- Buildings of Local Interest
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monuments

12.5 Policy HE 1 applies to all heritage assets within the borough.

Policy HE1

Heritage assets

1. The historic environment is unique in its character, quality and diversity across Telford and Wrekin ranging from areas of international importance to those of local importance. It is the council's duty to preserve and enhance our historic environment.
2. All developments, including new buildings, alterations, extensions, changes of use and demolitions, should seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, including their setting, and seek enhancement where possible.
3. Any harm or loss to the significance of or to the setting of a heritage asset must be clearly justified.
4. Proposals for development which would conserve or enhance the boroughs heritage assets, sustaining and enhancing their significance and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness will be supported.
5. Proposals likely to cause substantial harm to or total loss of a heritage asset will only be supported where it can be clearly demonstrated that there would be substantial public benefits that would outweigh any harm or loss to the heritage asset, or all of the following circumstances are met:

    a. The heritage asset cannot be sustained in its current use; and
    b. The heritage asset prevents all reasonable use of the site; and

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c. Conservation by grant-funding or some form of non-profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
d. The harm or loss to it outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

6. Harm to a heritage asset is unacceptable except in wholly exceptional circumstances as set out above.
7. In these exceptional circumstances where harm can be fully justified and the development would result in the partial or total loss of the heritage asset and/or its setting, the council will require the developer to record and analyse the heritage asset, including an archaeological excavation where relevant, in accordance with a scheme to be agreed beforehand and to be deposited on the council's Historic Environment Record (HER).
8. The council will require traditional shopfronts and associated features which contribute to the character of individual heritage assets and a conservation area to be retained and repaired as part of any development proposal.
9. Applications made in outline form will not normally be accepted for proposals that would affect the WHS, a conservation area, a listed building or any other designated heritage asset.

12.6 The NPPF requires local planning authorities to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment within the Local Plan and should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

12.7 Whether an asset has a statutory designation or not it is equally important to protect, conserve and enhance these historic places within our planning system, positively managing them for the duration of the Local Plan period.

12.8 In preparation of development proposals, applicants should refer at an early stage the sources of information available on the historic environment. These include:

- The National Heritage List for England
- Local Heritage Impact Assessment
- Conservation Area Appraisals
- Shropshire - Historic Environment Record

12.9 This is to ensure that proposals are based on an understanding of the significance of any heritage assets that may be affected. Development proposals should also take into account the principles set out in any Supplementary Planning Documents and other relevant guidance including the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site, Supplementary Planning Document.

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Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site

12.10 The Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Sites was designated by UNESCO in 1986 in recognition of its role as the birthplace of the industrial revolution and its unique landscape. The majority of the site lies within the borough and extends into Shropshire. The quality of the area is described in a statement of Outstanding Universal Value in accordance with UNESCO guidelines.

12.11 The purpose of Policy HE2 is to provide the highest level of planning protection for the World Heritage Site and meet the councils, stakeholders and residents obligations as custodians of the area.

Policy HE2

Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site

1. The council will conserve, or where appropriate enhance the Outstanding Universal Value of the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site.
2. In determining any application for development, and in undertaking its overall responsibilities, the council will give the greatest weight to the Outstanding Universal Value of the Severn Gorge area as a World Heritage Site.
3. The Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site is an area of special archaeological interest within which archaeological sites of significance will be afforded protection. Proposed development will be particularly scrutinised for its potential effect on the archaeology of sites and monuments.
4. The council will not support proposals in, or within the setting of, the World Heritage Site that adversely affect the following key features:
    a. The existing topographical character and landscape quality, including the stability of the slopes and river banks;
    b. The significance of the World Heritage Sites Outstanding Universal Value, including the existing skylines and views to, and from, the Gorge;
    c. The area's natural diversity and ecology, including amongst others, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Local Wildlife Sites;
    d. The area's distinctive archaeological resource;
    e. Key gateways to the World Heritage Site; or
    f. The historic built environment, either through infill, new development proposals or alterations to existing properties.
5. Development within the World Heritage Site will need to take account of flood risk and drainage and will be required to demonstrate that the site is stable and that the development can address gas migration.
6. The council will only support engineering works or development along the riverside, or within the course of the River Severn, if it can be demonstrated that the natural, historic or archaeological character of the river is preserved or enhanced by the proposal and that there are no adverse impacts on the hydrology, ecology or archaeology of the river and associated deposits upstream or downstream.
7. The council will support development in, and within the setting of, the World Heritage Site, that enhances or better reveals its significance and is in accordance with Policy DD1 Design Criteria

