

Heritage Statements



**Regeneration and Planning
(Conservation)**

April 2017

Under paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), applicants are required to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting.

When are Heritage Statements needed?

All applications for proposals which affect a heritage asset are required to be accompanied by a heritage statement. A heritage statement must be submitted with the following types of application:

- Applications for listed building consent
- Applications within the curtilage of a listed building
- Applications in conservation areas (including demolition)
- Applications affecting Scheduled Monuments
- Applications affecting a Registered Park and Garden
- Applications affecting an archaeological site
- Applications affecting non-designated heritage assets, such as buildings which feature on the Council's List of Local Heritage Assets or those identified during the pre-application process
- Applications affecting the setting of a heritage asset (whether designated or non-designated)

Such applications cannot be validated without this supporting information.

Further information on validation requirements can be found in the Council's *Planning Application Validation Guide* on the Council's website: www.lancaster.gov.uk

What is a Heritage Statement?

A heritage statement is an assessment of the significance of heritage assets and their settings affected by a development, and the impacts of that development upon them.

Significance is defined as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from an asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

What should be included in a heritage statement?

A heritage statement can form part of a Design and Access Statement, but this should be made clear in the title of the document for validation purposes, for example, 'Design & Access Statement and Heritage Statement'.

The process of writing a heritage statement is an important tool to use in developing a proposal. It is therefore good practice for an applicant to consider the issues covered in the

statement when beginning to formulate their proposals. For example, a good understanding of the significance of the heritage asset(s) is essential before any decisions are made.

Heritage statements do not achieve their full purpose if they are prepared only between finalising plans and submitting them to the local planning authority.

The level of detail needed should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposal and the importance of the asset itself.

Whilst there is no prescribed format for a heritage statement, it should usually cover the following points:

- *A description of the heritage asset and its setting:*
The list description and/or conservation area appraisal may be referred to here.
- *An assessment of the heritage significance, particularly of those parts affected by the proposals:*
A statement of significance is required which demonstrates an understanding of the historical, archaeological, architectural and artistic interest of the site and its setting.
- *Description of the proposed works:*
This information should be clearly set out in the form of a schedule, and reference made to any relevant plans/drawings.
- *Assessment of the impact (including justification):*
This should include a discussion of the likely impact of the proposed works on the significance of the heritage asset and/or its setting, an assessment of the scale and nature of any harm that would be caused to the significance of the heritage asset, and the details of any potential heritage benefits, including proposals which enhance or better reveal the significance.

A statement of justification is also required, explaining why the works are desirable or necessary, including any benefits which justify any resulting harm. In the case of substantial harm or loss of significance, the tests in the NPPF should be applied (paragraph 133).

Please note that it is important that your statement is a balanced, evidence-based assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed development, and should not simply express a personal view on whether the works should be approved.

- *Mitigation works:*
This section should explain what steps have been taken to avoid, minimise or mitigate any harm to the significance of the heritage asset. This will help us to understand your design approach and how your understanding of the asset's significance has informed this. For example, are the works the minimum required? Are they reversible? Has it been designed sensitively, e.g. has a less sensitive part of

the building/site be used to accommodate the proposed use? Will the extension be subservient to the main building, and not detract from it? Have appropriate materials been selected for new and repair works, which avoid visual or structural harm to the building?

Has a programme for investigation and recording of architectural or archaeological features which might be uncovered as part of a conversion, or for works which might unavoidably obscure them, been considered?

Who should produce the Heritage Statement?

As stated above, the level of detail needed should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposal and the importance of the asset itself.

Therefore, for minor proposals, where the impacts are likely to be limited, an applicant might decide to produce the statement themselves. However, it usually makes sense for the scheme architect/designer to produce the statement since it should cover those issues which were considered in formulating the proposals, and the thinking behind it.

Depending on the scale of the proposal and the nature and importance of the heritage asset it might be necessary to employ a suitably qualified professional consultant to produce the statement to ensure an appropriate document is submitted.

