Conservation Principles

for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales
Foreword

The people of Wales have inherited a unique historic environment. This environment has been shaped by past generations, highlighting where we have come from and enhancing our quality of life. The history that surrounds us gives us a sense of place and helps to define us as a nation. The heritage of Wales is also very rich and diverse. Some elements are of international importance and have justifiably been given global recognition as World Heritage Sites.

But the great medieval castles of Gwynedd and the legacy of the Industrial Revolution in Wales represent only a small fraction of the numerous historic assets that form our historic environment. The entire rural and urban landscape can be treated as an historic asset; it is made up of elements that on their own may seem insignificant, but together define the places in which we live.

However, this historic environment is also a fragile resource. We have an obligation and duty to manage change in a sensitive and sustainable way and to ensure that what is significant is passed on to future generations. The historic environment is an asset, not a barrier to change. Equally there must be a recognition that once elements have been destroyed or altered, they can seldom be recovered. We all have a role to play in ensuring that this balance is achieved.

The historic assets of Wales are in a variety of ownerships: public and private, religious and secular, third sector, local and central government. As curators of this heritage the owners of significant historic places need to be guided by a conservation philosophy that will help with their decision making. We intend that the conservation principles contained in this document will help articulate this philosophy.

The principles will also assist in the ambition of the Welsh Assembly Government to place sustainable development at the heart of its work. In May 2009, the Assembly Government launched One Wales: One Planet, which articulates how it wishes to develop Wales in ways which contribute sustainably to people’s economic, social and environmental well-being. In this document Wales’s rich culture and heritage is recognized as a vehicle for regeneration and for fostering local character and distinctiveness. These themes can also be cross-referenced to People, Places, Futures: The Wales Spatial Plan and the Environment Strategy for Wales. The Minister for Heritage issued his Welsh Historic Environment Strategic Statement in October 2009, which emphasizes the key role that heritage can make to sustainable economic and social development. The conservation principles set out here are intended to provide the framework for guiding how this can be achieved.
The Assembly Government, through Cadw, its historic environment division, intends to apply these principles when undertaking work it carries out on sites in its ownership and care, and in considering applications which come before it for determination. Cadw also intends to apply these principles when contributing to future planning policy and guidance relating to the historic environment and programmes where it provides financial support. Other organizations and individuals in Wales are strongly encouraged to make use of them when considering changes that affect the historic environment.

Pentre Ifan Burial Chamber in Pembrokeshire was the first historic site in Wales to be given legal protection. Over the following 125 years, great efforts have been made to protect our historic environment. Cadw, through its statutory and non-statutory designation programmes, has identified many thousands of historic assets worthy of long-term preservation, including archaeological sites, historic buildings, underwater wrecks, historic parks and gardens. The protection of such important historic assets from unnecessary destruction or ill-considered change can be seen as a great success of the twentieth century.

However, these designated historic assets sit within broader historic landscapes. The need for the detailed understanding and management of these landscapes has led to the establishment of a Register of Historic Landscapes, which is unique to Wales. Detailed characterization studies are also being undertaken, which define areas in both our urban and rural landscapes that have particular and distinctive historic qualities. Such studies allow the impacts of a development or other land-use change to be assessed objectively and it also highlights the opportunities that historic character can play in regeneration.

The importance and added value of heritage are increasingly being appreciated. However, change and decay are inevitable and the preservation of every part of a historic asset or of all the historic landscape will be impossible. The objective of Conservation Principles is to inhibit decay and manage change, so that the significant values of individual historic assets or historic landscapes are carried forward for future generations to enjoy. In Wales that future has to be sustainable; investment in the historic environment needs to bring social and economic benefits. However, change also needs to recognize and manage the impact on the values that we place on our historic environment.

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Director of Cadw
March 2011
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Introduction

Aims

The historic environment is central to Wales’s cultural heritage and sense of identity. It is a resource that should be sustained for the benefit of present and future generations. In this document, Cadw, the historic environment division of the Welsh Assembly Government, sets out a logical approach for making decisions about all aspects of the historic environment. Conservation Principles will help reconcile the protection of the historic environment with the economic and social needs, and aspirations of the people who live in it.

The six conservation principles set out below are based on those developed by English Heritage and published in 2008 (www.englishheritage.org.uk/conservation.principles). Cadw has adapted these principles for use in Wales. We acknowledge a considerable debt to English Heritage who developed their principles after extensive consultation with outside organizations. Many of the explanatory paragraphs are also adapted from their Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, but have been tailored to meet the needs of Wales. The English Heritage document includes sections on ‘Understanding Heritage Values,’ ‘Assessing Heritage Significance’ and ‘Managing Change to Significant Places’, which give extended explanations of these topics. In this document, Cadw has replaced these with a more accessible and succinct summary entitled ‘Understanding heritage values and assessing significance’. Other organizations, such as the National Trust and the National Trust for Scotland, have also produced their own ‘Conservation Principles’, and a consistent approach is emerging.

Conservation Principles will inform Cadw’s approach to the protection and management of the historic environment as a whole, including the community engagement, learning and access issues addressed under Principle 3. They will ensure that our actions and decisions are justified and consistent. The following section, ‘Conservation Principles in Action’, will specifically guide Cadw in applying its principles to its role in the development process, and in managing the historic sites in its care. However, other organizations and individuals such as local authorities, property owners, developers, developers,
and their advisers, are strongly encouraged to use Conservation Principles in their decision making.

The entire rural and urban landscape of Wales is an historic asset. However, it is also possible to define individual components of the historic environment, small or large, and including those under the ground or under water, that can be identified as specific historic assets. Historic assets, or combinations of historic assets, of any size, including historic buildings, archaeological sites, historic areas or landscapes, need to be understood and managed at different levels for different purposes. Every historic asset also occupies a site which will have natural environmental values as well as heritage values. However, when this document refers to the ‘fabric’, this means only the man-made parts of the site. It should also be stressed that the conservation principles do not only apply to those historic assets that meet the particular thresholds of significance necessary for formal international, national or local designation (for example through registration or statutory listing and scheduling).