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12.12 The Ironbridge Gorge area is also designated as a conservation area (Severn Gorge Conservation Area). There is an Article 4(2) Direction restricting permitted development rights across the whole site to preserve the visual quality of the streetscape, meaning that planning permissions may be needed for certain works. The Article 4(2) Direction controls minor works including most alterations to houses, to front and back gardens and other householder projects such as the installation of solar panels and satellite dishes. In addition, to the Madeley Neighbourhood Plan provides some elements of control for parts of the site and the World Heritage Site Residents Guide provides information to residents helping make informed choices and decisions when considering making changes to or carrying out works to book their dwelling house, and the land that surrounds their property.

12.13 In July 2023, the council adopted the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document (IGWHS SPD), in order to provide guidance on the application of Local Plan policies and form a material consideration in the planning application process, as well providing further guidance for the protecting and enhancing the Outstanding Universal Value, preventing loss through deterioration and disappearance of its heritage value, whilst providing a consistent set of guidelines to help businesses and residents play their part in maintaining what makes the IGWHS so universally special.

12.14 Additional guidance for the IGWHS includes detail on shopfronts and signage that also has a SPD status which should be considered alongside Policy EC10 (shopfront and advertisement design), as a well as the Conservation Area Management Plan. While these tools can collectively control development at a micro level, it is appropriate that the Local Plan also gives further direction to managing the area holistically and balancing the desire to protect and enhance the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS alongside its role as a major tourist attraction and contributor to the local economy.

Figure 32: Hay Incline Blists Hill



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Listed buildings

12.15 Listing a building marks and celebrates a building's special architectural and historic interest, and also brings it under the consideration of the planning system, so that it can be protected for future generations.

12.16 Policy HE3 relates to the protection of listed buildings.

Policy HE3

Listed buildings

1. The council will have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The Council will not support development that would detract from or damage the setting of a listed building.
2. Harm to a Grade II listed building is unacceptable other than in exceptional circumstances. Harm to a Grade I or II* listed building is unacceptable other than in wholly exceptional circumstances.
3. The council will only support applications for alterations, extensions and other changes to listed buildings if the following criteria are met:

    a. The essential form, character and special interest of the building are maintained and the historic interest of the building and its setting are not adversely affected;
    b. Its architectural features, both internal and external, are preserved intact;
    c. The proposed development is of an appropriate design in terms of massing, scale form, proportion, details, colour and materials;
    d. An alteration, extension or new use can be demonstrated to be in the interest of the long term survival of the building;
    e. Where an extension is proposed, it should be designed to complement the character of the building, be generally subservient in scale and of a suitable form, material and detailed design;
    f. The development is located in a way which respects the setting and form of the listed building and respects its relationship to surrounding buildings, features, street scene or skyline and does not otherwise impair important views of and from the building; and
    g. The development is of a high quality of design in terms of scale, massing, form, proportions, detailing and materials which is appropriate to the listed building and its context.

12.17 The NPPF states that, when assessing development that could affect a heritage asset, such as a listed building, consideration should be given to the asset's conservation since insensitive alterations can harm its significance.

12.18 In considering applications relating to a listed building the council will, therefore, require that proposals do not have a detrimental effect upon the building's integrity and character or its setting. When listed building consent and planning permission are required it is

recommended that both applications are submitted to the council at the same time, this will allow the full impact of alterations or development to be assessed.

12.19 The council will require all applications that include the alteration, extension and repair of a listed building to limit the loss of its historic character and the scale, materials, intricate details and structure of the building should be respected. When larger alterations, such as extensions, are required it is vital that they are carefully located to create a balance with the rest of the building, not altering views adversely and not changing elevations. Alterations should not remove or hide original features or result in a significant removal of the buildings fabric.

