



**DARTMOOR LOCAL PLAN**  
guiding planning applications in Dartmoor National Park

## **TOPIC PAPER 2**

### **Historic Environment**

**December 2018**

This topic paper provides an overview of the issues and evidence used to inform Dartmoor National Park's local plan review.



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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Objectives

1.1.1 This is one of ten topic papers which form part of the evidence base that support the emerging Dartmoor National Park Local Plan. These topic papers have been produced to coordinate and consolidate some of the evidence used in drafting the emerging local plan. All the topic papers will be available to view online at:

[www.dartmoor.gov.uk/living-and-working/planning/planning-policy/background-evidence](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/living-and-working/planning/planning-policy/background-evidence)

1.1.2 The purpose of this topic paper is to gather evidence and serve as a starting point for developing planning policies related to the historic environment. Invariably the paper will cover issues which overlap or compete with those in other parts of the evidence base (e.g. Strategic Environmental Appraisal, housing delivery and climate change mitigation and adaptation). In light of this the topic paper's aims are to:

- review relevant legislation and policy which set the statutory framework for the local plan;
- set out the important elements which contribute to Dartmoor's unique historic environment;
- review the current Dartmoor National Park Authority planning policy framework and its effectiveness through analysis of planning applications and consultation with specialists
- draw on a wide range of source material including research, guidance and best practice to inform policy development;
- identify threats and forces for change in the historic environment and opportunities for enhancement; and
- make recommendations which ensure planning policy gives sufficient protection of the National Park's historic environment and identifies opportunities to enhance it in the future

1.1.3 The topic paper has been updated throughout the course of the local plan review to reflect new evidence or changes to national guidance or policy. The views of the local community, stakeholders and partner organisations who all have an interest in the future of Dartmoor National Park forms part of the evidence base for the local plan. We have therefore welcomed feedback on this paper. The following summarises the changes made in each version:

Version	Changes made
<b>Version 1</b> October 2017	Original topic paper
<b>Version 2</b> December 2018	Updated to reflect 2019 NPPF

## 1.2 Dartmoor's historic built environment

1.2.1 The importance of Dartmoor's historic built environment is reflected in the high proportion of heritage assets that have national recognition and statutory protection through being designated as listed buildings or by being within a conservation area.

1.2.2 Dartmoor National Park is famous for the well preserved archaeological and historical sites and landscapes that survive there. The National Park is home to a total of 2058 listed buildings and 1,208 scheduled monuments. The Historic Environment Record (HER) contains detailed information for Dartmoor's diverse archaeological and historical resource

and includes sites dating from ten thousand years ago up to the 20th century. At present the Dartmoor HER contains over 18,600 entries.

- 1.2.3 Over the last Plan period Dartmoor National Park Authority has identified and surveyed some 900 historic farmsteads which have been added to the Historic Environment Record (HER), and is producing guidance on how to conserve this valuable resource.
- 1.2.4 A total of 25 new listed buildings were designated over the last plan period. These include listing revisions for HM Prison Princetown and Okehampton Camp, as well as a number of First World War village war memorials.
- 1.2.5 Since 2010 the total number of Conservation Areas has increased, from 23 to 25, with new designated areas created for Ilsington and Walkhampton in 2013.
- 1.2.6 Buildings at Risk were last the subject of a full survey in 2012. The current total deemed to be 'at risk' from neglect and decay stands at 36. This is a reduction of 3 since 2010 but due to the revision in listed building totals outlined above, the overall percentage has risen slightly to 1.7%. A total of 1.1% of the listed buildings designated at Grade I or II\* are deemed to be at risk – this compares favourably with the average for the South West of 3%.

#### *What is the historic environment?*

The historic environment includes 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 landscaped and planted or managed flora<sup>1</sup>.

## **2 Policy and Regulatory Framework**

### *2.1 International Treaties*

- 2.1.1 The UK is a signatory to a number of international treaties that touch upon or concern culture and heritage (see Table 1). They are not law and have no direct force in planning or other consent decisions. A treaty is effectively a promise by the UK government to adhere to the treaty's principles and, if necessary, enshrine these in law to do so.

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government (2012) 'National Planning Policy Framework, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/annex-2-glossary>

**Table 1 - International Treaties and Conventions**

**The Paris Convention 1954**

Formally known as the European Cultural Convention (2) its main relevant obligations are:

- Development of the national contribution to the common cultural heritage of Europe (article 1);
- Safeguarding objects of European cultural value placed under government control (article 5);
- Ensuring reasonable access to such objects (article 5).

The UK is a signatory.

**The Granada Convention 1985**

Originally known as the European Charter of the Architectural Heritage, it was later turned into the "Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe".

It defines 'architectural heritage' and each signatory promises to maintain an inventory of it and to take statutory measures to protect it. There is also a promise to provide funding, but only within budgetary limitations, and to promote the general enhancement of the surroundings of conservation groups.

Signatories (including the UK) also promise to adopt integrated conservation policies in their planning systems and other spheres of government influence that promote the conservation and enhancement of architectural heritage and the fostering of traditional skills.

**The Valetta Convention 1992**

Formally known as the Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe it was originally signed in London in 1969 but was revised in Valletta in 1992.