Sustainable management of a site begins by gaining an understanding of its cultural and natural heritage values and then setting out its significance. It is essential then to communicate that significance to everyone concerned with that site, and who may be affected by any actions taken. Only then will it be possible to assess which qualities people value, and how they will be vulnerable to harm or loss. Every conservation decision should be based on an understanding of its likely impact on the significance of the fabric and other aspects of the site concerned.

The definition of conservation given below (paragraph 1.2) is that it is ‘the careful management of change’. In managing historic assets, ‘to preserve’ — even accepting its established legal definition of ‘to do no harm’ — is only one part of what is needed to sustain heritage values. For example, local authorities are required ‘to preserve or enhance’ conservation areas. This helps emphasize the potential for beneficial change to historic assets by revealing and reinforcing their heritage values. ‘To sustain’ embraces both preservation and enhancement to the extent that the values of a place allow. ‘Considered change’ offers the potential to enhance historic assets, as well as generating the need to protect their established heritage values. It is the means by which each generation aspires to enrich the historic environment.
Relationship to other policy documents

The Welsh Assembly Government’s current guidance on conserving the historic environment is given in chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales. This is now an online document (http://wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/policy/ppw2010/?lang=en) and is the subject of periodic updating. This is supported by:

Welsh Office Circular 60/96: Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology


Future versions of chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales and supporting guidance will cross-reference to and will be informed by aspects of these conservation principles.


The section on ‘Conservation Principles in Action’ will be updated to refer to and reflect any new heritage legislation and Government policy as they emerge, and in the light of the experience of their use.

At the international level, the conservation principles reflect many of the presumptions of the World Heritage Convention, with its call to give all natural and cultural heritage a function in the life of communities. The conservation principles are consistent with the Granada Convention on the protection of the architectural heritage, and the Valletta Convention on the protection of the archaeological heritage, both ratified by the United Kingdom. The European Landscape Convention, also ratified by the United Kingdom, has been influential, not least for its definition of a landscape as ‘an area, as perceived by people…’, and its references to the need to consider sustaining cultural values in managing all landscapes, as well as the importance of public engagement in that process.

1 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (UNESCO, 1972)
Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada: Council of Europe, 1985, ETS 121)
European convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta: Council of Europe, 1992, ETS 143)
European Landscape Convention (Florence: Council of Europe, 2000, ETS 176)
Conservation Principles

1 Historic assets will be managed to sustain their values

1.1 Changes in the historic environment are inevitable. This can be the result of decay caused by natural processes, damage caused by wear and tear of use, and the need to respond to social, cultural, economic and technological changes. The impact of climate change on historic assets is a particular challenge.

1.2 Conservation is the careful management of change. It is about revealing and sharing the significance of historic assets and ensuring that their special qualities are protected, enhanced, enjoyed and understood by present and future generations.

1.3 To be sustainable, investment in the conservation of the historic environment should bring social and economic benefits. On the other hand, investment in social and economic programmes should bring environmental benefits.

1.4 Conservation of an historic asset is achieved by gaining and sharing an understanding of its significance (see Principles 2 and 3). This understanding will enable:
• The identification of those heritage values which are vulnerable to change.
• The definition of the constraints needed to reveal, protect and sustain those values.
• Achieving a balance between the impact of the different options on the heritage value and significance of the assets affected.
• A consistency in decision making, aimed at retaining the authenticity and future significance of the historic asset.

1.5 All heritage conservation actions lead to interventions. These must be justified by demonstrating that the benefits in protecting, increasing the understanding and sustaining the heritage values of the historic asset decisively outweigh the losses and harm caused.

1.6 New work must respect the setting and significance of the historic assets affected. The quality of design and execution must add value to that site and its setting, both now and in the future.

Ty Mawr, Castle Caereinion, Powys
The timber-framed shell of this late medieval farmhouse was rescued from dereliction to make a beautiful modern home.
1.7 The conservation of the historic environment must recognize and respect associated natural environmental values. This will be achieved by an integrated approach to conservation that has identified both the natural and historical values of each asset.

2 Understanding the significance of historic assets is vital

2.1 The historic environment is made up of individual historic features, archaeological sites and historic buildings as well as the landscapes in which they are found. Any part of the historic environment to which people have given a distinctive historical association or identity is considered here to be an historic asset.

2.2 The significance of an historic asset embraces all of the cultural heritage values that people associate with it, or which prompt them to respond to it. These values tend to grow in strength and complexity over time, as understanding deepens and people’s perceptions evolve.

2.3 In order to assess the significance of an historic asset, four component values need to be considered. These are:

• Evidential value
• Historical value
• Aesthetic value
• Communal value

These are explained in more detail in the section ‘Understanding heritage values and assessing significance’ (page 16) but, briefly, they can encompass: the physical remains or surviving fabric of an historic asset (evidential); the contribution of documentary sources, pictorial records and museum collections to forming an understanding of an historic asset (evidential); how historic assets through illustrative or associative values can connect the past with the present (historical); the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from an historic asset through its form, external appearance or setting (aesthetic); the social and economic values, and spiritual meanings, that an historic asset has for the people who relate to it (communal).

2.4 Understanding and articulating the values of an historic asset is necessary to inform the decisions about its future. The degree of significance determines what, if any, protection, including statutory designation, is appropriate under law and policy.
3 The historic environment is a shared resource

3.1 Our environment contains a unique and dynamic record of human activity. It has been shaped by successive generations of people responding to the surroundings that they have inherited. It embodies their aspirations, skills and endeavour.

3.2 People value this historic environment as part of their cultural and natural heritage. It reflects the knowledge, beliefs and traditions of diverse communities. It gives distinctiveness, meaning and quality to the places in which we live, providing a sense of continuity and a source of identity. It is a social and economic asset and a resource for learning and enjoyment.

3.3 Each generation is therefore responsible for shaping and sustaining the historic environment to enable people to use, enjoy and benefit from it, without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same.

