

Draft Heritage and Design Policy

February 2019 version

Policy Objectives

— Create living and working environments which respond to the Paddock Wood’s heritage context; the need for sustainable development, whilst supporting existing business and their aspirations.

— Maintain and enhance the character of Paddock Wood, its roofscape, commercial ground floor activity and landmark buildings.

While Paddock Wood is a relatively new town in comparison to other towns and villages within the Weald, it still has a heritage and history worthy of protection and enhancement.

In 1841, only 23 dwellings were recorded on the census with a total population of 121 people. Around 1863, twenty-two acres of land adjacent to the railway station were purchased and the land was allocated for building on and around what is now Commercial Road and Old Kent Road. However, development of the community was relatively slow as mains drainage, gas and electricity had still not arrived by the end of the century.

The railway brought many hop pickers as a result of which Paddock Wood became a major centre for the hop growing industry. This is reflected by the presence of oast houses around the edge of the town contributing to its character. Over the years Paddock Wood has grown from a village of only 816 people in 1901 to a town of 8253 in 2011

The character of the townscape is generally more modern, but a variety of housing types can be seen ranging from the original Victorian cottages to large, modern housing developments, such as at Green Lane. Paddock Wood retains much of the original Victoria design with the town centre gradually expanding.

POLICY H1

General Design Policy

- a) All new developments and redevelopment proposals should be in keeping with and sympathetic to the character and design of Paddock Wood. They are expected to be of high quality, in accordance with the policies of this neighbourhood plan.
- b) The visual impact of any development, along with any required landscape mitigation measures, should be specified in a Design & Access Statement, submitted with any planning application.
- c) Any submitted Design & Access Statement should address all the design check-list topics as contained on page xx — xx.

Policy Justification

The many flat roofs of various buildings in the town are not considered attractive, and residents have expressed a preference for pitched roofs. There are some original buildings on

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Commercial Road with intricate brick detail and these should be retained. The lack of conformity of shop front designs is also seen as attractive.

Building design must be appropriate to the historic context and new buildings should be designed to reflect the 3-dimensional qualities of traditional buildings. Paddock Wood evolved as a result of the railway and the hop industry, and new development should respond to this.

POLICY H2

Buildings of Local Historic Interest

- a) The Wesley Centre and its curtilage should be retained because of its historic character, architectural merit and location in the centre of the town.
- b) This building should continue to be used for public and community purposes (D1), but where it can be demonstrated that this is not viable, class A1, A2 or A3 may be supported where this would enhance the vitality and amenities in the neighbourhood plan area.

Policy Justification

The Wesley Centre is a valuable resource, particularly for youth group meetings and church use. It is a well-loved community and heritage asset to the town, and its central location makes it easily accessible and sustainable.

As an important symbolic example of the Town's Victorian heritage there is a continuing need to retain the Wesley Centre and its curtilage. It is the oldest and last remaining 19th Century community building in the town. The retention of the curtilage is important as it is the only green space in the centre of Paddock Wood available for public use.

POLICY H3

Protect Local Heritage Assets

Any new development or alteration to an existing structure or heritage asset, whether designated or undesignated, will be required in its design, scale and materials to preserve or enhance the historical character and setting of Paddock Wood.

Policy Justification

Paddock Wood's heritage assets should be protected, and any new development or alteration to existing structures should preserve or enhance the setting of heritage assets (designated or undesignated).

Any developments that affect the centre of Paddock Wood must preserve or enhance the existing older buildings. There are a number of historic buildings in Paddock Wood, such as the Wesley Centre, and it is important that the town retains the few heritage assets and

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historic buildings that it has. Concerns have been expressed during all the consultations that development should not be allowed to damage the historic environment.

Proposals should include an appraisal of the site in its surroundings, with detailed drawings accurately showing its relationship to heritage assets and historic buildings, including roofscapes and visual aspects. Explanation should be given as to how the chosen design, scale and materials respond to any nearby heritage assets. An appraisal of the impact of construction work and traffic on heritage assets is also required.

