

Bournemouth Borough Council

Heritage Statement Guidance Note

What are Heritage Assets?

Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, buildings on the Local List, Scheduled Monuments or Archaeological sites are all heritage assets. Heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and they should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

What are Heritage Statements?

When an application is submitted to the Local Planning Authority for a proposal which is likely to affect a heritage asset, or its setting, a heritage assessment must be undertaken. This assessment, which is generally known as a Heritage Statement, will detail the impact of any proposals upon the heritage asset.

Why do I have to provide a Heritage Statement?

The need for a heritage assessment is identified in The National Planning Practice Guidance, Policy 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Policies CS39 and CS40 of the Bournemouth Local Plan Core Strategy.

If a Heritage Statement is not submitted, the submitted application will not be validated. The Local Planning Authority must also have sufficient information to fully understand the implications of a proposal and if a heritage statement contains insufficient information with which to assess this impact the application may be refused, or a request may be made for it to be withdrawn.

Are Heritage Statements and Design and Access Statements the same?

A Heritage Statement is not the same as a Design and Access Statement. However, the information required for a Heritage Statement can be submitted as a separate statement which will accompany the application, or it can be included within a Design and Access Statement. If the Heritage Statement is part of a Design and Access Statement it should be in a separate, clearly headed section and easily identifiable within the document.

What types of application require a Heritage Statement?

A Heritage Statement is required for applications for work which affect:

- a listed building (interior and exterior)
- a conservation area
- a registered park or garden
- a building on the local list
- a scheduled ancient monument or archaeological site

Proposals that affect the setting of any of these heritage assets will also require a Heritage Statement.

Who can write a Heritage Statement?

It is important that the statement is an evidence based assessment and does not simply express a personal view on whether the works should be approved. Depending on the nature of the proposals a suitably qualified specialist or professional consultant will be required. This could include a conservation expert, structural engineer, building surveyor or conservation specialist (i.e. stone mason).

However, in some cases, for smaller schemes which are likely to have a limited impact (i.e. householder) it may be possible for an assessment to be undertaken and a statement written by the applicant themselves.

How long or detailed should a Heritage Statement be?

The length of the statement and level of detail will vary depending on the significance of the heritage asset (i.e. the asset's importance), the nature of the proposal and its impact on the heritage asset. Policy 128 of the NPPF advises that an applicant should 'describe the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance'.

A heritage statement will allow the applicant to show that they have understood and considered the significance of the heritage asset when putting forward their proposals. This will be relevant for different types of proposals which may include new buildings, extensions, alterations or repairs.

For example a significant level of detail will be required for proposals to replace windows in a listed building but a similar proposal for a property in a conservation area will require less information. A large scale development proposal involving demolition and new build in a conservation area will also require a significantly greater level of detail than, for example, the erection of a small conservatory to a dwelling house in a conservation area. For a small scale scheme with a limited impact a short statement may be sufficient.

What information should a Heritage Statement contain?

The content of a Heritage Statement will vary depending on the nature and extent of works. However, in all cases, full consideration should be given to:

- **assessing the significance** of the heritage asset,
- **assessing the potential impact** of the works proposed to it, and
- **justification** for the works.

Consideration of these three key issues will help the Planning Authority to understand more fully the nature, extent and impact of the proposals.

Assessing the significance

The significance of any heritage assets affected, including the contribution made by their setting, should be described. Significance relates to 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. Consideration should be given to:

- What the heritage asset is and why it is important.
- What contributes to its special interest (i.e. materials, architecture, scale, form, features, street pattern, layout, design, landscaping, trees).
- The importance of the parts of a building/area affected by the proposals (i.e. are they original or later additions).
- Examining historic maps, listed building descriptions and Conservation Area Appraisals.
- Whether the asset is unique or part of a group of similar buildings/area.
- What is important about the setting of the building/area.
- Whether an expert assessment is required to gain the necessary level of understanding.

Assessing the potential impact

The statement should contain sufficient information to fully understand the potential impact of the proposal upon the significance of the heritage asset and its setting. This will consider all of the impacts of the proposed works upon the importance of the heritage asset. Consideration should be given to:

- How the work will affect the special interest of the area or building (including consideration of design and the use of appropriate products, materials and methods of construction/repair).
- Whether the changes will result in the loss of original elements.
- Details of potential heritage benefits including whether the proposal will preserve, enhance or better reveal the special interest of the building/area.
- The submission of a schedule of works or method statement detailing the nature and extent of works.
- What specialist skills are required (i.e. conservation specialist such as - architect, surveyor, stone mason).
- The need to protect surrounding features or buildings.

- The recording of elements prior to removal/demolition/concealment.
- Whether the work is reversible without causing damage.
- How the proposal will affect the setting of the building or area.
- Details of conservation advice or discussions with English Heritage.
- Relevant planning policies and planning history.

Justification

The reason for the proposed works should be clearly justified along with details of the steps that have been taken to avoid or minimise any harm or loss. Consideration should be given to:

- A structural survey to assess the condition of a building or to explain how and why works are necessary.
- A mitigation strategy - where important archaeological remains exist.
- Whether the works are absolutely necessary and whether alternative solutions have been investigated (i.e. by altering a less sensitive part of the building or redesigning/repositioning an extension which may cause less or no harm).
- The submission of supporting evidence to justify any enabling development (i.e. financial details, market testing).
- Whether the works result in harm and if so that supporting evidence has been submitted to address the criteria identified in Policy 133 or 134 of the NPPF.

What do I do if I require further advice?

Please contact:

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