It defines archaeological heritage and the signatories promise to make and maintain an inventory of it and to legislate for its protection. The emphasis is on protection of sites for future study, the reporting of chance finds the control of excavations and the use of metal detectors.

Signatories (including the UK) also promise to allow the input of expert archaeologists into the making of planning policies and planning decisions.

**World Heritage Convention 1972**

Formally known as the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, it was adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in 1972.

The UK adheres to the Convention as a member state of UNESCO. The convention defines and 'natural heritage' and sets out a framework for the identification and designation of cultural or natural heritage sites of outstanding universal value as World Heritage Sites.

**The Paris Convention 1970**

Formally known as the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, its signatories promise to legislate to prevent the trade in illegally obtained cultural objects. The UK signed the Convention in 2002 and then passed the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003.

**The Florence Convention 2000**

Formally known as the European Landscape Convention, its signatories (including the UK) agree to recognise "landscapes" in law as "an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity". These recognised landscapes are then to be subject to policies for their management, amongst other obligations. The UK became a signatory in 2007.

## 2.2 National Legislative and Policy Framework

- 2.2.1 The key national policies and legislative regulations related to the historic environment are set out in Table 2.

<b>Table 2 - National Legislative and Policy Framework</b>
<b>Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990</b>
This Act introduced legislation which created special controls for the protection of historic buildings (as listed buildings) and areas (as conservation areas). It established that damage to these assets could amount to a criminal offence.
<b>Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979</b>
This Act legislates to protect the archaeological heritage of Great Britain. The Act defines monuments which warrant protection and establishes that damage to these amounts to a criminal offence.
<b>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</b>
This sets out the Government's planning policies for England. Paragraphs 184 to 202 detail historic environment policies and focus on ensuring heritage assets are given protection commensurate with their status and encouraging new development which preserves their special qualities.
<b>National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)</b>
Explains key issues and answers common questions to guide implementation of national policies. The Historic Environment section is of relevance to this paper.

- 2.2.2 The NPPF is very clear that protection of the historic environment is a key component of sustainable development. In addition the NPPF contains the following policies which are particularly relevant to the local plan:
- 'Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. The strategy should take into account:
    - the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
    - the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
    - the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
    - opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place. (Para 185)
  - 'Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of or damage to a heritage asset the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.' (Para 191)

## 2.3 Local Policy Framework and Guidance Documents

- 2.3.1 The current Dartmoor National Park development plan comprises the following documents:
- Development Management and Delivery Development Plan Document (policies DMD1 – DMD46)
  - Core Strategy (policies COR1 – COR24)
  - Minerals Local Plan (policies M1 – M7)
- 2.3.2 In addition the National Park Management Plan 2014 forms an important consideration for

this topic paper and the natural environment planning policies.

- 2.3.3 Policies and guidance specific to elements of the historic environment will be discussed in detail in relevant sections of this paper.

### **3 Heritage Assets**

- 3.1.1 Dartmoor has one of the richest resources of heritage assets of any area in England. Heritage assets both designated (listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks and

gardens and scheduled monuments) and non-designated are protected through planning legislation and policy helping to ensure their conservation, management and enhancement.

*What is a heritage asset?*

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets, identified under legislation (e.g. listed buildings, scheduled monuments etc.), and non-designated assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing<sup>1</sup>).

3.1.2 A summary of the diversity of Dartmoor’s designated heritage assets is provided in Table 3.

**Table 3 - Designated heritage assets in Dartmoor National Park**

Heritage Asset	Number in Dartmoor National Park
<b>Statutory List (Listed Buildings)</b>	2,059 <sup>1</sup>
Grade I	42
Grade II*	133
Grade II	1,884
<b>Conservation Areas</b>	25
Article 4 Directions	18
<b>Registered Parks and Gardens</b>	2
<b>Premier Archaeological Landscapes</b>	14
<b>Scheduled Monuments</b>	1,082
<b>Registered Battlefield</b>	0
<b>World Heritage Sites</b>	0

<sup>1</sup>Does not include protected buildings or structures in the curtilage of a listed building, a listing may include a complex of buildings (e.g. HMP Dartmoor)

3.1.3 It is important the local plan gives the historic environment proper weight in order that it can be considered alongside the National Park’s other valued assets and special qualities and recognises the integration between them.

3.1.4 Historic England has published a checklist<sup>2</sup> of items a local plan should include to ensure it includes the necessary protection for the historic environment required by the 2012 NPPF.

1. Strategic policies to deliver conservation and enhancement of the historic environment (NPPF para156)
2. Identify land where development would be inappropriate, for instance because of its environmental or historic significance (NPPF para157)
3. A clear strategy for enhancing the historic environment (NPPF para157)
4. A positive strategy for the conservation enjoyment of the historic environment including heritage assets most at risk of neglect, decay and other threats, recognising they are an irreplaceable resource (NPPF para126)
5. Land allocations and policies that take account of the following (NPPF para126):
  - a. the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
  - b. the wider social, cultural and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
  - c. the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and



- d. opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

### 3.2 Designated heritage assets

#### *What is a designated heritage asset?*

A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under legislation as being of importance to protect.

