



**Workshop on Planning-led research and investigation  
for the historic built environment.**

Produced by IHBC Enterprises Ltd for and on behalf of The  
Institute of Historic Building Conservation

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report is the conclusion of a project on understanding the potential public value of investigation of the historic built environment generated through the planning system. The project included a workshop with structured round table discussion between delegates covering a variety of professional backgrounds and interests.
- 1.2 The overall aim of the project was to suggest ways of delivering public benefit through the specification of improvements in areas of practice on the publication and dissemination of the results of historic built environment investigation work.  
The objectives were;
  - to examine the role of research and investigation in the planning system
  - to assess if this information is of wider use to the public
  - to examine if it is being made public and if not how this could be done
- 1.3 The project set out to look at building related research to establish, once the decision making process has been completed, what does or what should happen to the investigative material generated.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 This project came about to address issues specific to the historic built environment which were not covered in the report generally known as the 'Southport Report', "Realising the benefits of planning led investigation in the historic environment: A framework for delivery" (Final report, July 2011) and highlighted as representing an area of concern for the sector in the IHBC's HER 21 project, 'Information and Partnerships'.
- 2.2 The Southport report reported on findings from workshops, and economic study and consultation, and set out a vision for planning-led investigation of the historic environment sector. The report provided a series of recommendations, to be developed by suggested partner organisations. These aimed to "enable the sector to make a deliberate, bold and consistent set of improvements to how it understands, investigates, records, involves communities and communicates the significance of historic environment assets in the context of the planning process".
- 2.3 Recommendation 18 of this report describes the Investigation of the built historic environment and recommends that;

“EH with Southport Group members, built environment professional bodies and other built environment research organisations convene a workshop on developing understanding of potential public value from investigation in the historic built environment, addressing issues specific to the built historic environment.”

- 2.4 The Southport report itself acknowledged its own lack of coverage of the historic built environment and this project has come forward to partly fill that gap and to meet the need identified as Product P16 of that report
- Product number: P16
  - Product title: Historic built environment workshop
  - Purpose of the Product: to address issues specific to the historic built environment not covered in the Southport Report
  - Composition: a workshop on developing an understanding of potential public value from investigation in the historic built environment
  - Derived from: Southport Report recommendations 18
  - Format and presentation:
  - Potential partners: English Heritage, Southport Group, built environment professional bodies
  - Quality criteria and method: Person/group responsible for quality assurance:
  - Person/group responsible for approval:
  - Planned completion date:

## 3 The workshop

- 3.1 The project workshop was held on Tuesday 20th October 2015 at The Carriage Shop, Derby Roundhouse. The programme for the day is included at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The workshop audience was made up of delegates invited to cover a variety of professional backgrounds and interests. The delegate list for the workshop is also included at Appendix 1. The structured round table discussion was carried out in small groups with each group containing a cross section of professional backgrounds and drawn up in advance of the day to ensure this.
- 3.3 The audience was made up of those who
- produce historic building and area related reports which feed into the planning system
  - produce plans and proposals for historic buildings
  - administrate the acceptance and retention of reports within the planning system
  - deal with planning reports as part of the planning decision making process
  - research historic buildings to inform the planning process
  - publish and disseminate research material

- use the information, including for public engagement, interpretation, education promotion and outreach, that can shape planning outcomes
  - have a general interest in the area
- 3.4 Informal feedback from a number of delegates congratulated the organisers on a very interesting day which was excellent CPD for those attending, making them think about aspects they had never considered and learning about the perspectives of other professions and interest areas. This in itself was a slightly unexpected positive outcome from the project: providing quality well received CPD for around 40 delegates.
- 3.5 Each workshop group was provided with a facilitator and a scribe. The notes of the groups were then developed into a single discussion overview report of the day, which is appended to this report at Appendix 2. Although this overview here forms an appendix contains some very detailed and relevant material. The completed discussion overview was circulated to delegates and their comments noted in its completion.

## 4 Understanding the role of researching buildings in the planning system

- 4.1 Broadly research on buildings was identified as falling into three broad areas.
- Research informing planning applications
  - Research following application approval or refusal
  - Research guiding policy and local authority action including that which informs and enhances public engagement in the planning process.
- 4.2 This simple categorisation of the areas of research was agreed as suitable by the workshop participants.