POLICY H4

The Historic Railway

Proposals which preserve and enhance the historic Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst railway line will be supported.

Policy Justification

This former railway line is an important piece of local heritage. The route has been afforded protection by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council against future development, and a way-marking and interpretation scheme, featuring specially designed finger-posts, monoliths and information panels, has been organised by the Hop Pickers Line Heritage Group.

Policy H5

Heritage-Led Design

- 1) The design and detail of new developments should be
 - a) in keeping with the traditional architecture, layout, character and style of Paddock Wood's heritage
 - b) sensitive to the local context and environment in order to leave a positive architectural legacy.
- 2) Thoughtful innovation in design is not precluded by this policy

Policy Justification

Any new development, both residential and non-residential, should be shaped and influenced by the traditional character and style of Paddock Wood. All new developments should enhance the local context and utilise high quality materials and styles appropriate to the town.

The aim for all new developments should be for them to leave a positive architectural legacy, to be sensitive to their local context and environment and add to the positive character of the Paddock Wood area.

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This policy does not exclude innovation in design, modern or contemporary architecture. Such designs are not discouraged but architects are encouraged to create new designs that reflect both the local character and the current technology and materials of the era within which they will be built.

Over the following pages, there are shown a series of examples of heritage architecture within Paddock Wood that should serve as a reference point for new development proposals.

DESIGN CHECK-LIST

The following design topics should be addressed through a Design & Access Statement (DAS) by any applicant seeking planning permission for development or redevelopment in the neighbourhood area:

Amenity

Green spaces of appropriate scale and quality within new developments will be encouraged. All new houses to have private amenity space and/or gardens, at the front, back or side of the property, as appropriate.

Construction

The build quality of new developments, and the materials selected as part of the construction process, should ensure a high standard of appearance over time. Construction techniques and materials should prevent a rapid deterioration that can lead to buildings with an unsightly or neglected appearance. Building maintenance should be cost-effective and easy to administer.

Density

The density of new development should be in character with the local surrounding area, respect the character of the area and be designed to give an impression of spaciousness with opportunity for green landscape between buildings.

Discretion

Car parking is to be discreet, with a proper provision of off-road parking as appropriate. On-road parking needs to be accommodated carefully to ensure that footways are not blocked or narrowed.

Domestic

The scale of new dwellings to be of a small or domestic scale suitable for the local context. This is especially true within the existing built areas.

Evolution

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Paddock Wood is to evolve gradually and not to experience rapid large-scale development. All development proposals are required to demonstrate how they will contribute to this positive evolution.

Extension

House extensions are to be sympathetic with the style of the host house and use similar materials and fenestration. Modern style extensions to traditional houses will be resisted.

Integration

New buildings should be well-integrated into the site and become part of a unified and interrelated composition, both with other buildings on site and with existing buildings adjacent to the site.

Layout

New developments should incorporate access routes and footpaths within the layout that reflect the historic character of Paddock Wood, where appropriate.

Lighting

Consideration should be given to the need for lighting, and where it is deemed essential, efforts should be made to seek to minimise its impact in the landscape through choice of light source and control of light spillage. Lighting should only be installed in areas of need, such as alongside pedestrian routes in and around the built areas. Areas adjacent to open spaces should be left unlit to avoid light pollution.

Locality

New buildings are to be based on local needs, use local construction materials, and reflect local building traditions. Materials should be obtained from local sustainable sources.

Resource Efficiency

Measures to help conserve water and energy in new buildings will be encouraged. The reuse and recycling of building materials will be encouraged, as will the use of locally sourced timber in construction.

Security

All developments and improvements in Paddock should be designed to ensure that safety and security are built in. Designs should ensure people feel safe during hours of darkness through unobtrusive path lighting and active frontages (i.e. doors and windows facing onto the street) and safe, permeable routes where appropriate.

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Sustainability

New development should seek for ecological enhancement to the immediate area, such as provision for birds and bats to be incorporated into new buildings.

Tradition

Styles and materials that relate to those found in the more historic parts of the locality will be encouraged.