- 3.2.1 Designated heritage assets are generally protected by robust legislation and very strong national policies. The presence of a designated heritage asset does not however preclude the possibility of new development. The NPPF is clear that new development which compliments and enhances designated heritage assets should be encouraged.
- 3.2.2 The local plan will need to continue to support national legislation and policy protecting designated heritage assets.
- 3.2.3 All listed buildings and structures have the same level of protection regardless of their grading. The effect of listing is that proposals to alter, extend or demolish such a building require listed building consent as well as planning permission. Applications for listed building consent are normally dealt with by the local planning authority with the requirement to consult with Historic England in all cases involving Grade I or II\* buildings.
- 3.2.4 Scheduled Monuments (SMs) are protected independently of the planning system. Proposals to demolish, remove, repair, alter, add to, flood or cover up a SM require scheduled monument consent, as well as planning permission. There is no requirement to repeat this within the local plan. However, the local plan will need to establish a positive strategy to encourage SM's protection and restoration as part of development proposals and it may be necessary for the local plan to protect the setting of a SM.
- 3.2.5 The Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest identifies the areas gardens, grounds and other planned open spaces which aren't directly included in the protection of listed buildings. The Register is advisory only and provides no statutory powers, however, Registration is a 'material consideration' in the planning process, meaning that planning authorities must consider the impact of any proposed development on the landscape's special character.
- 3.2.6 There are a significant number of heritage assets within the National Park which are deserving of designation, but which have not been designated and are therefore vulnerable to ruin, demolition and inappropriate development. Of particular note are buildings and structures associated with Dartmoor's industrial legacy (e.g. engine houses and historic mine buildings), historic agricultural buildings and medieval and bronze age field boundaries. There is a need for further research to fully understand the significance of these assets. A project investigating the significance of Dartmoor's historic weirs is in the early stages. Local plan policy needs to ensure the significance of these undesignated assets is

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<sup>2</sup> Historic England 'The Local Development Plan and Heritage' - <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/historic-environment/devplan/>

duly considered when making planning decisions. This issue is discussed further in 3.5 Non-designated heritage assets and 3.8 Redundant Agricultural Buildings.

#### *Recommendations for Policy*

- 3.2.7 Conservation and enhancement of the National Park's designated heritage assets is an important strategic objective, particularly in the context of National Park purposes, which must be clearly stated not only in a strategic policy, but through the local plan as if it were a golden thread.
- 3.2.8 Specific policies related to alterations to and demolition of listed buildings and other designated heritage assets are a crucial component of a strategy to conserve the historic environment. These criteria are currently set out under Policy DMD8 and DMD11, but there is an opportunity to condense these into one policy which complies with NPPF paragraphs 195 to 198.
- 3.2.9 The reviewed policy should explicitly require an assessment of significance to include regard for any contribution made by a heritage asset's setting and, where it is found to make a contribution, protect it from harm.
- 3.2.10 NPPF para 188 requires information related to the historic environment to be publically accessible. There exists an opportunity to better signpost applicants to the many online resources where they can find out about the history of their buildings and local area. In doing so the Authority can encourage awareness and over time improve the consideration of the historic environment in development proposals. This is of particular relevance to statements of significance which can often be of poor quality as a result of applicants not being aware of available information resources.

### 3.3 *Conservation Areas*

- 3.3.1 The character of Dartmoor's Conservation Areas play a vital role in establishing the character of the National Park; their modest scale and vernacular forms complement the historic landscapes which surround them and hold great social benefit. The Conservation Areas of the National Park are some of the most sought after places to live. It is vital that the National Park's Conservation Areas continue to be protected from inappropriate development and improved through encouragement of sympathetic high quality development. Although there is a cost to more demanding planning controls national research suggests Conservation Area designation can pay for the cost of these controls by increasing values<sup>3</sup>.
- 3.3.2 [Conservation Area Appraisals](#) are a vital tool in identifying the important buildings and features of a Conservation Area and setting the context appropriate development will need to fit within. The Authority have Conservation Area Appraisals for all 25 Conservation Areas. No Conservation Areas are currently at risk.
- 3.3.3 Conservation Areas do not benefit from statutory protection and most permitted development rights applicable to National Parks (installation of rooflights, domestic extensions etc.) apply within them. Article 4 Directions restrict permitted development rights in relation to a particular site, or a particular type of development anywhere in an Authority's area. Article 4 directions can be adopted where permitted development rights would allow development of a scale or type that is likely to have a harmful impact on an area. There are

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<sup>3</sup> Ahlfeld, G., Holman, N. and Wendland N (2012) '*An assessment of the effects of conservation areas on value*'.

currently 18 Article 4 Directions in force across the National Park, none of which have been made recently.

- 3.3.4 Some conservation areas have large adjoining areas of rural land which possess special historic or setting value and therefore provide an important landscape context for the designated conservation area, but are not worthy of designation in themselves. These Areas of Historic Setting appear on the Historic Environment Record and are considered to be non-designated heritage assets.