### 4.3 Research informing planning applications

- 4.3.1 **Research conclusions contained in Statements of significance & Heritage Statements**
- 4.3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states at paragraph 128 '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.'
- 4.3.3 Heritage Statements and/or Statements of Significance are produced for applications for

- listed building consent
- within the curtilage of a listed building
- in Conservation Areas
- affecting Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- affecting a Registered Park or Garden of Special Historic Interest;
- affecting an archaeological site.
- affecting non designated heritage assets

4.3.4 Whilst the requirement for assessing the significance of heritage assets applies to all assets, whether designated or non-designated, the main planning vehicle in which this becomes most important for buildings is the application for Listed Building Consent

4.3.5 Listed Building Consent is normally required for works of demolition alteration or extension of a listed building which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. This will apply to the building itself, any object or structure fixed to it and any object or structure that has been within the curtilage of the building since 1948.

4.3.6 There is no definitive guidance on format or content for this statement of significance can contain other than the requirements of the NPPF which states at paragraph 128 “As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted *and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.*” (our emphasis) The latter more detailed assessment using skilled advisors is likely to include some element of original research. Many local planning authorities also offer guidance on what should be included<sup>1</sup>.

4.3.7 As well as the results of physical on site inspection of the building the statement of significance may include the informed conclusions of research using historic maps, documents and photographs.

4.3.8 Some statements of significance will be relatively limited that should be proportionate to the amount of work required, the impact on the significance of the building and the overall level of significance of the building. This variation of detail will be in response to NPPF paragraph 128 which requires that “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

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<sup>1</sup> Examples of local authority guidance on preparing a statement of significance

<http://eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-permission/apply-for-planning-permission/listed-building-consent/statement-of-significance-guidance-notes-for-listed-buildings/>

<http://www.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/content/planning/planning-general/statement-of-significance.en>

<https://www.iwight.com/Residents/Environment-Planning-and-Waste/Planning/Conservation-and-Design/Heritage-Statements>

<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/heritage-conservation/heritage-statement-guidance/>

[http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/Environment/Planning\\_and\\_development\\_management/content/Pages/Heritage-statement.aspx](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/Environment/Planning_and_development_management/content/Pages/Heritage-statement.aspx)

<http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/article/2800/Heritage-statement-guidance>

significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary." An application, which proposes the loss of a whole building, should include a thorough analysis of the whole building and how the proposals will impact on the significance of the building. Whilst minor works to just a part of the building could include some general comment on the significance of the whole building along with a more detailed analysis of the part to be altered.

- 4.3.9 As a result some statements of significance may not be very extensive or contain significant levels of research because the building has limited significance, the proposed works do not impact on the buildings significance or the works are very minor.
- 4.3.10 The investigation of the usefulness of the research assumes that the Statement of Significance actually contains information that is of wider interest outside the planning process and which contains any information which is the result of drawing together research findings, whether from primary or secondary sources.
- 4.3.11 Many statements of significance accepted by Local Authorities are short and contain little original research.

**Statement of significance for installation of ATM in Grade II Listed Bank**

*The building is grade II listing and has further architectural merit considering its location within a conservation area.*

**Statement of significance Grade II\* Listed Building.**

*This site of XX House is situated in the small hamlet of XXX which lies approximately 6.5 miles east of XXX and comprises a small church together with several houses and cottages, some of which are listed. The hamlet is surrounded by agricultural land. XX House is listed grade II\* and does not lie within a Conservation Area. The property is a large detached dwelling, formerly a Rectory, dating from the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century with later 18<sup>th</sup> century and 19<sup>th</sup>-century additions. Further alterations were carried out in the mid 1970s. The building is of two-storey construction with a single story lean to wing at the West end. The dwelling has a pantiled roof, painted brick external walls and softwood painted external joinery.*

*Internally there is a single flight staircase with turned balusters, tapering fluted newel and carved tread ends. The staircase has been reversed from its original layout. XX House is particularly noteworthy as being the birthplace of the poet laureate, XXX.*

There is actually more information in the **Statutory list description** for the same property

*Rectory, now house. Mid C18 with later C18 and C19 additions, c.1975 alterations. Colourwashed red brick. Pantile roof. 2 red brick gable stacks. Brick coped gables. First floor band. Double*



