

Speakers

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Delivered by

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Ideas

1. *Compromises and collaboration.* Compromises are needed from to deliver something good, but often authorities are exposed because of need or gaps in policy. A tabula rasa approach should be challenged, but ultimately there are limitations on powers and resources in these situations. A mutual recognition of quality is required to achieve something of the quality of Kingsdown House.
2. *Funding.* The best design and conservation needs to be well funded, and many poor examples result from a lack of economic resource.
3. *Skills.* There is a skills shortage of design and knowledge in both construction and conservation, and it is difficult to engage good teams for smaller and less prominent sites.
4. *Scrutiny.* Policy is flexible and the outcome is reduced to whichever party is constructs the best argument.
5. *Boundaries.* Conservation area boundary setting practices are opaque, arbitrary, disparate and often outdated. Although some progress has been made through the new NPPF, there is recognition of the need to think, design and assess beyond both site and conservation area boundaries. Council estates and industrial areas should be protected, too.

What does it mean to harm or enhance?

Harm. To harm is to distract, obscure, ignore, jar, intensify, and dilute. Most significantly, to harm is to have no process. There will always be a friction between the best conservation techniques and the legislative requirements of avoiding harm to heritage assets. Why recreate a bad detail which causes harm to the fabric just because it is considered 'authentic' to past materials or method?

Enhance. All agreed that to enhance is to have purpose, foresight, to be progressive. However, recent case law defines 'enhancement' as not causing harm. We should all challenge the sterilisation and containment of our assets and areas through fear of their status. This only results in 'time capsules' or 'museum towns' - instead, we should design with the same confidence as generations before us.

Beyond 'in-keeping'

Monday 8th October 2018

Kingsdown House, Canterbury and Canterbury Cathedral Lodge

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