

## Statement of Significance for Heritage Assets

### What is a Statement of Significance?

These are statements that form part of the justification for the proposal which demonstrates that consideration has been given to the protection of the heritage asset and or its setting. Its purpose is to identify important characteristics or significance of the existing heritage asset, explain how the proposals would affect these aspects and justify why this is necessary or desirable. This will help to ensure that care is taken to preserve the special appearance and character of the building or area which is affected, and the Council is required to consider this has been undertaken.

*The National Planning Policy Framework states: "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". (Feb 2019, para 189)*

### When is a Statement of Significance required?

A Statement of Significance or Heritage Statement is required when an application affects a heritage asset, namely *Listed Buildings, buildings in Conservation Areas, locally listed buildings, registered parks and gardens or archaeological sites* and any proposal which affects the setting of any of the above.

### What could the Statement of Significance include?

The scope will vary on the extent of the proposals and the importance of the asset. For example, a larger development which includes demolition will require a more in-depth expert approach than a small change like a replacement window. Enough information should be provided to enable the importance of the asset to be understood and to understand the potential input of the proposal on the assets significance. Such a statement can be incorporated into a Design and Access Statement.

As a minimum the relevant Historic Environment Record (HER) should be consulted and ideally should include the following components:

1. **A description of the heritage asset and its setting**, such as,
  - What is the heritage asset, or what does it form part of?
  - what is the approximate age of the asset and how has it developed over time?
  - what are the main characteristics, e.g. in terms of style, building materials and architectural features such as window types?
  - what is the surrounding area or streetscene like?
  - building form and type; for example is it suburban with gardens fronting the properties?

The Statement can be supplemented with additional reports, studies, historical information, photographs and any other information where relevant.

2. **Assessing significance**

- How does the asset contribute to the historic character of the area? How does the setting contribute to the character and appearance of the asset?
- Is it one of a kind or part of a group?

### 3. Describing the design concept of the proposed development.

- Why has that design been chosen?
- what are the proposed design and materials, including layouts and landscaping?

### 4. Impact of the proposed development.

- What part of the asset will be affected by your proposal?
- Would the proposed development be visible from any public viewpoint?
- Would the proposed development involve loss or change to any original features/fabric, above or below ground?
- For extensions and new build: what would be the impact on the appearance, character and setting of the building?
- Would any alteration preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the asset and area?

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.

### Where can I get information for my Assessment of Significance?

There are a variety of sources that can help you find out and describe the significance of the heritage asset that is the subject of your application. They will not all be relevant to each case. These include:

- The County Historic Environment Record (HER). A database of all heritage assets within Staffordshire, including listed buildings, buildings of local importance, conservation areas, registered parks, scheduled monuments and other sites of archaeological significance. The HER officer can be contacted by emailing [her@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:her@staffordshire.gov.uk)
- Conservation Area Appraisals. These have been prepared for a number of Conservation Areas within the Borough and are available online at [www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/conservation](http://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/conservation) or by contacting [planningconservation@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk](mailto:planningconservation@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk)
- The National Heritage List for England is an online resource providing list descriptions for all nationally-designated heritage assets, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and scheduled monuments. The descriptions provide a starting point for researchers. [www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/)
- National Amenity Societies (Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings, Georgian Group, Victorian Society, Twentieth Century Society, Garden History Society). These groups publish extensive material on their websites and in books and journals.

This list is not exhaustive. There might be other texts relevant to your heritage asset, for example in local libraries or local history websites