

<b>Policy and Resources Committee</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	12 June 2025
<b>Report Title</b>	Local Heritage List – Interim Designation Protocol
<b>EMT Lead</b>	Emma Wiggins - Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
<b>Head of Service</b>	Joanne Johnson – Head of Place
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Jhilmil Kishore – Principal Heritage Officer
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Members of the Policy and Resources Committee agree the protocol at appendix 2 to allow the urgent designation of assets to the Local Heritage List.</li> <li>2. That Members of the Policy and Resources Committee agree to delegate the enactment of the protocol to the Head of Place.</li> </ol>

## **1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Local Heritage List is proposed to be reviewed every three years in line with the Heritage Strategy Action Plan.
- 1.2 However, since the adoption of the first round of designations for the Local Heritage List in November 2024, a need has been identified for an interim protocol so that a heritage asset that is at urgent risk can be added to the register without having to wait for the next review.
- 1.3 This report proposes a protocol to be able to assess heritage assets for inclusion within the local list outside of the scheduled programme, via delegated authority.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 Historic England, in its guidance note, *Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage, Historic England Advice Note 7 (2nd edition, 27 January 2021)* advises that following adoption, a local list is unlikely to be definitive and further additions may be required during the course of planning decisions. Therefore, local planning authorities should ensure that officers can assess and add heritage assets to the local list, either using delegated authority or via a clearly defined rapid decision-making procedure.
- 2.2 The current process for adopting the Local Heritage List involves Parish/Town Councils, local amenity societies and members of the public being invited to nominate assets for the Local Heritage List. A Selection Panel is convened to agree the final list out of the shortlisted entries. The Selection Panel comprises the Chair/representative of all four Area Committees, a representative of key amenity societies covering Swale, the Heritage Champion, borough conservation officers

and a representative from Historic England. The final list is then presented to Policy and Resources Committee for ratification/adoption. This process is scheduled to run every three years in line with the Heritage Strategy Action Plan.

- 2.3 The existing Local Heritage List was agreed by Policy and Resources Committee in November 2024. Since adoption it has been suggested that a protocol is necessary to allow local heritage assets that are identified to be at risk to be added to the register without having to wait for the next planned update.
- 2.4 The protocol at appendix 2 provides a mechanism for heritage assets facing urgent threat of demolition or which are at risk of a rapid and significant loss of architectural or historic significance to be considered for inclusion to the local list. If an asset is found not to be at risk, it can be considered for the next round of the local listing process. It will be important to note that the protocol is not an 'invitation to nominate' but a way that local heritage at risk can be protected if facing urgent risk.
- 2.5 It is unknown at the present time how many such assets will be proposed for designation. Officer time and additional admin support is needed to continuously update the Local Heritage List. It is proposed that nominations for urgent listing can be made anytime, but that this is to be kept under review.
- 2.6 Following the adoption of the inaugural list in November 2024, it was agreed a second round would follow in quick succession in autumn 2025, and the three-yearly pattern then be established.
- 2.7 The Swale Heritage Strategy 2020 – 2032, adopted in March 2020, committed the Council to establish and maintain a borough wide local heritage list. The designation and review of local heritage is intended to be part of the work programme of every three-year action plan to deliver the Heritage Strategy.

### **3 Proposal**

- 3.1 That Members of the Policy and Resources Committee agree the protocol at appendix 2 to allow the urgent designation of assets to the Local Heritage List.
- 3.2 That Members of the Policy and Resources Committee agree to delegate the enactment of the protocol to the Head of Place.

### **4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

- 4.1 Not establish a protocol for interim addition of assets to Local Heritage List under delegated powers. This would result in additional time to designate the asset potentially leading to (a) loss of a heritage asset, (b) reputational damage to the Council and/or (c) development and associated infrastructure provision decisions being made for an asset without an appropriate understanding and appreciation of its special qualities. This is not recommended because it would risk the justifiable continuation of maintaining a robust local heritage list and/or the appropriately

sensitive and positive management of the heritage assets of local interest and their wider setting moving forward.

- 4.2 Seek Policy and Resources Committee agreement of all urgent listings. While this is a more rapid process than 4.1, it still represents delays due to the timing of the Committee cycle. It is not recommended given the urgency the proposal is intending to address.

## 5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Public consultation was undertaken prior to the adoption of listing criteria for the Local Heritage List in 2021, at the time the three-yearly programme based on selection panel was presented to the committee.
- 5.2 The need for an interim designation protocol was identified at the first selection panel in October 2024.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The proposed protocol for interim addition of assets to Local Heritage List would support the priority from the Corporate Plan: <i>'To develop the borough's second Heritage Action Plan that reflects in-house and partnership capacity, to support and promote our outstanding assets.'</i>
Financial, Resource and Property	Adding assets to the Local Heritage List on an interim basis will require additional officer's time and this impact will be kept under review.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Historic England in its guidance note advises- <i>'as a local list is unlikely to be considered definitive and further additions may be required during the course of planning decisions, local planning authorities should ensure that officers have the ability to assess heritage assets for inclusion within the local list and either the delegated authority to add them to the list, or to seek a rapid decision through a clearly defined procedure'.</i>
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	One of the three dimensions of sustainable development is its environmental role: contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.
Health and Wellbeing	The health and wellbeing aspects of interaction with heritage assets and heritage related projects are referenced in the adopted Heritage Strategy which underpins this review work.
Safeguarding of Children, Young	None identified at this stage.

People and Vulnerable Adults	
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

## 7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Adopted listing criteria for Local Heritage List.
- Appendix 2: Proposed protocol for urgent designation to the Local Heritage List

## 8 Background Papers

[A Heritage Strategy for Swale 2020-2032](#) Adopted March 2020

Policy and Resources Committee – Local Heritage List Report, November 2024:  
[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Policy and Resources Committee, 27/11/2024](#)  
 19:00