

HERITAGE STATEMENT GUIDANCE

What will be in a Heritage Statement?

The amount of detail that is required in a Heritage Statement will vary according to the particular proposal. The statement should be proportionate in detail to the type of works being carried out. For example, a major scheme that affects several assets will require an extensive and professionally produced heritage statement. A small-scale scheme that has limited impacts will probably require a short statement. However, there are a number of basics that must be included in any heritage statement.

A Heritage Statement should always cover three main points:

- (1) **Assessment of heritage significance** – an assessment of the significance of the heritage asset or assets which may be affected by the proposed development, including their setting. (Significance is defined as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic).
- (2) **Assessment of Impact** – an assessment of the likely impacts of the proposed development of the heritage asset(s) and their setting.
- (3) **Mitigation** – a statement outlining a mitigation strategy to address any impacts of the proposed development on the significance of the heritage asset(s). This might include modification of methods, materials chosen or design and/or archaeological or architectural investigation and recording.

Writing your Heritage Statement – Assessment of Heritage Significance

This section thinks about what the relevant heritage asset is, and explains why the heritage asset is important. For example it may talk about what gives a Conservation Area its character, or discuss why a building has been listed.

All heritage statements should include:

- A statement of significance that demonstrates an understanding of the historical, archaeological, architectural and artistic interest of the site and its setting and in particular the significance of those parts affected by the proposed development;
- Supporting information as necessary. Supporting information may include:
 - All necessary context drawings and perspectives of the heritage asset, its setting and wider context;
 - Photographs, dated, numbered and cross-referenced to a plan;
 - Reference to a Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Plan, where adopted;

- Listing Descriptions
- Any available information from the local Historic Environment Record;
- Information from early maps.

In addition, if your proposals affect a particular type of heritage asset, other information may also be required.

For example, proposals affecting archaeological heritage assets may require:

- A full archaeological field evaluation. This will need to be carried out to a brief supplied by a qualified archaeologist.

Schemes proposing major alterations or demolition of Listed Buildings and other historic buildings and structures may require:

- A full analytical, architectural and/or structural survey.

Proposals affecting Conservation Areas will require:

- An assessment of the contribution of the heritage asset(s) to the significance of the conservation area and its setting;
- Reference to the relevant conservation area appraisal and management plan where adopted;
- Where demolition or substantial alteration is proposed, a full structural survey.

Writing your Heritage Statement – Assessment of Impact

This section considers what impact the proposed development would have on the significance of the relevant heritage asset(s). For example, this section may discuss how an extension to a property would impact upon a wider Conservation Area, or how an alteration to a Listed Building would affect its character.

All heritage statement will include:

- A schedule of proposed works to the heritage assets and/or its setting;
- All necessary context drawings and perspectives which show the impact of the proposed works on the heritage asset(s), setting and wider context.
- A statement of impact assessing:
 - The likely impact of the proposed works on the significance of the heritage asset(s) and/or their setting;
 - An assessment of the scale and nature of any harm that would be caused to the significance of the heritage asset;
 - Details of any potential heritage benefits, including proposals which enhance or better reveal the significance;

- A statement of justification explaining why the works would be 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.

In addition, if your proposal affects a particular type of heritage asset, other information may also be required.

Where proposal would affect **Listed Buildings and non-designated historic buildings and structures**, for works involving demolition, significant rebuilding or repair a structural survey and method statement will be required. These should be prepared by a qualified structural engineer, experienced in working with historic buildings, and identify, where appropriate

- The structural stability and condition of the asset, including any defects;
- A schedule/method statement of proposed repairs;
- A statement of how the stability of the structure and adjoining structures and their weather protection is to be safeguarded during the works;
- Details of how any internal or external decorative features, finishes or joinery will be protected during the works;
- A statement identifying how the structure is to be safely demolished.

Where proposals would include the **demolition or significant alteration of historic buildings within a Conservation Area**, the following will be required:

- Details of the principles and justification for the proposed works;
- Details of the impact of the proposal on the significance of the Conservation Area and its setting, having regard to the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, where adopted;
- A structural survey and method statement prepared by a qualified structural engineer experienced in working with historic buildings. This should do as stated previously (see above)

For **applications within or adjacent to a conservation area**, an assessment of the impact of the development on the character and appearance of the area will be required. This should include an analysis of the important characteristics of the area including significant buildings or features as well as views into or out from the proposed development. Reference to the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is essential.

Writing your Heritage Statement – Mitigation

This section should explain what steps have been taken to avoid, minimise or mitigate any harm to the significance of the heritage asset(s) and should consider the following:

- Minimal intervention and reversible works: Are all the works absolutely required for the proposed use or function? Can new work be designed so that it can easily be installed and removed at some later date without causing damage to significant building fabric or archaeological deposits?
- Alternative methods of development: examining whether other options exist to meet the applicant's objectives. Could a less sensitive part of the building be used to accommodate a proposed use or function? Could a new building or extension be repositioned so it is less detrimental to the setting of an archaeological feature or historic building?
- Sensitive design: examples include the installation of new services in a discreet manner so as not to compromise the qualities of a room, or skilfully designing an extension that takes account of the physical massing and scale in both the old and new work;
- Choice of materials: the careful selection of construction materials for new and repair works can avoid both visual and longer-term structural harm to a building;
- Recording: a programme for investigation and recording of architectural or archaeological features that would be obscured, damaged or destroyed.

Identifying such approaches in your impact statement would help us to understand your design approach and how it has been informed by an understanding of the asset's significance.