*ridge roof. 2 storeys plus cellar, 5 bays. Single segmental arched cellar opening to the left. Doorway with 6 fielded panel door and traceried fanlight flanked by single slender Doric pilasters with entablature and open pediment. C19 gabled hood with orb finial. To the left are 4 cambered arched glazing bar sashes. To the right a single small gabled hood with bell under. Above are 3 similar sashes under flat heads, that on the right flanked by single small C20 sashes. Attached to the right is a similar C19 single storey plus attic, 2 bay wing, half hipped to the right. First floor band. 2 C20 casements. Attic has a single half dormer with hipped pantile roof and single tripartite casement. Attached to the left is a similar wing with single red brick ridge stack. 2 C20 tripartite casements with 2 similar half dormers above. Rear. The left single bay is single storey plus attic, the single bay to the right is late C18, of 2 storeys with coped gables, left gable stack and dentil eaves, further right are 2 mid C18 bays being lower 2 storeys, slightly set back with coped right gable with red brick stack, moulded eaves and first floor bands. On the far right are 3 C20 single storey plus attic bays replacing the demolished wing. Having from left to right a single segmental arched glazing bar Yorkshire sash, a 2 storey canted bay being C20 to the ground floor and C19 to the first floor with 3 glazing bar sashes, 2 large segmental arched glazing bar sashes and in the C20 wing 2 giant order pointed arched panels which break the roof line and are gabled over having 3 glazing bar sashes with concrete lintels. Above in the attic is a single half dormer with 2 glazing bar sashes, to the right, in the canted bay, are 3 glazing bar sashes, further right are 2 glazing bar sashes with ornate wrought iron balcony to that on the right. In the C20 bays are 2 pointed arched glazing bar sashes with intersecting tracery. Interior. Re-set single flight staircase with turned balusters, tapering fluted newel and carved tread ends. Balusters also to landing.*

- 4.3.12 How can the poor quality of many statements be improved upon? The planning system requires its inclusion at validation stage but does not monitor the quality of statements, the content or the level of professional input.
- 4.3.13 Those statements of significance which contain extensive original research might be of wider interest outside simply feeding into and informing the planning process. Many are thoroughly researched and contain new conclusions on the history and development of the building;

**Part of the map regression element of a more extensive and researched statement**

*Map regression assists in understanding recent history and development of the site. The 1824 OS map is the earliest of the site apart from estate surveys conducted in the 18th century.*

*These are not relevant or helpful in respect of the proposed works and are not included.*

*Fig 3 - Extract 1824 OS Map.*

*Fig 4 - Extract of the OS Map 1899 (surveyed in 1885-88). The stable block is seen but there are no outbuildings on this map.*

*Fig 5 - Extract of 1906 Map (Surveyed in 1888) provides a much better detail for the site. The outbuildings to north of the site are clearly in situ, and the passage between the hall and outside privy with its formal masking wall are also shown on this map. This gives a date for the outbuildings and privy of circa 1885 - 1888. However, brickwork on the formal masking wall of the privy contains earlier brickwork over the archway and to its frontage which appears to date from the late 18th or early 19th century. The privy was therefore affixed to the earlier garden wall. The folly and its mound are clearly demarcated to the SW corner of the site*

The full statement can be found at [http://publicaccess.e-lindsey.gov.uk/online-applications/files/410F2C4493DC51A28F77A9DA2B667298/pdf/N\\_019\\_00988\\_15-ASSESSMENT\\_OF\\_SIGNIFICANCE-3860948.pdf](http://publicaccess.e-lindsey.gov.uk/online-applications/files/410F2C4493DC51A28F77A9DA2B667298/pdf/N_019_00988_15-ASSESSMENT_OF_SIGNIFICANCE-3860948.pdf)

#### **4.3.14 Cultural heritage assessment as part of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)**

**4.3.15** Cultural heritage assessment of element of the Environmental Impact assessment<sup>2</sup>. The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 as amended apply the EU Environmental Impact Directive to the planning system. The regulations only apply to certain types of development. Major infrastructure or power projects have a mandatory EIA requirement whilst an EIA is also prepared for applications where the local planning authority considers the proposal may have a significant effect on the environment.

**4.3.16** An Environmental Statement (ES) describes the likely significant effects of the development upon the environment and any proposed mitigation measures.

**4.3.17** EIA's are usually carried out for major applications and are likely to include some research, even if secondary research, into the historic environment of the area in question.

**4.3.18 Design and Access Statements.** "A Design and Access Statement is a concise report accompanying certain applications for planning permission and applications for listed building consent. They provide a framework for applicants to explain how the proposed development

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/environmental-impact-assessment>

is a suitable response to the site and its setting, and demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users.”<sup>3</sup>

4.3.19 “The level of detail in a Design and Access Statement should be proportionate to the complexity of the application, but should not be long”<sup>4</sup>.