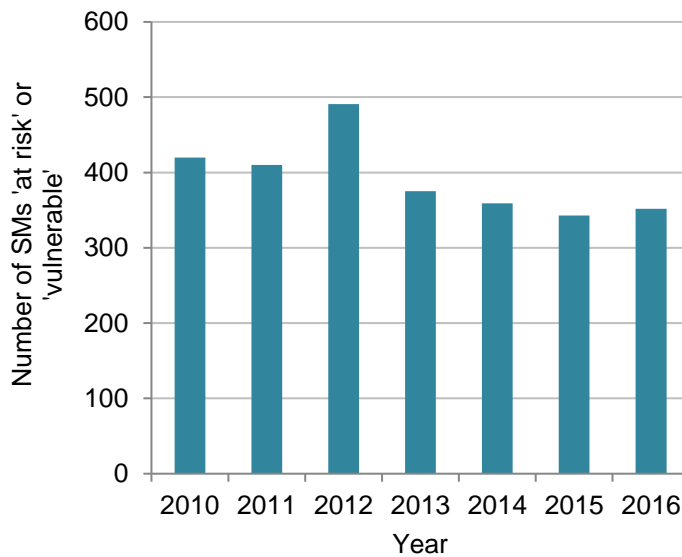
*Recommendations for Policy*

- 3.3.5 The continued conservation and enhancement of Dartmoor's Conservation Areas is vitally important and warrants retention of current Policy DMD12. Particularly important features of this policy which must be retained include:
- Ensuring development and demolition conserves or enhances the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
  - Ensuring development outside Conservation Areas, including in the Areas of Historic Setting does not harm the Conservation Area's character or appearance (particularly important given this is not a statutory duty in legislation, but required by the NPPF)
  - That applications affecting a Conservation Area are detailed and accompanied by a statement of significance
  - Encouraging complementary high quality contemporary design
  - Only grant permission for redevelopment with a condition prohibiting commencement of demolition until a contract for carrying out the redevelopment has been appointed

3.4 *Designated heritage assets at risk*

- 3.4.1 Para 185 of the NPPF requires local planning authorities to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets at risk through neglect, decay or other threats.
- 3.4.2 Dartmoor's listed buildings at risk were last surveyed in 2012 and 36 were found to be at risk from decay, neglect or other threats. This is a reduction of 3 since a 2010 study.
- 3.4.3 Dartmoor's scheduled monuments are surveyed separately. A 2016 survey identified 181 monuments at risk with a further 171 vulnerable or at medium risk. Since 2010, 114 at risk

Scheduled Monuments have been removed from the register due to positive conservation interventions and works.



**Figure 1 - Number of Scheduled Monuments 'at risk' or 'vulnerable'**

- 3.4.4 The primary threat to Dartmoor's scheduled monuments is vegetation growth and dense gorse which causes direct damage to the archaeology, as well impacting its amenity value, accessibility and setting. The opportunities to reduce the number of at risk or vulnerable, therefore come largely through altered land management practice rather than through planning policy.

*Recommendations for policy*

- 3.4.5 Developing a positive strategy for conservation and enhancement of heritage assets at risk will involve careful consideration of the local plan's land use policies so that the threat of decay and neglect can be proactively addressed. For buildings this could include policies which allow conversion of redundant buildings to viable uses consistent with the building's conservation. More widely 'enabling development' allows a more flexible approach to be taken when the future of a listed building or scheduled monument at risk can be secured for public benefit. Both these policy options are discussed in detail later in this paper.
- 3.4.6 Consistent with para 191 of the NPPF, policy should clearly state that where there is evidence of **deliberate** neglect of or damage to a heritage asset (either designated or undesignated) their deteriorated state should not be taken into consideration when coming to a decision.

**3.5 Non-designated heritage assets**

- 3.5.1 The concept of Non-designated Heritage Assets as a planning consideration has been part of planning policy guidance since the 1990s but has been more closely defined in the

current National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2018) and National Planning Practice Guidance<sup>4</sup>.

*What is a non-designated heritage asset?*

These are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated heritage assets and are not protected by legislation<sup>4</sup>.

3.5.2 Local Planning Authorities are able to identify non-designated heritage assets and consider their significance when coming to a decision on a planning application.

3.5.3 In April 2017 the Authority formally adopted the process by which they identify non-designated heritage assets<sup>5</sup>. The process essentially requires that potential heritage assets are assessed against a set of significance criteria set out by Historic England<sup>6</sup>. The significance criteria are as follows:

**Evidential** - the potential of an asset to yield evidence, generally archaeological, about past human activity and our understanding of it.

**Historical** - the potential of an asset to act as a link between past and present people, to illustrate or be associated with past events and the ways in which people and communities lived in the past.

**Aesthetic** - derived from the sensory and intellectual stimulation a heritage asset might provide which can be fortuitous and the way in which a place has developed naturally, through planned design or a combination of both.

**Communal** – derived from the meanings a place has for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory, particularly places with *commemorative* or *symbolic* value.

In addition, other factors to be taken into account include, age, state of preservation, rarity, fragility or vulnerability to damage, contribution to setting, group value, and the degree to which a Heritage Asset is characteristic of a given period.

3.5.4 Where, in the professional view of the officer, the archaeological site or building has the potential to be regarded as a Heritage Asset then, if the site is the subject of a development proposal, further information may be requested from the applicant.