Useful sources of information

- The NPPF points to the relevant Historic Environment Record (HER) as a starting point (paragraph 128). Access to the Lancashire County HER is available by prior arrangement, in Preston. Please see the Lancashire County Council website for further details:
<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/archives-and-record-office/historic-environment-record.aspx>
- The National Heritage List for England provides details of listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields, World Heritage Sites, Applications for Certificates of Immunity (COIs), Current Building Preservation Notices (BPNs):
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>
- Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans: We have detailed appraisals for many of our conservation areas. The appraisals identify which buildings within a conservation area make a positive contribution to the special interest of each area. They also identify significant aspects of townscape, such as trees, landmarks, important views and the character of public and private open spaces. They can be downloaded from our website:
<http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/planning/conservation/conservation-area-appraisal>

- List of Local Heritage Assets: the Council has begun compiling a list of heritage assets which, although not included on the national statutory list, are considered to contribute to the local built character, settlement formation and 'sense of place'. This work is being carried out on a parish-by-parish basis, and it is worth checking to see whether your parish/area has been covered yet:
<http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/planning/conservation/local-heritage-assets>
- A wealth of historic maps for Lancaster, Morecambe and Lancashire can be found on the Lancaster University website, including John Speed's 1610 Plan of Lancaster. These maps can be useful in identifying changes to the size and form of buildings, as well as their settings: <http://lancaster.libguides.com/c.php?g=541443&p=3708769>
- The 1840s and 1890s Ordnance Survey maps for most of the district can be viewed on the Lancashire County Council: <http://mario.lancashire.gov.uk/agsmario/>
- Garnett, E. *The Dated Buildings of South Lonsdale – revised and expanded edition* (Lancaster University, Centre for North-West Regional Studies, 2007). This book includes most of the building date stones within the district, with an historical background to each one.
- PastScape is a database maintained by Historic England which allows access to over 420,000 records held in the National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE). It includes information on archaeological, architectural and maritime sites:
<https://www.pastscape.org.uk/>
- MAGIC is an interactive map service which brings together environmental information from across government. It includes information on Scheduled Monuments and many other types of designation: <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>
- British History Online is a digital library of key printed primary and secondary sources for the history of Britain and Ireland, with a primary focus on the period between 1300 and 1800. The Victoria County Histories are particularly useful:
<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>
- Britain from Above, an aerial photographic archive dating from 1919 to 2006:
<http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/>
- Images of England website for details and images of listed buildings
<http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk/>
- British Listed Buildings website for details of listed buildings
<http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/#>

- Historic England's website is a good source of information on planning and the historic environment: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/local-heritage/>
- *Making Changes to Heritage Assets: Historic England Advice Note 2*. This document sets out general advice on the different levels of intervention, whether it be repair, restoration, addition and alteration - <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/making-changes-heritage-assets-advice-note-2/>
- *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (Historic England, 2016): <https://historicengland.org.uk/imagesbooks/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/>
- *Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*. (Historic England, 2008): <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/constructive-conservation/conservation-principles/> This document sets out a method for thinking systematically and consistently about the heritage values that can be ascribed to a place.
- *Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings*: Historic England has produced a wide range of practical guidance to help with saving energy in older and listed buildings: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/energy-efficiency-and-historic-buildings/>
- *Easy Access to Historic Buildings*: Historic England's guidance on physical access issues, looking at both the challenges and opportunities: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/easy-access-to-historic-buildings/>
- National Amenity Societies such as the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), the Ancient Monuments Society, The Georgian Group, The Victorian Society and The Twentieth Century Society publish extensive material on their websites and in books and journals.

Please be aware that this list is by no means exhaustive, and that other sources of useful information may exist. This list of information sources will be added to as the Authority becomes aware of other relevant texts.

Contact details

If you have any further queries, please contact the Conservation Team on 01524 582360 or conservationteam@lancaster.gov.uk

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