4.3.20 For more major work to listed buildings it is possible that Design and Access Statements might contain some element of research.

#### 4.3.21 **Local resident or amenity body research**

4.3.22 Research carried out by local research, resident, civic or amenity can feed into the planning system when it is carried out to resist rather than support development. Groups such as these may carry out their own research to counteract assumptions made in proposals, try to save a building or guide the more sensitive development of a site.

4.3.23 In many cases this research can be very comprehensive and detailed but can be less structured than professional research.

4.3.24 Once again this material will be hidden within the application files possibly appended to a letter of objection. Research based amenity groups may feel it appropriate to lodge their findings with the Historic Environment Record or offer them to the Local Studies Library but there is not system in place to ensure this occurs.

### 4.4 **Research following application approval or refusal**

4.4.1 Appeal statements and Public Inquiry expert witness proof of evidence for both LBC & also planning applications affecting listed buildings and their setting and other heritage assets, designated or non designated.

#### 4.4.2 **Outcome of discharge of Conditions**

4.4.3 *Planning Conditions* Section 16(1) of the LBCA Act 1990 provides that listed building consent may be granted subject to conditions and Planning Permission likewise can be granted conditionally. Research reports can be produced as a result of condition and submitted to the local planning authority to discharge these conditions.

4.4.4 *Recording* Recording can be required when a condition is attached. Building recording - Level 1 basic visual record, Level 2 a descriptive record, Level 3 an analytical record, Level 4 comprehensive analytical record. Something hitherto unseen may be discovered relevant Planning Permission or Listed Building Consent. Paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012): ‘Local planning

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-an-application#Design-and-Access-Statement>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-an-application#Design-and-Access-Statement>

authorities should make information about the significance of the historic environment gathered as part of plan-making or development management publicly accessible. They should also require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. (NPPF, paragraph 141). Work submitted may include recording at the four levels identified in Understanding Historic Buildings – a guide to good recording practice<sup>5</sup> which may be in the form of drawn or photographic surveys but may also include a written analysis including historical or archive assessment.

#### **4.4.5 Research produced in support of appeal statements / public inquiries.**

**4.4.6** Following refusal of an application the applicant may choose to appeal against the decision. There are three procedural routes that an appeal can follow, written representations, a hearing or an inquiry.<sup>6</sup>

**4.4.7** Research is likely to inform the more detailed examination of the issues surrounding the application and will be particularly relevant where expert evidence is presented on historic building issues.

## **4.5 Research guiding policy and local authority action**

### **4.5.1 Local listing & Local Heritage Review.**

**4.5.2** The survey of non-designated heritage assets in the whole local authority area or in specific smaller areas. Local lists are usually prepared using a set of prior agreed criteria<sup>7</sup> and the development of the list, whether by the local authority or by community groups, can include;

- historical documentary research
- visual analysis, inspection and survey
- historical map regression

### **4.5.3 Conservation area designation, appraisal and management<sup>8</sup>**

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<sup>5</sup> <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/heag099-understanding-historic-buildings.pdf/>

<sup>6</sup>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/544036/Procedural\\_Guide\\_Planning\\_appeals\\_v8\\_0.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/544036/Procedural_Guide_Planning_appeals_v8_0.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7/heag018-local-heritage-listing.pdf/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-designation-appraisal-management-advice-note-1/>

4.5.4 A Conservation Area is identified by the local authority as having definite architectural quality or historic interest that will merit designation<sup>9</sup>. Research can be carried out to inform the designation and develop future management proposals:

- historical research
- historical map regression
- characterisation studies and character and townscape analysis

4.5.5 Conservation Area Designation reports are usually prepared by the Local Authority. Conservation Areas are designated where the Authority believes the areas has definite architectural quality or historic interest that will merit designation in line with Paragraph 127 of the NPPF<sup>10</sup>. In justifying the need for designation the Authority will prepare a report and documents for local consultation and Council consideration which will include research and description and they may also include a photographic survey of the buildings included in the Conservation Area.

4.5.6 Prior to designation the local planning authority may have carried out a Conservation Area Appraisal but may also carry out appraisals as part of the on-going management of the Area.

