

Guidance for what to write in Heritage Statements

Para 128 of NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework 2012) states that “Local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting”

For applications for listed building consent, a Heritage Statement is a written statement that includes a schedule of works to the listed building(s), an analysis of the significance of archaeology, history and character of the building/structure, the principles of and justification for the proposed works and their impact on the special character of the listed building or structure, its setting and the setting of adjacent listed buildings may be required. A structural survey may be required in support of an application for listed building consent.

For most applications the heritage statement will include the following components:

1) A description of the heritage asset and its setting

The following may be considered:

- Which conservation area does the building form part of?
- What is the age of the building?
- What are the main characteristics in terms of style, building materials and architectural features e.g. window type?
- What is the surrounding development of the area like? Is the building part of a development of the same age and style, perhaps by the same builder?

Describe the street scene: Is it of residential or commercial character? Is there a variety or coherence in building form and types? Is it suburban e.g. are there front gardens to the buildings?

2) An assessment of significance

The following may be considered:

- How does the building contribute to the historic character of the area?
- Is it one of its kind? Is it part of group of buildings of similar style and age? Is it one of a pair of semi-detached, or part of a terrace in which the single house forms a unit within a larger entity?
- Are there any distinctive architectural features?
- How does the setting contribute to the character and appearance of the asset?

3) An explanation of the design concept for the proposed development.

- For small scale alterations: What are the design and proposed materials?
- For extensions to buildings or proposals for new development: What is amount of development, layout, scale, landscaping and appearance (e.g. building materials and architectural detail)?

4) Describing the impact of the proposed development

The following may be considered:

- Would the proposed development be visible from any public viewpoint?
- Would the proposed development involve loss or change to any original features?
- For extensions and new build: What would be the impact on the appearance, character and setting of the building?
- For small-scale alterations: If not a 'like-for-like' replacement – what would be the visual impact? Would it preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the building and streetscene?

The statement should show clearly that you have considered all the relevant issues and sought to preserve the special appearance and character of the building or area affected. Information on any sources and expertise that has been consulted should also be provided.

As a minimum, applicants are expected to consult the Winchester City Council Historic Environment Record (HER) for information on the history of the building, site or area as well as the National Heritage List produced by English Heritage, relevant local plan policies and any available Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

The HER is the principal source of information about the historic environment of Winchester District and is managed and organised on a computer database, which is combined with GIS mapping technology. The database is an index to fuller information and is supplemented with various types of information, such as plans, photographs, reports, books, maps, etc.

The Heritage Statement should ideally be prepared by an appropriate professional with the necessary expertise to properly assess the heritage asset and its significance. For buildings or sites of high significance it is recommended that the statement be prepared by an architectural historian, an accredited conservation architect or qualified archaeologist. 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.

GLOSSARY

Designated heritage asset:

A world heritage site, scheduled monument, listed building, protected wreck site, registered park or garden, registered battlefield or conservation area.

Non-designated heritage asset:

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. These shall normally be identified by the local planning authority during the pre-application enquiry stage, during decision-making or through the plan making process.

Setting:

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make

a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Significance:

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.

GUIDANCE FOR HERITAGE STATEMENTS

When development proposals are being considered by local authorities, in order to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework, local authorities will require an applicant in certain circumstances to “describe the significance of any heritage assets, affected including any contribution made by their setting”. Heritage assets are “buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Heritage statements need to be proportionate in terms of complexity, content and detail, to the proposals being made and the significance in heritage terms of the site affected. This guidance sets out a basic structure which you should apply to your Heritage Statement if asked to produce one.

For most applications the heritage statement should include the following components: -

1) A description of the heritage asset and its setting

The following may be considered:

- Is the building or structure listed? Do you know when and why? Does it lie within the curtilage of a listed building?
- Is it located within a conservation area?
- What is the age of the building?
- What are the main characteristics in terms of style, building materials and architectural features e.g. window type? Why is the building interesting?
- What is the surrounding area like? Is the building part of a development of the same age and style, perhaps by the same builder? Perhaps it is unique and stands out? Does it form a group with others?
- Describe the street scene: Is it of residential or commercial character? Is there a variety or coherence in building form and types? Does it have a front garden?

2) An assessment of significance

The following may be considered:

- How does the building contribute to the historic character of the area?
- Is it one of its kind? Is it part of group of buildings of similar style and age? Is it one of a pair of semi-detached, or part of a terrace in which the single house forms a unit within a larger entity?
- What are the phases of alteration to the building? These may cover a number of centuries.
- Are there any distinctive architectural features?
- How does the setting contribute to the character and appearance of the asset?

3) An explanation of the design concept for the proposed development.

- For small scale alterations: What are the design and proposed materials?
- For extensions to buildings or proposals for new development: Describe the form of development. How is it laid out? How has the scale or extension been considered? What materials and detailing are to be used? Is there additional or altered landscaping proposed?
- What historic fabric will be affected?

4) A description of the impact of the proposal

The following may be considered:

- Would the proposed development be visible from any public viewpoint or only from inside the site itself?
- Would the proposed development involve loss or change to any original features? Does it impact on any known or likely archaeology? If so, by how much and how is it justified and/or mitigated?
- What would be the impact on the appearance, character and setting of the building? Why have the particular design choices been made? Have others been discarded in the design process? Why?
- How does the proposal preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the building and streetscene?
- What harm or loss of historic interest might result from the proposal? How is this justified or mitigated?

A Heritage statement should demonstrate how you have considered the relevant issues and sought to preserve the special appearance and character of the building or area affected. Information on any sources and expertise that has been consulted is helpful as are photographs and plan or map extracts.

As a minimum, applicants are expected to have consulted the Winchester City Council Historic Environment Record (HER) for information on the history of the building, site or area as well as the National Heritage List produced by English Heritage, relevant local plan policies and any available Conservation Area Character Appraisals. Links are set out [below](#).

Winchester's HER is the principal source of information about the historic environment of Winchester District and is managed and organised on a computer database, which is combined with GIS mapping technology. The database is an index to fuller information and is supplemented with various types of information, such as plans, photographs, reports, books, maps, etc.

For simple proposals it is perfectly acceptable for homeowners or other non-specialists to prepare their own Heritage Statements providing the issues set out above are addressed. Where the development affects a more complex site and has more wide

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reaching heritage impacts, it might be preferable for the statement to be compiled by a professional with the necessary expertise to properly assess the heritage asset and its significance. For buildings or sites of high significance it is recommended that the statement be prepared by an architectural historian, an accredited conservation architect, specialist heritage consultant, or qualified archaeologist. 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.

Heritage Statements should be submitted with the other application documentation as your application may be invalidated without it.