

## **Heritage Statement - incorporating a Statement of Significance, Heritage Impact Assessment and Justification Statement**

### **Understanding Heritage Assets**

Understanding a heritage asset is important and is an established good conservation practice to inform the management of change.

One of Historic England's Conservation Principles<sup>1</sup> is that understanding the significance of a place is vital, and that in order to identify the significance of a place it is necessary first to understand its fabric and how and why it has changed over time.

### **The need for a Heritage Statement**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states at para 194 that *'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. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation'.*

Derby City Council require a Heritage Statement, incorporating a Statement of Significance and a Heritage Impact Assessment, to inform proposals that would affect a heritage asset, and to be submitted with the relevant planning application or application for listed building consent.

It is essential that research into the heritage asset (historic building or place) and its significance is carried out before proposals are drawn up. This will ensure that changes affecting heritage assets are informed by a thorough understanding of them and every effort is made to protect what is significant about them or enhance or better reveal their special historic character and interest.

### **What should a Heritage Statement contain?**

These notes should be read in conjunction with the Historic England Guidance on heritage statements –

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/statements-heritage-significance-advice-note-12/>.

All applications that affect heritage assets, including their settings, should be accompanied by a Heritage Statement which should contain the following:

- **A list of the heritage assets** that have been assessed, identifying which would be affected by the proposal and which would not.
- **A Statement of Significance** - to demonstrate an understanding of the significance of the heritage assets affected. In addition to an examination of the asset itself, and

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<sup>1</sup> Conservation Principles, Policy and Practise (2008) Historic England

its setting, this may include information from the Historic Environment Record, Local Studies, historic maps or photographs, or for complex cases a historic building survey by a qualified Historic Building Consultant and phasing plans showing phases of development.

- **A Heritage Impact Assessment** – A description of the impact upon significance and discussion on options looked at and how the proposals have been designed to protect and respond to the heritage asset's significance.
- **A Justification Statement** – to explain what the scheme aims to achieve and discuss why the proposed alterations are necessary.

### List of Heritage Assets

To identify the Heritage Assets that might be affected by the proposals, you should check the Historic Environment Record via the Heritage Gateway<sup>2</sup>. In some cases, such as for internal works to listed buildings, only one heritage asset may be affected. However, in many cases, you may need to consider the impact on the character and appearance of a conservation area as a whole, the settings of nearby heritage assets, or for larger developments, the impact on the settings of or views of or from, quite distant heritage assets.

The heritage assessment should contain a list of all the heritage assets nearby and further away which could potentially be impacted by the proposals, and an assessment as to whether the proposal would affect them.

### Statement of Significance

The statement of significance defines what is of historical importance about the heritage asset. Significance is defined as;

*'the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting'* Annex 2: Glossary National Planning Policy Framework, 2023.

To fully understand the significance of the heritage asset, whether it is a place or building, it is often helpful to analyse it in terms of the following values:

- a) *aesthetic value*, derived from ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place and may be deliberately designed or planned, or have derived from the fortuitous juxtaposition of buildings and materials over time.
- b) *communal value*, derived from the meanings of a place for people who relate to it in different ways, associations with social groups and individuals.
- c) *evidential value*, derived from the potential of a place to yield evidence about the past, for example, the way an individual building has developed over time to reflect changing uses or architectural tastes, or how the pattern of development in an area reflects its historic development
- d) *historic value*, which derives from way in which a place illustrates an aspect of the past or association with historic figure or event.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>

<sup>3</sup> Please see Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, Historic England 2008

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/>

The statutory listed building descriptions can be helpful, but many of the older ones do not mention the full extent of the listed building (including anything attached and/or curtilage structures) everything that is of significance and further analysis and understanding of the building will be necessary.

Where Conservation Area Appraisals and Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans have been prepared by the Council, these should be used as a starting point for understanding significance and be used to guide development. In the absence of these, or where detailed information on the particular site or building is lacking, applicants will be expected to undertake an assessment of the area and use useful references.

In addition to on-site analysis, archive information may be available from the Historic Environment Record, Local Studies Library and Picture the Past (an on-line collection of historic images)<sup>4</sup>. 'Map Regression', where the phases of development of a site or building are traced using historic maps, can be particularly useful in understanding their historic development and evolution.

### **Heritage Impact Assessment.**

A Heritage Impact Assessment should outline the proposal, the impact on significance and any mitigation measures proposed. It can be useful to present the assessment in a tabular form with photos.

For alterations to listed buildings we need quite detailed schedules of works, to understand exactly how historic fabric or detail would be affected. This may be for structural works, works to meet building or fire regulations, or methods of repair. Photographs of the areas affected by the works should be provided.

For larger scale schemes and development within historic areas, you will need to explain how the proposal has been designed to respond to the surrounding historic environment and protect or enhance its historic character and appearance, or the setting of nearby heritage assets.

Where the proposals are within the Derwent Valley World Heritage Site, within its buffer or its wider setting UNESCO, and the Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee, have issued 'Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context' which should be used - <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidance-toolkit-impact-assessments/> . Please see the useful toolkit towards the back of the document and Historic England accompanying guidance at <https://historicengland.org.uk/content/documents/advice/he-briefing-unesco-guidance-toolkit-hia-2022/>.

### **Justification Statement**

Where harm to the significance of a heritage asset has been identified, you should explain why the works are considered necessary and outline alternative solutions that have been considered and provide a clear and convincing justification.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.picturethepast.org.uk/>