3.4 Conservation projects will recognize the need to promote greater access, understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment for all groups in society.

3.5 There is a strong public interest in the heritage values of different places, whatever their ownership. The use of law, public policy and investment is justified to protect that interest. The legal procedures needed to obtain planning, listed building and scheduled monument consents provide the mechanisms for arbitrating between private and public interests.

3.6 Owners and occupiers need to recognize and understand the significance of their historic assets, and seek advice and assistance from public sources to help them sustain the heritage in their stewardship.
4 Everyone will be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment

4.1 Everyone should have the opportunity to contribute his or her knowledge of the heritage value of different sites, and to participate in decisions about their future, by means that are accessible, inclusive and informed. This will enable decisions about an important historic asset to be undertaken in an open and transparent manner (see also Principle 5).

4.2 Sharing learning is central to sustaining the historic environment. It raises people’s awareness and understanding of their heritage, including the varied ways in which its values are perceived by different generations and communities. It encourages informed and active participation in caring for the historic environment.

4.3 Knowledge and expertise are vital in encouraging and enabling others to learn about, value and care for the historic environment. Experts play a crucial role in discerning, communicating and sustaining the established values of places. They can help people to refine and articulate the values that they attach to places.

4.4 It is essential to develop, maintain and pass on the specialist craft and professional knowledge and skills necessary to sustain the historic environment.

4.5 People should not carry out work on an historic asset unless they have the appropriate skills or qualifications to undertake the work.
5 Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent

5.1 Owners and managers of historic assets will be encouraged to seek advice and examples of good practice in preparing their proposals for change.

5.2 Public authorities will make decisions about changes to the historic environment by applying expertise, experience and judgement, in a consistent and transparent process guided by law and policy.

5.3 Public authorities, within the resources available to them, will undertake sufficient assessment and public engagement to inform and justify the decisions they make.

5.4 When considering change, public authorities will give due importance to the heritage values of a site when considering the sustainability of proposals submitted to them.
6  Documenting and learning from decisions is essential

6.1 The information and documentation gathered in understanding and assessing the significance of an historic asset should be retained by the owner and manager of that place, and a copy be placed in a public archive. This will ensure that future generations will benefit from the knowledge gained.

6.2 The records of the justification for decisions, which affect an historic asset and the actions that follow, will be maintained as an accessible and cumulative account.

6.3 Owners and managers of historic assets should monitor and regularly evaluate the effects of change and responses to it, and use the results to inform future decisions. Public bodies similarly should monitor and respond to the effects on the historic environment of their policies and programmes.

6.4 In the unusual event that all or part of an historic asset is to be lost as a result of a decision or inevitable natural process, the opportunity to extract the information that it holds about the past must be taken. This loss will require recording, investigation and analysis, followed by archiving and dissemination of the results, all to a level that reflects its significance.

6.5 Where such a loss is the direct result of human intervention, the costs of this work should be borne by those who benefit from the change, or whose role it is to initiate such change in the public interest.
Applying the conservation principles

*Conservation Principles* builds on earlier statements and experience to formalize an approach, which takes account of a wide range of heritage values. They are supported by the section below describing how Cadw will put its *Conservation Principles* into action. They are intended to help everyone involved to take account of the diverse ways in which people value the historic environment. They acknowledge that the values of places, including those reflected in landscape designations, should be managed in a sustainable way, fostering close working relationships between cultural and natural heritage interests.

Balanced and justifiable decisions about change to the historic environment depend upon understanding who values different historic assets and why they do so, leading to a clear statement of their significance and, with it, the ability to understand the impact of the proposed change on that significance.

Every reasonable effort should be made to eliminate or minimize adverse impacts on historic assets. Ultimately, however, it may be necessary to balance the benefit of the proposed change against the harm to the asset. If so, the weight given to heritage values should be proportionate to the importance of the assets and the impact of the change upon them.

The historic environment is constantly changing, but each significant part of it represents a finite resource. If it is not sustained, its heritage values will be eroded or lost. In addition, its potential to give distinctiveness, meaning and quality to the places in which people live, and provide people with a sense of continuity and a source of identity will be diminished. The historic environment is a social and economic asset and a cultural resource for learning and enjoyment.

Cadw will apply these principles to the management of the monuments in its care and in undertaking its statutory functions. The principles will be shared with other divisions of the Welsh Assembly Government. Cadw commends them for adoption and application by all those involved with the historic environment in Wales, and in making decisions about its future.
Understanding heritage values and assessing significance

The objective of understanding the heritage values of an historic asset and assessing its significance is to enable an authoritative statement of significance to be made, and allow for the effects of proposed changes to be evaluated. This demands the application of a systematic and consistent process, which is appropriate and proportionate in scope and depth to the decision to be made, or the purpose of the assessment.

English Heritage's Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008) described in detail the family of heritage values and provides an extended explanation on assessing heritage significance. Cadw sees no reason to differ from this set of heritage values. The following provides a summary of these values and on managing change to historic assets.

Heritage values

Evidential value. This derives from those elements of an historic asset that can provide evidence about past human activity, including its physical remains or historic fabric. These may be visible and relatively easy to assess, or they may be buried below ground, under water or be hidden by later fabric. These remains provide the primary evidence for when and how an historic asset was made or built, what it was used for and how it has changed over time. The unrecorded loss of historic fabric represents the destruction of the primary evidence.

Additional evidential values can be gained from documentary sources, pictorial records and archaeological archives or museum collections. To assess the significance of this aspect of an asset, all this evidence needs to be gathered in a systematic way and any gaps in the evidence identified.

Historical value. An historic asset might illustrate a particular aspect of past life or it might be associated with a notable family, person, event or movement. These illustrative or associative values of an historic asset may be less tangible than its evidential value but will often connect past people, events and aspects of life with the present. Of course the functions of an historic asset are likely to change over time and so the full range of changing historical values might not become clear until all the evidential values have been
gathered together. Historical values are not so easily diminished by change as evidential values and are harmed only to the extent that adaptation has obliterated them or concealed them.

