

# Blackpool Council



## **GUIDANCE ON THE PREPARATION OF HERITAGE STATEMENTS**

### **Information requirements for applications affecting heritage assets**

Conservation areas, listed buildings, other locally listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, and archaeological remains are also known as heritage assets. Most development affecting heritage assets needs planning permission or consent. This helps the Council to manage change to the historic environment. Statements of significance, referred to in this guidance as Heritage Statements, became compulsory in March 2010 when PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment was published. This requirement is repeated within para 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012 which 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”

A heritage statement is required for all applications affecting listed buildings, unlisted buildings in conservation areas or locally listed buildings, registered historic parks or gardens, or affecting known archaeological sites. A heritage statement is also required for applications affecting the setting of any of the above. Applications for demolition within conservation areas should also include the supporting evidence and justification required by para 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

#### **What information should a heritage statement include?**

The Heritage Statement can form part of a Design and Access Statement, 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 set out the significance of the asset and its setting, and should be detailed enough that the impact of the proposed works on the significance and setting can be properly assessed by the local planning authority.

The scope and complexity of a heritage statement will vary, however, depending on the extent of the proposals and the importance of the building. Larger development proposals that include demolition and new build in a conservation area will require a more in-depth approach than, for example, the replacement of a boundary wall or a front door. Similarly, the scope and depth of

information required for an application for listed building consent will be much more than for planning permission for works to a locally listed building.

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 Lancashire County Council Historic Environment Record (HER) or Blackpool Local and Family History Centre at Central Library, Queen Street (tel: 01253 478095) for information on the history of the building, site or area. Historic Asset Record datasheets for locally listed buildings are available from the Built Heritage Team (telephone 01253 476332). In addition, the National Heritage List produced by English Heritage will give you information on listed buildings, and relevant local plan policies and any available Conservation Area Appraisals should be consulted where appropriate.

The heritage statement should ideally be prepared by an appropriate professional with the necessary expertise to assess properly 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.

### **Listed Buildings**

The significance of the building should be assessed using the following list for guidance. This should be followed by an explanation of the proposed works, methodology, and a description of the impact of the works on the significance of the building, together with any proposed mitigation.

Age and history, describing its phases of development over time

Description of its architecture and the layout of the site

Internal features of special interest such as fireplaces, decorative plasterwork, staircases and other fixtures

The role the site plays in the townscape

The role the site plays in local, regional and national cultural history

The use of the building, historically and currently

Original architect or owner

Visual qualities and characteristics of the building, including roofscape

Design and materials

Special external features of interest

Potential for underground archaeological remains

## **Locally Listed Buildings**

Para 128 of the NPPF states that the level of detail in a heritage statement should be proportionate to the heritage asset's importance, and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on its significance. Blackpool's locally listed buildings have been assessed using the same criteria applied to statutory listed buildings, and a brief heritage statement setting out significance, methodology and impact should be based, where appropriate, on the guidance given above for listed buildings.

## **Conservation Areas**

The following should be included:

Name and nature of the conservation area e.g. residential, commercial

Age of the building, and its contribution to the character of the conservation area

Is the building one of a kind or part of a 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?

Main characteristics of style, building materials and architectural features of the building itself, and the wider conservation area

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 the amount of development, layout, scale, landscaping, architectural details and building materials?

Describe the impact e.g. would the development be visible from any public viewpoint, would there be a loss of architectural features, what would be impact on the character of the building, and would it preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area?

## **USEFUL WEBSITES**

### **The National Heritage List**

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>

### **The Heritage Gateway**

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

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/planningpolicy/planningpolicyframework/>

### **Planning Practice Guidance**

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/>