3.5.5 Where there is sufficient information provided to assess the site then, if the significance criteria are met, the site is added to the Historic Environment Record (HER) as a Non-designated Heritage Asset.

3.5.6 Premier archaeological landscapes (PALs) are a locally identified resource of archaeological landscapes which are considered to be some of the finest in Europe. The main objective of these areas is to ensure that, when land management strategies are under consideration, their historic significance is recognised, respected and prioritised over competing issues. The PALs arose as part of the process of creating a Vision for Dartmoor's moorland in 2005

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<sup>4</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government (2014) 'National Planning Practice Guidance, [Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment](#), Para 039'

<sup>5</sup> Dartmoor National Park Authority (2017) '*Identifying and recording non-designated heritage assets*' *Report to Authority Meeting*

<sup>6</sup> Historic England (2008) '*Conservation Principles*'

and have led to 14 such areas being identified across the National Park. The identification of these areas was in partnership with English Nature (now Natural England), English Heritage (now Historic England), the Commoners' Council, DEFRA and Environment Agency which gives PALs designation additional weight. The remote location of the PALs mean they are not likely to come under development pressure, but their significance is nevertheless worthy of mention in policy.

#### *Recommendations for policy*

- 3.5.7 Policy DMD8 includes the Authority's policy on non-designated heritage assets and states a balanced judgement will be made with regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the building or asset. This policy is sound and consistent with para 197 of the NPPF.
- 3.5.8 To ensure the process for identifying non-designated heritage assets is transparent the process for identifying them, including the significance criteria, could be summarised in policy pre-amble.
- 3.5.9 As suggested by NPPG (para 041), local plan policy should continue to identify areas of potential for the discovery of non-designated heritage assets. The list of areas in current policy has been reviewed and simplified:
- archaeological features, structures and buildings on the HER;
  - historic buildings and structures which reinforce local distinctiveness, particularly those in Conservation Areas (e.g. vernacular farm buildings, historic farmsteads and houses pre-1919);
  - historic artefacts and structures (e.g. milestones, bridges, wells, slotted gateposts);
  - sites, buildings or structures which reflect Dartmoor's industrial and socio-economic history (e.g. engine houses, mines, Boulton & Paul prefabricated buildings, Nonconformist chapels);
  - buildings which reflect a distinctive architectural style (e.g. estate buildings, such as Hambleden and Bedford, and K6 telephone boxes); and
  - historic land divisions and landscapes (e.g. burgage plots and preserved historic field systems) and historic road, lane and routeway surfaces (e.g. disused railway tracks, green lanes and byways).

### 3.6 *Archaeology*

- 3.6.1 Dartmoor is one of the most significant areas in England for archaeology and the density of archaeological remains is reflected in over 20,000 entries in the Historic Environment Record (HER). The HER continues to be updated with new finds and it is important the planning system has suitable controls to ensure damage to discovered and undiscovered remains during construction is avoided.

#### *Recommendations for policy*

- 3.6.2 Sufficient protection for archaeological remains can be afforded through policies on designated and non-designated heritage assets. Where the potential for the discovery of archaeological remains exists anywhere in the National Park these policies should require appropriate site evaluation and investigation work is completed prior to construction.

### 3.7 Enabling Development

#### *What is enabling development?*

Enabling development is development that would be unacceptable in planning terms but for the fact that it would bring public benefits sufficient to justify it being carried out, and which could not otherwise be achieved. While normally a last resort, it is an established and useful planning tool by which a community may be able to secure the long-term future of a place of heritage significance, and sometimes other public benefits, provided it is satisfied that the balance of public advantage lies in doing so. The public benefits are paid for by the value added to land as a result of the granting of planning permission for its development.<sup>7</sup>

- 3.7.1 NPPF para 202 states local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.
- 3.7.2 Detailed guidance and a national policy recommendation on enabling development was issued by English Heritage, now Historic England, in 2012<sup>7</sup>. The guidance and policy advocates a higher level of scrutiny and more onerous tests than are included in NPPF para 202, including:
- Avoiding detrimental fragmentation of management
  - Ensuring sufficient subsidy is not available from elsewhere
  - Ensuring the amount of enabling development is the minimum necessary to secure the future of the place
  - Requiring the **public** benefit of the enabling development to decisively outweigh the disbenefits of breaching other planning policies.

#### *Recommendations for policy*

- 3.7.3 The Authority's existing policy on enabling development is set out in Policy DMD10 and is closely related to Historic England's policy recommendation. There is a compelling argument to retain this policy in full, as follows:
- Relying on NPPF para 202 alone would weaken the National Park's tests for enabling development
  - Given the National Park Authority's purposes to conserve and enhance cultural heritage a clear criteria based policy can both protect the National Park from

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<sup>7</sup> Historic England (2012) '*Enabling development and the conservation of significant places*'

inappropriate development and serve as a positive strategy to encourage the protection of heritage assets at risk

- As enabling development's success often relies on quality early advice there is merit highlighting these criteria clearly in local plan policy