**Aesthetic value.** This derives from the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from an historic asset. This might include the form of an historic asset, its external appearance and how it lies within its setting. It can be the result of conscious design or it might be a seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which an historic asset has evolved and been used over time, or it may be a combination of both.

The form of an asset normally changes over time. Sometimes earlier pictorial records and written descriptions will be more powerful in many people’s minds than what survives today. Some important viewpoints may be lost or screened, or access to them may be temporarily denied. To assess this aspect of an asset, again the evidence of the present and past form must be gathered systematically. This needs to be complemented by a thorough appreciation on site of the external appearance of an asset in its setting.

Inevitably understanding the aesthetic value of an historic asset will be more subjective than the study of its evidential and historical values. Much of it will involve trying to express the aesthetic qualities or the relative value of different parts of its form or design. It is important to seek the views of others with a knowledge and appreciation of the historic asset on what they consider to be the significant aesthetic values.

**Communal value.** This derives from the meanings that an historic asset has for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. It is closely linked to historical and aesthetic values but tends to have additional or specific aspects. Communal value might be commemorative or symbolic. For example, people might draw part of their identity or collective memory from an historic asset, or have emotional links to it. Such values often change over time and they may be important for remembering both positive and uncomfortable events, attitudes or periods in Wales’s history. Historic assets can also have social value, acting as a source of social interaction, distinctiveness or coherence; economic value, providing a valuable source of income or employment; or they may have spiritual value, emanating from religious beliefs or modern perceptions of the spirit of a place.
Assessing significance

To identify the heritage values of an asset, its history, fabric and character must first be understood. The relative significance of the different values then needs to be considered. It will be necessary to compare the values of the asset under consideration with others in the locality, region or even nationally, depending on its importance. Drawing on professional expertise in making these comparisons will help ensure the validity of this assessment.

The outcome of this process will be the production of a Statement of Significance. This needs to be a succinct assessment of the historical asset/s under consideration and its values. No Statement of Significance can ever be complete or totally objective and it will inevitably reflect the knowledge and perceptions of the individual or group who produce it. However, it must try to express the values identified fairly and not be influenced by consideration of any changes being proposed. Statements of Significance will change with time as new evidence emerges, or perceptions of the historical contexts, within which the asset falls, change.

All the information and evidence gathered when producing a Statement of Significance should be referenced and archived. A summary needs to be included in any conservation plan prepared for the asset. Copies of the archive and the conservation plan should be deposited in the appropriate national and/or regional Historic Environment Record.

Managing change to an historic asset

Changes to historic assets are inevitable. Over time, natural forces and regular use will lead to the erosion of some of the evidential values such as the fabric. Repair and restoration of the fabric and changes to its setting can affect its aesthetic value. A change in use may add a new historical or communal value.

To ensure the long-term future of historic assets, change needs to be managed to ensure that their significance is not diminished as a consequence. Retaining the economic viability or the social functions of historic buildings will sustain their survival and encourage their regular maintenance. Many archaeological sites are best maintained under sympathetic farming or forestry regimes. These regimes need to remain viable throughout times of economic and climatic change otherwise rapid decay of the sites may follow. Historic landscapes, parks and gardens are dynamic systems, which benefit from sustained and usually traditional management practices.
Nationally important historic assets will normally be designated as scheduled ancient monuments or listed buildings. Conservation areas, which contain a number of historic assets, also have statutory protection. In Wales, the sites on the Register of Historic Landscapes, Parks and Gardens are given protection through the planning process. There are well-established procedures through which consent can be sought for works that affect these assets. Owners of historic assets also have responsibilities to conserve the natural environment when they are proposing change.

Changes to an historic asset will involve one, or more likely a combination of the following types of work:
- Routine management and maintenance
- Repair
- Periodic renewal
- Archaeological intervention
- Restoration
- New work or alteration
- Enabling development

How Cadw will consider proposals for these types of work against the conservation principles is set out in the next section ‘Conservation Principles in Action’. It is intended that this section will provide a useful guide for those preparing projects for consent. It includes information on ‘Integrating conservation with other interests’, identifying where it may be necessary to accept a diminution or loss of the heritage values at a particular site to ensure that other needs are met. In these cases some compensation for the loss can be achieved through the realization of evidential value through expert archaeological recording and investigation.
Conservation Principles in Action

Preamble

This section will guide Cadw in making decisions or offering advice about changes to significant historic assets. It is recognized that most proposals that will come before Cadw will include more than one type of change to one or more historic assets. However, by setting out the different processes below, working from beneficial routine maintenance to potentially the most damaging and controversial proposals, Cadw has tried to present the criteria against which their decisions will be made. Formal policy and guidance is given in chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales, and in Welsh Office Circulars 60/96 — Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology and 61/96 — Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas. This policy and guidance will be subject to periodic review.

Tension between conservation and other public policies or legitimate private interests usually arises from a perceived need to harm the heritage values of the historic assets to be affected. In complex cases, it is important to keep a sense of proportion and not automatically to assume that cultural or natural heritage values must prevail. A key objective of Conservation Principles is to provide the framework for a dialogue, based on mutual understanding and respect, from which sustainable solutions will emerge.

There will be cases where part or all of some historic assets will be lost. In these cases, comprehensive archaeological recording must be undertaken as part of the project. There will be other cases where proposed enabling development will meet the tests set out in paragraph 49 below. In these cases, some historic assets will be conserved and sustained, whilst others will have their values diminished.

When preparing development proposals that affect significant historic assets, applicants are encouraged to develop a Conservation Plan. Applicants are also required to produce Design and Access

Cloister Garden, Aberglasney, Carmarthenshire
Extensive archaeological and historical research led to the restoration of the structure of this early seventeenth-century garden (© Aberglasney Restoration Trust).
Statements in which they describe the philosophy that they have adopted and decisions that they have taken in the preparation of the design of the new work and facilities they are seeking to build (see TAN 12: Design). In preparing these documents, it is hoped that Conservation Principles will assist in resolving any potential conflicts that might arise from the proposals.

