

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Report of the Conservation Officer to the Planning Committee - 23 July 2008

Draft Heritage Protection Bill 2008 and Heritage at Risk Register 2008

(This matter is the responsibility of Councillor Simon Coles)

1.0 Draft Heritage Protection Bill 2008

- 1.1 In April 2008 the government published its draft Heritage Protection Bill – a radical overhaul of the way the historic environment is protected and managed in England and Wales.
- 1.2 Under the proposed system the existing legal distinction between different kinds of heritage assets will disappear. Instead of separate but overlapping categories of listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, battlefields and wrecks, there will be one national register of ‘heritage assets’.
- 1.3 One important benefit is considered to be that it will be simpler to identify those assets at greatest risk. Another is that streamlining of the current system will make it easier for owners to manage their assets. A key element is a proposal that Local Authorities should take the lead in looking after the historic environment at local level. NB: Whilst not spelt out in the draft Bill, it is clear that the proposals will impact on Local Authority resources.

2.0 Heritage at Risk Register 2008

- 2.1 The annual report and register produced by English Heritage, highlighting the most important heritage assets at risk in England, has recently been published.
- 2.2 For the first time the register combines all categories of nationally designated assets that have been assessed to date, hence the change in title from the former ‘Buildings at Risk Register’.
- 2.3 The table below sets out the categories and number of assets and percentage at high risk in England:

Asset Type	No of Assets	No. of Assets at Risk	% at Risk
Grade I and II* Listed Buildings	30,687	977	3.2
Grade II Listed Buildings in London	16,515	402	2.4
Scheduled Monuments	19,695	4,136	21.0

Registered Parks and Gardens (RPG)	1,595	112	7.0
Registered Battlefields	43	8	18.6
Protected Wreck Sites	45	10	22.0

- 2.4 Of the entries on the South West 1999 baseline buildings at risk register 50% have been removed – slightly above the national average.
- 2.5 The total number of Grade I and Grade II* Listed Buildings and structural monuments at risk on the register is now 162, along with 4 protected wreck sites and one registered battlefield.
- 2.6 In the last year, two notable buildings at risk were removed from the register but 7 were added.
- 2.7 The regional position reflects the national trend of a small increase in building at risk entries.
- 2.8 The current heritage at risk assets for Somerset are as follows:

District	Grade I and II* Listed Buildings	Within RPG	Scheduled Monument
Mendip	5	2	-
Sedgemoor	2	-	-
South Somerset	4	-	-
Taunton Deane	4	1	-
West Somerset	1 (also SM)	-	2

- 2.9 The entries for Taunton Deane are:

Sandhill Park
Gatehouse at Cothelstone Manor
Cloth Finishing Works at Tone Mills
Tonedale Mills (West Complex)

3.0 Recommendation

- 3.1 Members are requested to note the above.

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