### 3.8 Redundant Agricultural Buildings

- 3.8.1 The National Park has a substantial number of historic farm buildings many of which are of historic value and contribute to the aesthetic quality and cultural value of the National Park. A recent map based investigation into farmstead locations identified 1100 surviving pre-1919 historic farmstead and over 200 lost farmsteads<sup>8</sup>.
- 3.8.2 Traditional farm buildings tell a story of Dartmoor's long farming history and the settlement of Dartmoor's landscape. Their construction often reflects underlying geology and traditional building practices and they therefore contribute to a sense of place, local distinctiveness and landscape character. Traditional agricultural buildings are inherently valuable and worthy of conservation in their own right.
- 3.8.3 Changing farm practices have resulted in many traditional buildings falling out of use or not being used for their traditional purposes, typically storage or light industrial uses. Furthermore changes in land ownership leading to the splitting up of large farms have disassociated traditional buildings from the land they once served. Where buildings are no longer needed to support farming practices there can be demand to find alternative uses to ensure their continued survival. The location of these buildings in isolated rural settings can make them particularly desirable for residential conversion. The significant costs associated with the restoration and preservation of these buildings also means that residential use is often the most economically viable alternative use.
- 3.8.4 Historic farm buildings have often been repurposed and adapted to respond to changing farming practices and reusing them continues this sustainable evolution. However, with any proposed new use it is crucial that the conversion preserves the important features, materials and form of the building and utilises the traditional crafts used to construct them. As important as the farm building itself is its setting. Agricultural buildings generally have a modest setting with few features or embellishments and residential conversions can put a significant amount of pressure on the building's setting to accept domestic gardens, patios, furniture and other paraphernalia which all serve to divorce the building from its modest beginnings. The result is the conversion disturbs the relationship the building has with the surrounding landscape.
- 3.8.5 Paragraph 83 of the NPPF seeks a prosperous rural economy and supports the conversion of existing buildings to support the growth and expansion of rural businesses and enterprises. Paragraph 79 of the NPPF sets out that local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances, including where such development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset, or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets, or where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting.
- 3.8.6 Paragraph 184 of the NPPF states heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Paragraph 190 requires local

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<sup>8</sup> Dartmoor National Park Authority 'Historic Farmsteads Survey'



planning authorities to avoid or minimise conflict between a heritage asset's conservation (including its setting) and any aspect of a development.

- 3.8.7 Commentary on the role the conversion of traditional agricultural buildings to residential accommodation can have on the National Park's housing need is not within the scope of the historic environment paper and will be discussed in the housing topic paper.
- 3.8.8 Policy DMD9 sets out the Authority's existing approach to the conversion of non-residential buildings. The policy establishes the first principle that the conversion of non-residential buildings will only be permitted where they relate to a historic building, as defined in paragraph 2.10.18. Other criteria the existing building must comply with are:
- Located with reasonable access to local services and facilities
  - Structurally sound
  - Appropriately sized for the proposed new use
  - Capable of conversion without substantial extension, alteration or reconstruction of the existing structure
  - Capable of conversion without requiring significant change to existing ground levels
- 3.8.9 The policy allows for the conversion to business uses, short stay tourist accommodation, provision of local community services or facilities. Only where these uses have been demonstrated to be unviable will the policy allow conversion to residential for provision of affordable housing or accommodation for agricultural, forestry or rural enterprise workers.
- 3.8.10 Since the adoption of policy DMD9 a new GPDO (General Permitted Development Order) has introduced permitted development rights for the conversion of agricultural buildings. Part 3 Class R allows conversion of agricultural buildings used solely for an agricultural use as part of an established unit on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2012 or when last in use if it was not in use on that date. Class R allows the change of use of an agricultural building and any land within its curtilage up to a maximum of 500 sq ms in any single agricultural unit to a flexible use falling within Class A1 (shops), Class A2 (financial and professional services), Class A3 (restaurants and cafes), Class B1 (business), Class B8 (storage and distribution), Class C1 (hotels) or Class D2 (assembly and leisure) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order. Any such change of use is required to submit an application for Prior Approval, this application may be refused where the proposed development does not comply with any conditions, limitations or restrictions specified in the GPDO as being applicable to the development (e.g. transport/highways impacts, noise impacts, contamination risks, flooding risks). These rights allow for conversion of both traditional and modern redundant agricultural buildings in the open countryside to non-land based business uses, this has not previously been supported by planning policy in the National Park.
- 3.8.11 Class Q of the GPDO allows conversion of agricultural buildings to residential dwelling houses, but does not apply to National Parks which are exempt from these development rights.

#### *Recommendations for policy*

- 3.8.12 The significant number of traditional agricultural buildings and the substantial contribution they make to the special characteristics of the National Park makes these buildings an important asset. As these buildings are often not suited to modern agricultural practices they are often redundant and likely to become at risk of dilapidation. Responses to the Issues Consultation demonstrate there is significant demand for the Authority to take a more flexible approach in policy affecting the future use of these buildings. Most often the Authority have been asked to consider allowing the conversion of redundant agricultural

buildings to affordable housing with local occupancy restriction or open market housing with a local occupancy restriction to better provide for local housing need.