12.20 The setting of a listed building is often linked to its character and its gardens, grounds, appearance and layout are vital to the overall design of the building. The open space and curtilage of the building, including hedges, walls, trees and buildings, can form intrinsic parts of its setting. Where a building is located in an urban area it can make a significant contribution to the street scene.

12.21 The conservation of heritage assets requires a holistic approach to understand how development can impact on their significance and how they can be viewed. The setting of heritage assets can directly impact on their significance. The NPPF requires local authorities to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a development proposal and requires them further to secure the enhancement of such an asset where possible.

12.22 The council will take enforcement action against unauthorised and unacceptable works to listed buildings. Poorly designed additions and alterations to listed buildings, or poorly sited development close to these heritage assets, can damage the historical significance of a building and damage its special interest and value. Even minor repairs and alterations can significantly affect a heritage asset or its setting if carried out insensitively. This includes alterations to the exterior and interior since both are included under listed building designation

Figure 33: Listed Building in Ironbridge



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Conservation areas

12.23 These are areas of special historic or architectural interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. When defining a conservation area it is the special architectural or historic interest of the whole area, rather than the merits of individual buildings and features, that is important.

12.24 Policy HE4 relate to the protection of conservation areas.

Policy HE4

Conservation areas

1. The council will support development in conservation areas where it will preserve or enhance its character or appearance. Development will not be supported where:

    a. It would prejudice the essential features of the conservation area, the relationship or appearance between buildings, the arrangement of open areas and their enclosure, grain, or significant natural or heritage features;
    b. The design of any new buildings, including height, density, mass, layout, proportions, or materials would not respect the character or appearance of a Conservation Area;
    c. The development would not do justice to the setting and surroundings of a conservation area or would impair views of the area; or
    d. Where a proposed use of land would adversely affect the appearance or environment of a conservation area.

2. Applications affecting a conservation area should identify the significance of any heritage assets within the conservation area and provide a clear justification as to why the development is considered appropriate. The Council will expect proposals to:

    e. Reinstate original features and elements to add to the heritage asset's significance where these have previously been lost;
    f. Remove modern additions or modifications to reveal the significance of any heritage asset. This could include the removal of pebbledash, paint from brickwork, non-original style windows, non-original doors, satellite dishes or other equipment; and
    g. Use the heritage asset in a way which complements its conservation significance.

3. The Council will require traditional shopfronts and associated features which contribute to the character of a conservation area to be retained and repaired as part of any development proposal.

12.25 The Council has a duty under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990) to designate as conservation areas any areas of special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

12.26 To date eight conservation areas have been designated and each of these make a valuable contribution to the borough as an attractive place to live, work and visit. These areas are defined as heritage assets in their own right. The eight conservation areas are:

- Severn Gorge;
- Newport;
- Wellington;
- Horsehay;
- Wrockwardine;
- Edgmond;
- High Ercall; and
- Kynnersely

12.27 There are extra controls imposed on development in these areas. Permission is required to fell most trees whether or not they are covered by a Tree Preservation Order.

12.28 Consistent with its statutory obligation to make sure that conservation areas are preserved or enhanced the council has established locally applicable principles that will be applied to all applications in these areas. It is important that development both within and outside of a conservation area does not harm the character or appearance of the conservation area by impacting on important views and groups of buildings from inside or outside the boundary. The character of conservation areas is rich and varied and each area requires a sensitive but differing approach to ensure that future change preserves and enhances the area's role and character.

12.29 In order to determine the effect of any new building in a conservation area, the council will require the submission of detailed plans and will not ordinarily support an application for outline planning permission. The council will expect applications to be accompanied by a design and access statement and a heritage significance statement (this can be included with the design and access statement or as a separate document).

Buildings of local interest

12.30 Buildings of local interest have been identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. Significance is the value a heritage asset has to this and future generations because of its heritage interest.

