



## Sunningwell Parish

### Neighbourhood Development Plan – 2026-41

### Non-Designated Heritage Assets – Factual Information



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Prepared by: Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of Sunningwell Parish Council

## Non-Designated Heritage Assets Documents

This document is one of three related to Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs) for Sunningwell Parish's Neighbourhood Plan:

1. Non-Designated Heritage Assets – Factual Information
2. Non-Designated Heritage Assets – Informal Briefing note
3. Non-Designated Heritage Assets - Nomination Form

### Important note

This document summarises Sunningwell Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group's understanding of facts relating to Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs).

Although prepared in good faith, neither the body of this document, nor the FAQ answers at the end, constitute advice and the information provided may not fit every situation.

Please treat it as a starting point, not something to rely on for decision-making, and seek professional advice if required.

## What is a Non-Designated Heritage Asset?

A NDHA is a building, space or other feature which has been identified by local people or the local planning authority as having locally significant historic, architectural, archaeological or artistic interest, or association with a significant person.

## The NDHA Process

### Authority & Decision Making

The Local Planning Authority (LPA), in our case the Vale of the White Horse District Council, has sole responsibility and authority for determining what is a NDHA.

The LPA can choose to classify an entity as a NDHA at any time, and at its sole discretion, based on its assessment of whether the entity satisfies the four required criteria (see below)

### Nomination Process

One of the criteria that an NDHA needs to meet is that it “has value for the neighbourhood”. Objective evidence for this is most likely to occur during the development of a Neighbourhood Plan.

Anyone can recommend to the LPA that an entity, including clusters of properties, be classified as NDHAs. It is common, therefore that the body developing the

Neighbourhood Plan submits a list of suggested NDHAs as part of the Plan, and that the LPA will accept or reject the entries on this list.

As noted previously, the LPA has the power to unilaterally add to this list.

### **Assessment Criteria**

The criteria that the Vale of White Horse District Council Planning Authority will use to determine whether an item is on the NDHA list will be whether it meets all four of the following criteria:

1. Is capable of meeting the government's definition of a heritage asset
2. Possesses heritage interest that can be conserved and enjoyed
3. Has a value for the neighbourhood or community beyond personal or family connections, or the interest of individual property owners because of its heritage interest
4. Has a level of significance that is greater than the general positive identified characteristics of the local area.

### **NDHAs in the Neighbourhood Plan**

As is typical, Sunningwell will include NDHAs in an Appendix to the Neighbourhood Plan. This will include images and descriptions of the features that are considered worthy of protection. In some cases this may be only a part of the structure, for example the exterior frontage.

This appendix will be included in the published Plan that is subject to two statutory 6-week consultation processes.

Following these consultations, it will be included within the Plan that will be subject to referendum of local residents which occurs before adoption.

If the referendum outcome is positive, the NDHA Appendix will form part of the "Made" Neighbourhood Plan which then has statutory weight in the planning process.

## **Consequences of NDHA status**

### **What effect does NDHA status have?**

There are no additional legal requirements or responsibilities placed on property owners as a result of NDHA status.

NDHAs do not have the statutory protection given to Designated Heritage Assets such as listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, etc.

The main practical effect of NDHA status is that, where an application for planning permission has potential to affect the historic fabric or setting of an NDHA, the local

planning authority will weigh any harm caused to its heritage value against any public benefits of the works, before deciding whether to grant consent. Alterations which harm the historic appearance of a NDHA may not be permitted without suitable justification.

### **Specific planning policies**

The relevant Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 policy is Core Policy 39:

*The Council will work with landowners, developers, the community, Historic England and other stakeholders to:*

*i. ensure that new development conserves, and where possible enhances, designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets and their setting in accordance with national guidance and legislation...*

The relevant part of the National Planning Policy Framework (as at 31 March 2026) is:

*216. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*

### **Planning application requirements**

In preparing any planning application which may affect the historic fabric or setting of an NDHA, the relevant requirement set out in the National Planning Policy Framework is:

*207. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. ...*

The assessment of significance which the local planning authority will require can be carried out by a specialist heritage consultant. However in many cases an architect, surveyor or planning consultant would be able to do this alongside the main part of their work.

### **Summary**

NDHA status gives the local planning authority the chance to influence planning decisions in a way that conserves and enhances local character.

Under the National Planning Policy Framework, the conservation and contribution of locally listed heritage assets will be a material consideration in planning decisions that directly affect them or their setting.

In their planning application the applicant will need to provide an assessment of the heritage significance of the NDHA, including any contribution made to that by its setting. The potential impact of the proposed works upon this significance will be a factor in the decision whether or not to grant consent.

## FAQs

### **What are NDHAs?**

Buildings, spaces or other features which have been identified by local people or the local planning authority as having locally significant historic, architectural, archaeological or artistic interest.

### **What are the benefits to the owner of the NDHA?**

Confirmation of the cultural value of the asset and its appreciation by the local community.

Can be used to discourage inappropriate out-of-character development in the immediate area.

### **What are the benefits to the parish?**

Confirmation of the cultural value of the asset and its appreciation by the local community.

Can be used to discourage inappropriate out-of-character development.

### **What restrictions does it bring?**

Will tend to constrain development to remain in-character

### **Is it the same as “listing”?**

No. It is a lower standard of protection/restriction.

### **What effect will NDHA status have on the value of my property?**

For some types of purchasers, NDHA status may increase the attractiveness and value of the property.

For other classes of purchasers, it may reduce the attractiveness and value.

**Can my property be added to the NDHA list later?**

Yes, although as this requires consultation and local support it is unlikely to happen outside the cycle of Neighbourhood Plan revisions which are typically every 5-years.

**Can my property be removed from the NDHA list?**

A request for removal may be submitted at any time, although it most commonly happens as part of the cycle of Neighbourhood Plan revisions which are typically every 5-years, unless there is a case that the property should not have been included in the list originally.

As noted elsewhere, the Local Planning Authority is the final arbiter of what is, and what is not classified as an NDHA based on their assessment against the published criteria.

**Is my approval required for my property to be on an NDHA list?**

No, although Sunningwell Parish Council currently does not have plans to include any isolated buildings against the wishes of the owners.

For properties which are part of clusters it may be necessary to include properties even where there is not unanimous support within the cluster.

The Local Planning Authority has unilateral power to add items to a NDHA list, potentially at any time, although the need to meet the assessment criteria and to evidence local support mean that this would be unusual.

**Who makes the final decision on whether a property is an approved NDHA?**

The Local Planning Authority – in our case the Vale of White Horse District council. They will usually be working from a local list prepared as part of a Neighbourhood Plan submission or revision, although they have the power to add and remove properties unilaterally.