- 3.8.13 Future planning policy will need to manage development proposals affecting agricultural buildings and other non-residential buildings outside classified settlements in accordance with the NPPF and National Park purposes. As such, conversions of these buildings will need to be managed with regard to a building's;
- historic and architectural significance, including its character, features and setting
  - location relative to transport infrastructure, amenities, facilities and services
- 3.8.14 The status of many of Dartmoor's traditional agricultural buildings as heritage assets demands any future conversion policy must plan positively for their conservation and viable use. This being the case future policy will need to include criteria for the type of building considered suitable for conversion and how proposals should conserve them. The current criteria in Policy DMD9 have been reviewed by Policy and Development Management Officers and heritage specialists. The criteria have been amended as follows:
- The building should be;
    - redundant for its original use;
    - of a form, structure and history that is traditional within the context of Dartmoor's built heritage;
    - structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for substantial reconstruction, excavation, or alteration, as confirmed by a structural engineer's survey where any uncertainty exists; and
    - appropriately sized for the intended use and capable of conversion without the need for ancillary buildings or extensions.
  - The proposed conversion work should;
    - sustain the external appearance of the building and its setting;
    - propose no significant new openings in external fabric;
    - preserve significant historic or architectural elements; and
    - ensure gardens, fences, parking areas, essential utilities (cables and pipes) or other paraphernalia do not harm the building's character, setting or any significant historic or architectural features.
  - Permitted development rights should be removed to control the character and appearance of the converted building.
- 3.8.15 The proposed use is an important consideration when considering the appropriateness of a conversion. To generalise, different uses can be said to put varying degrees of pressure on

a building to change, these are shown in Table 4. Although more important than the proposed use is that the proposals comply with the above conservation criteria.

**Table 4 – The pressure for change different uses generally have on historic agricultural buildings**

Impact of change	Example uses	Typical changes to building
<b>Low</b>	Light industrial, storage and distribution, community use (e.g. hall, meeting room, or community centre), equestrian, ancillary to residential (e.g. garage, games room)	Use can generally be achieved with only minor alterations to the building interior and exterior, and the wider site.
<b>Medium</b>	Office, camping barn, farm shop, pub, restaurant, wedding venue, museum, granny annexe, simple holiday let	Significant alterations necessary, but minimalist approach can avoid internal subdivision and preserve existing fabric. Can be achieved without the need to create additional curtilage or new openings.
<b>High</b>	Residential, intensive holiday let	Dramatic alterations normally necessary, including subdivision of interior, roof and wall insulation, new door/window/rooflight openings and flues. Often demand for ancillary buildings, gardens and domestic curtilage which can harm setting. Generally incompatible with listed buildings.

3.8.16 Reducing people's need to travel is a key strategic objective of the NPPF. Agricultural buildings outside settlements are often located far from infrastructure (e.g. utilities and roads), amenities (e.g. shops, pubs, village halls), facilities (e.g. sports pitches, play spaces) and services (e.g. public transport, schools, social services, healthcare). It follows that future policy should prefer buildings with reasonable access to these items. However, given many agricultural buildings' rural location it is rarely possible to have access to them all. As part of being positive towards conservation of these buildings, local policy should therefore be pragmatic where it can be demonstrated that a building is of value. It would not be reasonable to expect the degree of connectivity which would only arise from a location in the immediate vicinity of a settlement or any items not relevant to the use proposed.

3.8.17 In our experience it has been difficult for applicants to meet all of the above criteria, i.e. to have a historic building capable of conversion, with easy access to infrastructure, amenities, facilities and services and be proposing a sympathetic viable use. Policy should therefore provide clear guidance on how to resolve a scenario where only some criteria can be met. Consistent with the NPPF local plan policy should ensure heritage assets are put to a viable use consistent with their conservation and the criteria set out in 3.8.14. Where harm or loss

is proposed a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

- 3.8.18 The Housing Topic Paper will consider the potential for residential conversions to make a contribution to meeting local affordable housing need.
- 3.8.19 Current policy does not allow for the conversion of modern redundant agricultural buildings or those of no historic or architectural significance because:
- these buildings are likely to be suitable for continued agricultural use
  - the preservation and conservation of these buildings is not a priority as they are of no intrinsic historic or architectural importance
  - most modern agricultural buildings were permitted with redundancy conditions requiring them to be dismantled upon them becoming redundant for agricultural purposes
  - many of these buildings are isolated and their development would likely have a significant cumulative impact on landscape character, tranquillity and transport infrastructure
  - allowing the development of these buildings would create demand for business or residential development in unsustainable locations in the open countryside contrary to national planning policy
- 3.8.20 Permitted development rights now allow for the conversion of redundant modern agricultural buildings to a wide variety of business and community uses. For the reasons stated above it is not considered there is any justification for this to be extended within the policies of the new local plan.

