

# Heritage Statement/Guidance Notes for Assessments of Significance for Applications affecting Heritage Assets



**The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** of February 2019 requires applications affecting **Heritage Assets** to be accompanied by an "**Assessment of Significance**".

**'Heritage Assets'** are:

- Listed Buildings
- Conservation Areas
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Registered Historic Parks and Gardens
- Battlefields
- Other non-designated sites and buildings of local architectural, historic or archaeological interest as determined by the local authority, such as non-listed farm buildings, chapels, archaeological sites and locally important historic parks and gardens.

This guidance note is designed to explain what information should be submitted as part of an Assessment of Significance, and where to find that information. It is supplemented at the end with useful links to on line heritage information at national and local level.

### **Why is an Assessment of Significance required?**

The NPPF aims to conserve heritage assets and their settings in a manner appropriate to their significance. The intention of the assessment is to give an understanding of the nature, extent and importance of a heritage asset and its setting, so that the potential impact of change on its significance can be properly judged, as well as to help inform successful design.

Applications submitted without an Assessment of Significance will not be validated.

### **What should be included in an Assessment of Significance include?**

The information submitted should be proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset and no more than is needed to understand the potential impact on that significance, i.e. the more significant the asset the more information needs to be provided.

**To assist with structuring an assessment a pro-forma has been produced to accompany these notes which can be used when submitting an application.**

The pro-forma is only intended as a guide and doesn't have to be used. Where a proposed change is minor an assessment might just be a short paragraph and could be included as part of a Design and Access Statement. For more significant proposals it might need to be a supplementary document with additional reports, studies, historic information, photographs and any other information where relevant.

## What is Significance?

**Significance** is defined in Annexe 2 of the NPPF as:

**“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.”**

As well as requesting general descriptive information about the heritage asset affected, the Council can ask for an assessment of significance of the site or building and its setting under more than one heading. However, for most applications it is likely that only some of these will be relevant. The headings are:

- **Historic significance** – this looks at the age and history of the asset, its development over time, the strength of its tie to a particular architectural or historic period, the layout of a site, the plan form of a building, internal features of special interest including chimneystacks and fireplaces, links to history such as an important architect/landscape designer or owner or more locally to such as a local industry or agriculture
- **Architectural and Artistic Significance** – this is the design and general aesthetics of a place, either from a particular architectural or garden design or from the way a place, garden or a building has evolved over time. It includes its visual qualities and characteristics, long views of it in the landscape, legibility of form, character of elevations, roofscape, materials, fabric, construction, craftsmanship, decoration and any specific artistic interest such as sculpture.
- **Archaeological significance** – mostly for sites of archaeological interest, this should look at the evolution of the monument, phases of development over different periods, important features, evidence in building fabric, potential for below ground remains and how it relates to its setting. It can also be relevant for conservation areas and historic parks and gardens where there is potential for archaeology beneath later phases of development.

To be able to address these considerations, and depending on the nature of the heritage asset, there may be a need to:

- look at the asset and its setting;
- undertake a desk-top and on-site analysis;
- consider whether an expert assessment or supplementary analysis is necessary (e.g. archaeological, structural analysis, architectural historian, social history, etc.); It is important to remember that archaeological interest is not confined to below ground remains; an archaeological interpretive survey of a building can be key in understanding phases of development and the significance of features;
- Consider the need for exploratory works to understand hidden layers of fabric

## Listed Buildings

For demolition of, an extension to, or removal of historic features such as windows, staircases, fireplaces or walls, it will be necessary to provide an assessment of the listed building as a whole. For a smaller alterations, such as a new window or removal of a modern feature, it may only be necessary to provide an assessment of the affected part of the building. For development affecting the setting of a listed building, an assessment of the building as a whole and the value of its setting will be required.

## Conservation Areas

For demolition of buildings and new development in a Conservation Area, such as a new house or a garage it will be necessary to provide an assessment of the part of the conservation area to be affected and the wider conservation area. For more minor works, such as a modest extension to a dwelling it will be necessary to provide an assessment of only the part of the conservation area affected. For development affecting the setting of a conservation area it will be necessary to provide an assessment of the conservation area and the value of its setting.

## Scheduled Ancient Monuments

For development affecting a monument or its setting it will be necessary to provide an assessment of the monument as a whole and its setting.

## Registered Parks and Gardens

For development affecting a registered park, or their setting, it will be necessary to providing an assessment of the park, garden and its setting.

## Useful Websites

- **National Planning Policy Framework**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

- **National Planning Practice Guidance**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

- **Historic England**

Main website: - <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/>

Search facility to find all listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks, registered parks and gardens, and battlefields:-

<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>

- **Heritage Gateway**

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

- **Staffordshire Historic Environment Record**

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/Environment-and-countryside/HistoricEnvironment/Historic-environment-record.aspx>

- **East Staffordshire Borough Council**

Interactive Online Mapping (showing the location of heritage assets)

<http://mapping.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk:8080/rmx4-webapp/estaffs-client/map.htm?TABS=layers,search,help>

- **Local Plan Policies** (Policies SP25, DP5 and DP6 deal specifically with development impacting upon heritage assets)

<http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan-2012-2031>

- **Neighbourhood Plans**

Many Neighbourhood Plans have heritage related policies see:-

<http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/neighbourhood-plans>

- **General Heritage Guidance**

<http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/planning/conservation-and-listed-buildings>

- **Conservation Area Appraisals**

<http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/planning/conservation-and-listed-buildings/view-conservation-area-appraisals>

- **Agricultural Buildings (including re-use)**

<http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/docs/planning/planningpolicy/spd/Reuseofreduadantfarmbuildings.pdf>

<http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/docs/planning/planningpolicy/spd/GuidanceonTraditionalFarmsteads.pdf>