Routine management and maintenance

1 The conservation of historic assets is founded on appropriate and planned routine management and maintenance.

2 The values of all historic assets, ranging from a single feature to an area of landscape, will be quickly obscured or lost if long-standing management and maintenance regimes are discontinued. Such regimes are often closely linked to historic design, function and stewardship, and are dependent on traditional processes and materials. Since most habitats in Wales are the result of long-established land management practices, sustaining their ecosystems can depend upon continuing those practices. Reinstating a lapsed regime can help to recover both cultural and natural heritage values.

3 Regular monitoring should inform continual improvement of planned maintenance and identify the need for periodic repair or renewal at an early stage. If a permanent solution to identified problems is not immediately possible, temporary works should be undertaken to prevent the problems from escalating. Temporary solutions should be effective, timely and reversible.

Repair

4 Repair necessary to sustain the heritage values of an historic asset is normally desirable if:
   a. there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposals on the significance of the asset; and
   b. the long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future; and
   c. the proposals are designed to avoid or minimize harm, if the actions needed to sustain particular heritage values are in conflict.

5 It is important to look beyond the immediate need for action, to understand the reasons for the need for repair and plan for the long-term consequences of inevitable change and decay. While
sufficient work should be undertaken to achieve a lasting repair, the extent of the repair should normally be limited to what is reasonably necessary to make failing elements sound and capable of continuing to fulfil their intended functions.

The use of materials or techniques with a lifespan that is predictable from past performance, and which are close matches to those being repaired or replaced, is recommended. This tends to carry a low risk of future harm or premature failure. These repairs are often initially, visually distinctive and easily reversible. By contrast, the longer-term effects of using materials or techniques that are innovative and relatively untested are much less certain.

Not all historic building materials or techniques were durable — iron cramps in masonry, or ungalvanized steel windows, for example, are both subject to corrosion. Some structural failures are the inevitable, if slowly developing, consequences of the original method of construction. Once failure occurs, stabilizing the structure depends on addressing the underlying causes of the problem, not perpetuating inherent faults.

The use of original materials and techniques for repair can sometimes destroy more of the original fabric, and any decoration it carries, than the introduction of reinforcing or superficially protective modern materials. For example, these may offer the optimum conservation solution if they allow more of the significant original fabric to be retained.

In historic landscapes, planting may need to utilize alternative species, to resist disease or the effects of climate change. Before making decisions, it is essential to understand all the heritage values of the elements concerned, and to consider the longer-term, as well as the immediate, conservation objectives.

Sometimes, the action necessary to sustain or reinforce one heritage value can be incompatible with the actions necessary to sustain others. An example might be where subterranean structural repairs to a building would cause unacceptable archaeological damage. Understanding the range, inter-relationships and relative importance of the heritage values associated with an historic asset should establish priorities for reconciling or balancing such tensions. While every reasonable effort should be made to avoid or minimize potential conflict, contrived solutions requiring intensive maintenance are likely to be difficult to sustain.
Periodic renewal

9 Periodic renewal of elements of an historic asset is justified, when not to do so would lead to greater losses of the historic fabric and heritage values of that place.

10 Periodic renewal differs from maintenance in that it occurs on a longer cycle, is usually more drastic in nature and often has a greater visual impact. This issue arises most frequently with historic buildings and historic parks and gardens. It involves the temporary loss of certain heritage values, such as the aesthetic value of the patina of age on an old roof covering, or the value of a dying tree as a habitat for invertebrates. However, these values are likely to reappear during the next cycle of use, provided the replacement is physically and visually compatible (normally ‘like for like’ to the extent that this is sustainable). By contrast, the consequence of not undertaking periodic renewal is normally more extensive loss of both fabric and heritage values.

11 A programme of archaeological or building recording may need to accompany periodic renewal. For example, the replacement of a roof covering may reveal how it was originally laid, and the re-plastering or re-rendering of a wall may reveal significant evidence of earlier phases of the building’s history beneath.

12 The justification required for periodic renewal will normally be that the fabric concerned is becoming incapable of fulfilling its intended functions through more limited intervention. In addition, where important landscapes are concerned, there is a special case where successional planting cannot achieve this objective in a less drastic way. Harm to values that will normally be recovered during the next cycle can, in most cases, be discounted, but potential permanent harm cannot be ignored in making the decision.

Archaeological intervention

13 Archaeological intervention into an historic asset, which involves the material loss of evidence, would normally be acceptable only if:

a. preservation in situ is not reasonably practicable; or
b. it is demonstrated that any potential increase in knowledge
   • cannot be achieved using non-destructive techniques; and
   • is unlikely to be achieved at another place whose destruction is inevitable; and
   • is predicted decisively to outweigh the loss of the primary resource.
c. it is required to evaluate the potential harm of a
development proposal.
If acceptable, an archaeological intervention demands:
d. a skilled team, with the resources to implement a project design
   based on explicit research objectives;
e. the production of an authoritative record;
f. funding arrangements for the subsequent conservation and
   public deposit of the site archive, and for appropriate analysis
   and dissemination of the results within a set timetable;
g. a strategy to ensure that other elements and values of the
   place are not prejudiced by the work, whether at the time
   or subsequently, including the conservation of any elements
   to be left exposed.

14 The historic environment provides a unique record of past human
activity, but differs from written archives in that ‘reading’ some parts
of it can be achieved only through the destruction of the primary
record. This approach applies particularly to the excavation of buried
archaeological deposits, but can be relevant to the physical
investigation of structures. It concerns a level of intervention that
goes beyond the evaluation and targeted investigation that may be
necessary to inform and justify conservation management decisions.

15 Experience has shown that with the continuing development of
investigative techniques, it will be possible to extract more data
from excavation and other types of intervention in the future than
is currently possible. This demands a cautious approach to the use
of a finite resource, and must avoid the loss of integrity of the historic
assets of the site under investigation. However, it cannot reasonably
exclude research, where this will increase our knowledge of the
significance of that site and contribute to the better understanding
of the archaeology and history of Wales.