### 3.9 *HMP Dartmoor*

- 3.9.1 The majority of development relating to or affecting the historic environment is small scale, and will arise on a case by case basis through the plan period. However it is important to note that the future of HMP Dartmoor, Princetown ('Dartmoor Prison') could be a significant issue arising during the life of the next local plan. The NPPF (para 185) requires local planning authorities to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats.
- 3.9.2 The prison at Princetown was built in 1809 to accommodate French prisoners of war during the Napoleonic Wars and American prisoners of war during the War of 1812. Dartmoor was closed in 1816, remaining derelict until it was re-opened as a criminal prison from 1850 onwards. The main prison complex comprises seven wings arranged around a central open space like the spokes of a wheel. The blocks are of granite rubble construction with slate roofs and gable ends. The prison was originally grade II listed as a whole, but in 2015 the site was reassessed with listings for individual buildings replacing that for the whole site. The prison is one of the largest and certainly the most infamous listed building in the National Park.
- 3.9.3 Prison officers were originally housed in the immediate vicinity of the prison with convict labour used in construction. Over time this contributed to the development of Princetown as we know it today and resulted in the prison have close economic ties to the town. The history of the prison, its relationship with Princetown, the National Park, and their

communities has been well documented<sup>9 10 11</sup> and has inspired many stories. Less well understood is the contribution the prison makes to the identity of Princetown, the National Park and their communities today.

- 3.9.4 In November 2013 the Ministry of Justice (the lessee) gave Notice to the Duchy of Cornwall (the landowner) that it wishes to terminate its lease. There is a requirement in the lease to provide the Duchy with a ten year formal notice to expire on term on the lease, this has the effect of bringing the lease to an end on 25<sup>th</sup> December 2023. Whilst Notice has been served, uncertainty remains as to whether or not the Prison will definitely close.
- 3.9.5 There is therefore a significant matter for the future of this site and the wider area, which has direct and indirect economic, built and cultural heritage as well as other far reaching implications. The NPPF requires local planning authorities identify specific opportunities for the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets. As such it is prudent to reference the possibility of closure within the local plan, which should set out how development affecting the prison would need to be considered in the future.
- 3.9.6 Historic Area Assessment (HAA)<sup>12</sup> could be a useful tool to help ensure the prison's historic and social significance is properly recognised in future planning decisions and assess the significance of other 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century assets within Princetown as whole.

*What is Historic Area Assessment (HAA)?*

HAA is a practical tool to understand and explain the heritage interest of an area. It was developed to help determine the character of an area, explain its significance and highlight issues that have the potential to change this character.

HAA is generally used in the anticipation of major redevelopment, in response to increasing development pressures and to encourage specific planning aims or underpin planning policy. The tool is applicable to a variety of large scale sites, including town extensions, industrial quarters and rural settlements.

- 3.9.7 The key issues for a HAA to address would be as follows:
- **Establish boundaries** for the study, including the context of Princetown and the surrounding landscape
  - **Define character** of the prison and its relationship with surrounding character
  - **Identify character areas** where areas of uniform character exist
  - **Clarify historical and architectural development**
  - **Assess condition, integrity and vulnerability**
  - **Define and evaluate significance**
- 3.9.8 This would provide an important baseline evidence base which the HAA can then use to:
- analyse the prison's relationship with Princetown and the wider landscape and the contribution it makes to their character and sense of place
  - establish the prison's sensitivity to change, such as:
    - areas of particular significance where demolition or change would cause considerable harm to the prison's character

<sup>9</sup> Ron Joy (2002) *'Dartmoor Prison: A Complete Illustrated History'*

<sup>10</sup> Dartmoor Prison Museum [www.dartmoor-prison.co.uk/](http://www.dartmoor-prison.co.uk/)

<sup>11</sup> Stanbrook, E. (2002) *'Dartmoor's War Prison and Church 1805-1817'*

<sup>12</sup> Historic England (2017) *'Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessment'*

- areas suitable for adaptation, conversion and re-use
  - historic fabric which could be lost without reducing the significance of the site
  - assets which haven't yet been identified, including archaeological
  - identify opportunities for new development and inform its design
  - establish the heritage values of a place for different stakeholders, including the wider community
  - manage and target resources, including identifying where grant aid could be targeted most effectively
- 3.9.9 Consistent with Historic England's guidance<sup>12</sup> a 'detailed' HAA would be required. 'Outline' and 'rapid' HAAs would not provide sufficient detailed understanding of individual buildings or landscape features to inform detailed development proposals.
- 3.9.10 Bringing the views of experts and the community together will be an essential component of any HAA, a public workshop could be a useful forum in which to achieve this.
- 3.9.11 The value of a HAA is in it being completed well ahead of any development proposals so that it is used to guide and inform them.
- 3.9.12 The HAA is inevitably a multidisciplinary exercise and will go a long way to identifying key constraints. However it will not include a number of other strategic issues which will need to be addressed as part of any forthcoming development proposals, including:
- Transport impacts
  - Flood risk
  - Environment and biodiversity impacts
  - Landscape character impact
  - Tranquillity and dark night skies
  - Housing and employment space need
  - Any other specific issues related to the development proposed (e.g. infrastructure delivery, utility capacity, viability)

*Recommendations for Policy*

- 3.9.13 In view of the prison's uncertain future and the likelihood of increased development pressure during the next plan period the local plan should adopt a positive strategy to support its appropriate conservation and continued viable use. In the absence of any preliminary feasibility work it would be premature to recommend a particular development type. It is therefore recommended the site be allocated, but the allocation only set out a process for development proposals to follow, including that proposals are informed by appropriate evidence and that the above issues are investigated and addressed. This will ensure any proposals are properly thought through, that any widespread implications are fully understood, and that the community and other stakeholders have the opportunity to be involved in shaping its future.