



GET THE FACTS - HERITAGE INFORMATION SERIES

08. THE CONSERVATION PROCESS

Preservation is appropriate where the existing state of the fabric itself constitutes evidence of specific cultural significance, or where insufficient evidence is available to allow other conservation processes to be carried out. Preservation is limited to the protection, maintenance and where necessary, the stabilisation of the existing fabric but without the distortion of its cultural significance. Restoration is appropriate only if there is sufficient evidence of an earlier state of the fabric and only if returning the fabric to that state recovers the cultural significance

of the place. Restoration should reveal culturally significant aspects of the place. It is based on respect for all the physical, documentary and other evidence and stops at the point where conjecture begins. The contributions of all periods to the place must be respected. If a place includes the fabric of different periods, revealing the fabric of one period at the expense of another can only be justified when what is removed is of slight cultural significance and the fabric which is to be revealed is of much greater cultural significance. Reconstruction is appropriate where a place

is incomplete through damage or alteration and where it is necessary for its survival, or where it consummates the requisite cultural significance of the place as a whole. Adaptation is acceptable where the conservation of the place cannot otherwise be achieved, and where the adaptation does not substantially detract from its cultural significance. Fabric of cultural significance unavoidably removed in the process of adaptation must be kept safely to enable its future reinstatement.