16 Archaeological intervention must be justified primarily by considering
the potential gain in knowledge in relation to the impact on the
archaeological resource, and specifically on the place or type of site
in question. Established, relevant research framework priorities should
be taken into account. The level of intervention should always be the
minimum necessary to achieve the research objectives, and make full
use of non-destructive techniques. It needs to be extensive enough
to ensure that the full research potential of what is necessarily to be
destroyed in the process can be realized.
**Restoration**

17 The restoration of an historic asset will normally only be acceptable if:
   a. the enhanced heritage value of the elements that would be restored decisively outweighs the value of those that would be lost; and
   b. the work proposed is justified by compelling evidence of the evolution of that place, and is executed in accordance with that evidence; and
   c. the form in which the asset currently exists is not the result of a significant historical event but rather due to progressive decay or mis-management; and
   d. the work proposed respects previous forms of that place and is designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future; and
   e. the maintenance implications of the proposed restoration are considered to be sustainable.

18 Restoration involves the recreation of the lost parts, appearance or function of an historic asset based upon the strongest available evidence for its construction and layout. Even when restoring parts that have collapsed or been removed, what is produced will be new and will add another layer of history to the fabric. Restoration can be justified only when it does not diminish the value of the surviving fabric and leads to the enhancement and sustainability of that asset.

19 Restoration can easily compromise the authenticity of an historic asset. There is a fine line between restoration and new work. When restoration becomes speculative or produces a generalized recreation, the proposals should be treated as new work and judged against the criteria given in the section below.

20 It is particularly important to underpin restoration work by detailed, archaeological recording. The results produced will be integrated with and used to update the initial analysis of the evidence gathered to justify the restoration. When the work has been completed, copies of the results will be deposited in the National Monuments Record for Wales and in the regional Historic Environment Record held by the appropriate Welsh Archaeological Trust.

“The enhanced heritage value of the elements that would be restored decisively outweighs the value of those that would be lost.”

21 Any restoration project will inevitably remove or obscure part of the record of previous changes to that site. It will remove evidence of those changes and can potentially diminish its historical and aesthetic value. To outweigh those negative impacts, restoration must enhance
other heritage values to a greater extent. It may reveal and improve the understanding of an earlier or more important phase in the evolution of the site, highlighted in the Statement of Significance. It may greatly improve the setting and hence the enjoyment of the place. Finally, it may allow a past function to be restored, bringing new life to that site. Where significance of the historic assets is the result of centuries of change, their restoration to some earlier stage in their evolution is most unlikely to meet this criterion.

‘The nature of the work proposed is justified by compelling evidence of the evolution of that site, and is executed in accordance with that evidence’.

22 Evidence of the evolution of the historic assets of that site, and particularly of the phase to which restoration is proposed, should be drawn from all available sources. This requires the study of the fabric itself (the primary record of its evolution), any documentation of the original design and construction process, and subsequent archival sources, including records of previous interventions. The results of this research and the reasoned conclusions drawn from it should be clearly set out.

‘The form in which the asset currently exists is not the result of a historically significant event but rather due to progressive decay or mismanagement’.

23 If a building or structure was ruined or its character fundamentally changed as a consequence of an important historic event, its subsequent state will contribute to its significance: for example, monastic houses unroofed at the Dissolution, or castles slighted in the Civil War.

In the wake of such episodes, some sites were ruined, some cleared away completely, and others repaired and adapted for new purposes. An attempt to restore those exceptional historic assets that have survived as ruins, would conflict with their roles as strong visual and emotional reminders of important historic events. Ruins — real or contrived — can also play a major role in designed landscapes, define the character of places or be celebrated in art. Even so, their restoration or adaptive reuse may be justified if the alternative is loss or unacceptable decay.

24 The public response to dramatic contemporary events can lead to pressure to restore a damaged structure. This may be to act as a memorial or be linked to the social and economic regeneration of the community. Any decisions on the extent of restoration need to address the sustainability of the desired outcome.
By contrast, casual neglect and decay, abandonment, crude adaptation for transient uses, and similar circumstances, are not normally considered historically significant events. Proposals to restore the resultant damage to those parts of the buildings or other historic assets, even after a long interval, would not normally be refused.

“The work proposed respects previous forms of that historic asset, and is designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future”.

The more radical the restoration, the more likely it is to introduce an element of incongruity. This can apply to the site itself and its setting.

“The maintenance implications of the proposed restoration are considered to be sustainable”.

It is essential to consider the long-term implications of a proposed restoration for its viability and sustainability. If, for instance, an historic asset or part of it was modified primarily in order to reduce maintenance costs, restoration without considering the increased resources needed for maintenance is likely to be counterproductive. The reinstatement of elaborate parterres in historic gardens is an example.

New work and alteration

New work or alteration to an historic asset will normally only be acceptable if:

a. the need for the work is fully justified; and
b. there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the asset; and
c. the proposal would not materially harm the values of that asset, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed; and
d. the quality of design and execution must add value to the existing asset; and
e. the long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, largely reversible or be designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future.

The public interest in conserving and sustaining heritage values is not in conflict with the building of new work. Innovative design and construction is important to sustaining cultural values, but should not be achieved at the expense of assets of established value. New work can also support the maintenance and enhancement of other historic assets through the regeneration of an area.
‘The proposal would not materially harm the values of that asset, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed’.

30 The greater the range and strength of heritage values attached to a site, the less opportunity there may be for change. However, few sites are so sensitive that they, or their settings, present no opportunities for the addition of new work.

‘The quality of design and execution must add value to the existing asset’.

31 The need for quality in new work applies at every level, from small interventions in a historic room, to major new buildings or developments. Small changes need as much consideration as large ones, as cumulatively their effect can be comparable.