12.31 Policy HE5 relate to the protection of buildings of local interest.

Policy HE5

Buildings of local interest

1. The council will maintain and update a list of buildings of local interest. It will seek to preserve these buildings and will encourage their full and appropriate use. The council will not support development which:

    a. Involves the demolition or partial demolition of buildings of local interest fabric unless replaced by development of equal or better quality;
    b. Would have an adverse impact upon the character, form and fabric of a buildings of local interest or would remove or mask major features of interest; or
    c. Would have a detrimental impact on the setting of the building or damage traditional boundary treatments, floor space materials or other features.

12.32 The council has established a list of buildings of local interest. It is national policy to conserve and support restoration of such buildings and guidance on appropriate restoration and alteration can

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be provided by the council. The council will resist applications for development that fail to preserve or better reveal the significance of a buildings of local interest.

12.33 This local list covers a substantial span of buildings. These include, for example, a number of buildings built in the Duke of Sutherland style which represent an attractive and distinctive element of the borough's visual and historic environment. These buildings are not generally listed and, consequently, do not benefit from any additional statutory protection.

12.34 The council will review this list on a periodic basis and will add additional buildings to this list following a detailed assessment against a set of design criteria.

Historic parks and gardens

12.35 These are sites which have been assessed to be of particular significance, in terms of their special historic interest. The register of historic parks and gardens includes, gardens, grounds and other planning landscapes and open spaces. The register focuses on the interest of the designed landscape, rather than on planting or botanical species.

12.36 Policy HE6 relates to the protection of Historic Parks and Gardens.

Policy HE6

Historic parks and gardens

1. The council will make sure that the borough's historic parks and gardens, their associated features and settings are preserved and enhanced. The council will:

    a. Resist any development which would adversely affect their special historic interest, or result in the loss of, or damage to, their form and features;
    b. Seek to conserve their landscape and architectural features;
    c. Resist development which would impair the longer views of these sites and their wider landscape setting; and
    d. Encourage the restoration of original layout and features where this is appropriate and based upon a thorough research and understanding of the historical form.

12.37 The borough currently has three sites identified on the Historic England Parks and Gardens on the Special Historic Interest Register (Chetwynd Park, Lilleshall Hall and Orleton Hall) designated under the National Heritage Act 1983. These parks are shown on the Policies Map. All three of these parks are currently Grade II listed. The council is required to consult The Gardens Trust when considering applications affecting these registered sites.

12.38 Development both within and close to these sites should aim to preserve the setting of these historic parks and gardens so that they can continue to be enjoyed by future generations. This policy draws on the best practice guidelines from Historic England.

Scheduled monuments and archaeology

12.39 These are sites of national archaeological importance. They are nationally designated heritage assets. Scheduled of sites as monuments is the oldest form of heritage protection, and started in 1882.

12.40 Policy HE7 relates to the protection of scheduled monuments and the assessment of archaeology.

Policy HE7

Scheduled monuments and archaeology

1. The council will protect scheduled ancient monuments, other sites of international, national, regional or particular local archaeological importance and their settings. Development that would result in the loss of, damage to, or would otherwise adversely affect these sites and their settings will be resisted.
2. Where archaeological remains are known to exist as part of the established record or research indicates that they may exist, the council will require development proposals to be accompanied by an assessment of the site's archaeological features.
3. When development is considered to be acceptable in principle, the council will require that:
   a. Any archaeological remains are preserved in situ by the careful design, layout and the siting of new development; and
   b. Where in situ preservation is not justified or proves impractical or inappropriate, provision will be made for its recording and/or excavation by a competent archaeological organisation before development starts on site and any information which requires recording shall be recorded in a suitable format and deposited on the council's Historic Environment Record.

12.41 Although recent archaeological studies and surveys have revealed much about the borough's rich archaeological heritage, they also suggest that much is still hidden, and other archaeological sites and remains may be revealed during the plan period.

12.42 Archaeological assets are often fragile and therefore vulnerable to damage and destruction. They contain information that is invaluable, both for its own sake and for its role within education, leisure and tourism. As with the borough's other heritage assets, the council considers its archaeological heritage to be an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner that is appropriate to its significance for present and future generations. The council has the power to require developers to submit heritage statements which identify the site's archaeological features with planning applications and encourages pre-application discussion to ascertain if sites are close to a heritage site.