

DESIGN AND CONSERVATION

HERITAGE STATEMENTS – WHAT ARE THEY?

Apart from a requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework, the heritage statement is an important tool to guide and inform your development proposal. As good practice, it should therefore be **one of the first** things that you should consider when beginning to formulate your proposal.

Without this document how can any development proposal be argued to be appropriate before a thorough understanding of the heritage asset has first been undertaken?

This guidance note sets out why the Council ask for heritage statements, what should be in the statement and when it is needed. Getting this right first time, will assist in making sure the application you go onto make can be determined

Pre application discussion is encouraged for all designated heritage assets.

What is the policy basis for heritage statements?

Statements of significance, referred to in this guidance as Heritage Statements, became compulsory when the Government's Guidance entitled 'Planning for the Historic Environment' (PPS5) was published.

The PPS5 was replaced in 2012 by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012. It has been revised several times, including 13 December 2024.

Para 207 of NPPF states 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. A glossary of terms used, and sources of further information are included at the end of this document”.

When are statements needed?

The statement must be submitted with any application for

1. Listed Building Applications
2. Planning Permission
 - a. Within the curtilage of a Listed Building (or affecting the setting of)
 - b. Development adjoining a conservation area
 - c. Within a designated conservation area
 - d. Registered Historic Parks or Gardens
 - e. known archaeological sites
 - f. Scheduled Monuments
 - g. Battlefields

Applications for consent will not be validated or processed unless the heritage statement has been submitted.

Non designated heritage assets

A statement **may** also be requested if the Council identifies the building or site as a non-designated heritage asset of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest during the pre-application or application process.

What should the statement contain?

There is no prescribed format for a heritage statement. Officers will encourage early pre application discussions with applicants to offer guidance. In addition, Historic England has produced useful advice in the form of a document entitled Statements of Heritage Significance- Historic England Advice Note 12 dated 2019.

This might include

- providing advice how detailed the heritage statement will need to be to prevent unnecessary work being carried out
- help steer suggested changes in the right direction

- provide guidance on when it's appropriate to include Historic England and other outside bodies

The level of involvement will depend on the nature of works suggested, and the sensitivity of the site.

The heritage statement should ideally be prepared by an appropriate professional with the necessary expertise to properly assess the heritage asset and its significance. The level of detail and length of the statement required will differ depending on the application nature.

It is recommended that the statement be prepared by an architectural historian, an accredited conservation architect or qualified archaeologist. Preferably by a person who is a full member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC).

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.

The Heritage Statement can form part of a Design and Access Statement, or as standalone documents, but should contain sufficient detail to assess the history and character of the building, site or area and justify the proposed works in terms of their impact on the heritage asset.

The statement should

1. Assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of the asset and its setting and should be detailed enough that the impact of the proposed works on that significance and setting can be properly assessed by the local planning authority. This may also include assessment and consideration of any structural works required as part of the proposed changes. It is recommended works of this nature are undertaken and inputted by professionals with experience in heritage assets and appear on the Conservation Accreditation Register of Engineers (CARE register) or have IHBC qualifications in the necessary area of expertise.
2. Provide adequate details relating to materials to be used, whilst not directly related to the significance of the asset, a full understanding of the detailed elements of the proposal will prevent outstanding information being secured via planning conditions, which could further delay a project on site if permission is granted. Limited conditions by providing the information up front and explaining this

in the heritage statement is a more positive way of using the process.

3. Provide well captioned photographs and other illustrations, these are very helpful and useful substitutes for plain text and can help in making the relevant points.
4. **Reference the HER** (The Historical Environment Record)- this is the principal source of information about the historic environment of Bolton 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.

In cases where Heritage Statements are required as outlined above, and are not included or are not sufficient for officers to assess the impacts of the proposed works or changes this may result in

- *Refusal of your application*
- *Formal request by officers for further, more detailed information which may result in delays to your application being determined in the usual timeframes.*

How to Find the Right Professional Help

It is important to find professional advisers and contractors with the skills and experience to work on older buildings. In the additional information below you can find out why this is important and more about the trades and professions that may be able to help you.

Bolton Council cannot recommend any individuals or businesses. This page links to registers of professionals.

For more information regarding individuals and companies accredited by trade and professional associations, please look at the link below referring to Contractors.

GLOSSARY

Designated heritage asset:

A world heritage site, scheduled monument, listed building, protected wreck site, registered park of 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.

USEFUL INFORMATION**Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) List of Accredited Practitioners**

Link [IHBC Accredited Practitioners](#)

Register of Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Certified Historic Building Professionals

Link [register-of-rics-certified-historic-building-professionals-september-2024_161224.pdf](#)

Conservation Accreditation Register of Engineers (CARE)

Link [rgn-6-conservation-accreditation-register-for-engineers.pdf](#)

Architects with proven expertise in Heritage

Royal Institute of British Architecture (RIBA)

Link [Conservation Register](#)

or

Link [Home Page | AABC: The Register of Architects Accredited in Building Conservation](#)

Contractors – Why relevant experience matters

[How to Find the Right Professional Help | Historic England](#)

Historic England Northwest Office

Canada House, Chepstow Street, Manchester

Tel: 0370 333 0607/ 0161 242 1416 or email:

Link [North West Regional Office | Historic England](#)

Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service - GMAAS

The Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record, maintained by **GMAAS**, is a Geographical Information System (GIS) and linked database of more than 19,000 records relating to known sites of cultural heritage interest.

Link [Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service - GMAAS](#)

The National Heritage List

Link [Search the List - Find listed buildings, monuments, battlefields and more | Historic England](#)

The Heritage Gateway

Link [HeritageGateway - Home *](#)

National Planning Policy Framework

Link [National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK](#)

Planning Practice Guidance

Link [Planning practice guidance - GOV.UK](#)

Historic England Guidance Notes

Link [Latest Advice and Guidance | Historic England](#)

Adopted Development Plans and relevant policy documents

(Neighbourhood Plans for each area where adopted).

Link [Planning policy and strategy – Bolton Council](#)

Greater Manchester Plan

Link [Places For Everyone - Greater Manchester Combined Authority](#)

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