32 In justifying new work to an historic asset, there must be a clear and coherent understanding of the relationship of all the parts to the whole, as well as to the setting into which the new work is to be introduced.

33 Achieving quality always depends on the skill of the designer. The choice of appropriate materials and the craftsmanship applied to their use is particularly crucial to both durability and to maintaining the specific character of historic assets.

34 The assessment of the quality of design is subjective. It is a statutory requirement for applicants to submit Design and Access Statements with applications for planning permission and listed building consent. For large or particularly sensitive proposals, opinions may be sought from the Design Commission for Wales.

‘The long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future’.

35 Where proposals for new work involve some intervention into the existing fabric of an historic asset, there will be a ‘presumption in favour of preservation’ (doing no harm). If new work is designed to be reversible then it will not prejudice alternative solutions in the future.

36 There are limits beyond which loss of the inherited fabric compromises the authenticity and integrity of an historic asset. At the extreme, a proposal to retain no more than the façade of a historic building attached to a modern structure must be considered
in the light of an assessment of the existing values of the building, both as a whole and in its elements. The relationship between the façade and the existing and proposed structures behind will be crucial to the decision, but retaining the façade alone will rarely be acceptable.

37 Following a risk assessment or the review of statutory duties, some changes may be proposed to lessen the risk or consequences of a disaster to an historic asset. These may result from the need for improved fire prevention or escape routes, flood defences or protection from attack. All options should be evaluated so that a balance can be struck between the possibility of major harm to heritage values without them, and the certainty of the lesser, but often material, harm caused by the works themselves. Works may also be required to improve physical access and provide a safer environment. These may cause some harm to the evidential, historical, and aesthetic values of the historic asset, but be more than balanced by increasing the communal values deriving from the sustained use of the asset.

38 As with repair; the use in new work of materials and techniques proven by experience to be compatible with existing fabric, including recycled material from an appropriate source, tends to bring a low risk of failure. Work which touches existing fabric lightly, or stands apart from it, brings a greater opportunity for innovation and reversibility.

**Integrating conservation with other interests**

39 Changes which would harm the heritage values of an historic asset will be unacceptable unless:

a. the changes are demonstrably necessary either to make that asset sustainable, or to meet an overriding public policy objective or need; and

b. there is no reasonably practicable alternative means of doing so without harm; and

c. that harm has been reduced to the minimum consistent with achieving the objective; and

d. it has been demonstrated that the predicted benefit decisively outweighs the harm to the values of the asset, considering
   • its comparative significance;
   • the impact on that significance; and
   • the benefits to the asset itself and/or the wider community or society as a whole.
Sustainability requires the integration of heritage and other environmental interests with economic and social objectives at every level of strategic planning. It is essential that those promoting the need for change consider and compare the impacts on the significance of the historic assets of a range of options to achieve their objectives. This should lead to the selection of an option that either eliminates, or (as far as is possible) mitigates harm. It will be Cadw’s and other heritage professionals’ role to put the case for the preservation of the historic assets fully and robustly.

The sustainable sourcing of materials, and environmental good practice should guide all new work, but not to the extent of causing harm to the heritage values of the asset.

The Welsh Assembly Government wishes to promote greater energy efficiency and the production of renewable energy (TAN 8: Planning for Renewable Energy). This can present particular challenges, for example, in the adaptation of historic buildings and the placing of generating equipment within historic landscapes. Cadw has issued guidance on this topic — Renewable energy and your historic building. Installing micro-generation systems: A guide to best practice. The inherent sustainability of historic buildings (over new build) also needs to be recognized. For example, the energy expended in producing a new building, regardless of how energy efficient it might be, means that it will take many years to compensate for the loss of any historic building it may replace.

‘Comparative significance’.

The greater the significance of an historic asset to society, the greater the weight that should be attached to sustaining its heritage values.

Since statutory designation is a clear indicator of the significance of an historic asset, the fact of designation can itself play a vital role in guiding options for strategic change. The absence of designation, however, does not necessarily mean that an historic asset has a low significance. The weight to be attached to heritage values relative to other public interests should not be considered until those heritage values have been properly evaluated, assessed against current criteria and, if they meet them, safeguarded by designation.

‘Impact on significance’.

The assessment of the degree of harm to an historic asset needs to consider the impact of any proposal on its heritage values, and the likely consequences of doing nothing. In the case of a derelict historic building, for example, should a viable, but modestly damaging, proposal
be refused in the hope that a better or less damaging scheme will come forward before the place reaches the point of no return? In such circumstances, the known or predicted rate of deterioration is a crucial factor, and hope must be founded on rational analysis. The fact that somewhere has been neglected should not, of itself, be grounds for agreeing to a scheme that would otherwise be unacceptable. The impact of the proposals being put forward need to be assessed by comparing the significance of the historic assets to be affected in their current condition and after the completion of the works. The potential availability of subsidy as an alternative to harmful change, or to limit its impact, should be considered.

‘Benefits to the site’.

46 Quite minor changes, for example to meet the duties to make ‘reasonable adjustments’ under disability or fire safety legislation, or accommodate changing liturgy in a church, may keep a site fit for use. This in turn can make it sustainable by maintaining its market value, or allowing its continued use by a community. Changes that cause harm to the heritage values of the site should be limited to what is necessary to sustain it in use. Their impacts can be mitigated by good design.

‘Benefits to the wider community or society as a whole’.

47 When considering the severity of potential impacts upon an historic asset, there should always be proportionality and reasonableness. The balance lies between the irreplaceable loss of something of historic value and the predicted benefits of the development. Each party involved will make value judgements, and choose to attach different weights to particular values. If such positions cannot be reconciled, it may lead to a public inquiry, and ultimately a political decision.

48 Heritage regeneration through the reuse or development of historic buildings or other historic assets can ensure the sustainability of a local community. The potential benefits of such regeneration proposals need to be tested against the conservation principles.

Enabling development

49 Enabling development that would secure the future of an important historic asset, but contravene other planning policy objectives, will be unacceptable unless:
   a. it will not materially harm the heritage values of the historic asset or its setting; and
   b. it avoids detrimental fragmentation of management of the historic asset; and
c. it will secure the long-term future of the historic asset and, where applicable, its continued use for a sympathetic purpose; and
d. it is necessary to resolve problems arising from the inherent needs of the historic asset, rather than the circumstances of the present owner, or the purchase price paid; and
e. sufficient subsidy is not available from any other source; and
f. it is demonstrated that the amount of enabling development is the minimum necessary to secure the future of the historic asset, and that its form minimizes harm to other public interests; and
g. the public benefit of securing the future of the historic asset through such enabling development decisively outweighs the disbenefits of breaching other public policies.

50 Enabling development is development that would deliver substantial heritage benefits, but which would be contrary to other objectives of national, regional or local planning policy. It is an established planning principle that such development may be appropriate if the public benefit of rescuing, enhancing, or even endowing an important historic asset decisively outweighs the harm to other material interests. Enabling development must always be in proportion to the public benefit it offers.

51 If it is decided by a local authority that a scheme of enabling development meets all the criteria set out above, planning permission should be granted only if:
   a. the impact of the development is precisely defined at the outset, normally through the granting of full, rather than outline, planning permission;
   b. the achievement of the heritage objective is securely and enforceably linked to the enabling development;
   c. the place concerned is repaired to an agreed standard, or the funds to do so made available, as early as possible in the course of the enabling development, ideally at the outset and certainly before completion or occupation; and
   d. the planning authority closely monitors implementation, if necessary acting promptly to ensure that obligations are fulfilled.

52 By including this section, Cadw is endorsing English Heritage’s Enabling Development and the Conservation of Significant Places (September 2008).
Definitions

This section includes words used in a specific or technical sense.

**Alteration**
Work intended to change the function or appearance of an historic asset.

**Authenticity**
Those characteristics that most truthfully reflect and embody the cultural heritage values of an historic asset.

**Conservation**
The process of managing change to an historic asset in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognizing opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations.

**Conservation area**
‘An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’, designated under what is now s69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

**Conservation Plan**
A document, which sets out the significance of a site, and how that significance will be retained in any future use, alteration, repair, management or development.

**Designation**
The recognition of particular heritage value(s) of an historic asset by giving it formal status under law or policy intended to sustain those values.

**Design and Access Statement**
Document to accompany all planning and listed building consent applications whose contents are set out in TAN 12: Design, appendix 1.
**Fabric**
The material substances which make up an historic asset, including the upstanding physical remains and the buried archaeological deposits.

**Harm**
Change for the worse, here primarily referring to the effect of inappropriate interventions on the heritage values of an historic asset.

**Heritage**
All inherited resources which people value for reasons beyond mere utility.

**Heritage, cultural**
Inherited assets which people identify and value as a reflection and expression of their evolving knowledge, beliefs and traditions, and of their understanding of the beliefs and traditions of others.

**Heritage, natural**
Inherited habitats, species, ecosystems, geology and landforms, including those in and under water, to which people attach value.

**Historic asset**
An identifiable component of the historic environment. It may consist or be a combination of an archaeological site, an historic building, or a parcel of historic landscape. Nationally important historic assets will normally be designated.

**Historic environment**
All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and deliberately planted or managed.

**Historic Environment Record**
A public, map-based data set, primarily intended to inform the management of the historic environment. In Wales these are maintained by the four Welsh Archaeological Trusts.

**Integrity**
Wholeness, honesty.
Intervention
Any action which has a physical effect on the fabric of an historic asset.

Maintenance
Routine work regularly necessary to keep the historic fabric in good order.

Material
Relevant to and having a substantial effect on, demanding consideration.

Natural change
Change which takes place in the historic environment without human intervention, which may require specific management responses (particularly maintenance or periodic renewal) in order to sustain the significance of a place.

Object
Anything not (now) fixed to or incorporated within the historic environment, but associated with it.

Preserve
To keep safe from harm.

Proportionality
The quality of being appropriately related to something else in size, degree, or other measurable characteristics.

Public
Of, concerning, done, acting, etc. for people as a whole.

Renewal
Comprehensive dismantling and replacement of an element of an historic asset, in the case of structures normally reincorporating sound units.

Repair
Work beyond the scope of maintenance, to remedy defects caused by decay, damage or use, including minor adaptation to achieve a sustainable outcome, but not involving restoration or alteration.

Restoration
To return an historic asset to a known earlier state, on the basis of compelling evidence, without conjecture.
Reversible
Capable of being reversed so that the previous state is restored.

Setting
The surroundings in which an historic asset is experienced, its local context, embracing present and past relationships to the adjacent landscape.

Significance [within the historic environment]
The sum of the cultural heritage values, often set out in a Statement of Significance.

Site
The place where an historic asset is located.

Sustain
Maintain, nurture and affirm validity.

Sustainable
Capable of meeting present needs without compromising ability to meet future needs.

Transparent
Open to public scrutiny.

Value
An aspect of worth or importance, here given by people to historic assets.

Value, aesthetic
Value deriving from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

Value, communal
Value deriving from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

Value, evidential
Value deriving from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.

Value, historical
Value deriving from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.
Values, heritage
The sum of the four component values (evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal).

Value-based judgement
An assessment that reflects the values of the person or group making the judgement.
1. Conservation at Tintern Abbey, Monmouthshire.

2. Dinefwr Castle, Carmarthenshire.

3. The Earl’s Chamber at Chepstow Castle, Monmouthshire.


5. St Davids Bishop’s Palace, Pembrokeshire.


8. New footbridge at Caernarfon Castle, Gwynedd.

9. Excavation of the Priory Field at Caerleon, Newport.

10. 10–12 Dunraven Place, Bridgend.

11. Industrial landscape of Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd (© Crown Copyright: RCAHMW).


13. Troed-Rhiu-Fallen, Cribyn, Ceredigion (© Greg Stevenson).


15. Castell Aberlleiniog, Anglesey (© Heritage Lottery Fund).