4.5.7 A Conservation Area Appraisal may include<sup>11</sup>

- current and past land use
- communication types and patterns
- social and economic background
- aspect, geology and relief
- distribution, type and condition of designated and non-designated heritage assets
- density, types and forms of buildings, gardens and green spaces

Documentary and other sources used might include<sup>12</sup>: „

- Ordnance Survey and other maps
- trade directories
- the Historic England Archive
- aerial photographs

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/12-conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>

<sup>10</sup> “When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest” NPPF Paragraph 127.

<sup>11</sup> Historic England Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management Historic England Advice Note 1

<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-designation-appraisal-management-advice-note-1/heag040-conservation-area-designation-appraisal-and-management.pdf/>

<sup>12</sup> Historic England Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management Historic England Advice Note 1

<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-designation-appraisal-management-advice-note-1/heag040-conservation-area-designation-appraisal-and-management.pdf/>

- historic environment record (HER) data
- historic characterisation studies

**4.5.8** A Conservation Area Management Plan lays out the Authorities proposals for the Area and how it will fulfil its duties under the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act to review the conservation area and its boundaries and formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the area. The Management Plan is less likely to include research than the other Conservation Area documents.

#### **4.5.9 Owner or community generated research**

**4.5.10** Unexpected windfall work as a result of owner interest in their building can be submitted as supporting information in a planning application but sometimes material of this kind is just sent into the local authority for general interest. Research can often be based on a desire to tracing the history of the house or further understand what they own to inform proposals.

**4.5.11** Objectors to planning proposals may submit research to support their objection and use it to attempt to prove the site has greater significance or interest than the applicant might suggest.

**4.5.12** Unpublished research by local societies and community groups to inform understanding of the local area

#### **4.5.13 Historic Area Assessments**

**4.5.14** Historic Area Assessment focuses on the historic built environment including buildings, archaeology, street patterns and boundary treatment. "It will look at a place or area as a whole with an emphasis on field observations and understanding and explaining those observations."<sup>13</sup>

Historic Area Assessments can be undertaken at three levels:

1. Outline (Level 1)
2. Rapid (Level 2)
3. Detailed (Level 3)

**4.5.15** In level 3 Detailed assessments research will play a major part; "Detailed Assessments require systematic documentary research and completion of individual building records.....The particular histories of individual buildings and sites are then interpreted and combined to understand the development of the area as a whole." <sup>13</sup>

#### **4.5.16 Local and Neighbourhood plans**

**4.5.17** "Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development

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<sup>13</sup> <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-place-planning-develop/understanding-place-haa-planning-dev-context.pdf/>

and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead"<sup>14</sup>

**4.5.18** Many Neighbourhood plans do not include heritage input but this omission can be rectified. There are sources of information for how to prepare a neighbourhood plan, which does include heritage and may include research<sup>15</sup>.

**4.5.19 Characterisation studies.**

**4.5.20** Characterisation studies defining character areas within urban areas and landscapes<sup>16</sup> and will include research on the area.

**4.5.21 Area action plans.**

**4.5.22** Plans for regeneration schemes such as Townscape Heritage or PSICAs. An understanding of the grant area can be informed by research and grants are sometimes paid for research in Townscape Heritage Schemes. Bid documents such as the Management and Maintenance Plan required for Heritage Lottery Fund projects requires applicants to show they "Understand your heritage and why it is important - Describe your heritage, and explain why it is important and to whom"<sup>17</sup> which may include research.

**4.5.23 Village Design Statements.**

**4.5.24** A document describing what is distinctive in a rural area, and providing design guidance for future development to maintain and improve the qualities of the area.

**4.5.25** "A Village Design Statement sets out clear and simple guidance for the design of all development in a village, based on its character. It is an advisory document produced by the village community, not by the planning authority. It will not stop change from happening, but it can help effect how any new building fits in to the village. VDSs are intended to influence the operation of the statutory planning system, so that new development is in harmony with its setting and makes a positive contribution to the immediate environment." <sup>18</sup>

**4.5.26** Historical and local research can often feed into the development of the Statement

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

<sup>15</sup> <http://locality.org.uk/blog/heritage-neighbourhood-plans/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/methods/characterisation-2/urban-characterisation/>  
<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/methods/characterisation-2/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.hlf.org.uk/activity-plan-guidance>

<sup>18</sup>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20070707180136/http://www.countryside.gov.uk/LAR/Landscape/CC/landscape/village/introduction.asp>

#### **4.5.27 Strategic Housing assessments**

**4.5.28** A strategic assessment of all the potential housing sites suggested to the Council as possibly suitable for development. Although this is mainly process driven looking at housing sites and assessing their availability, suitability and deliverability in some cases this can include research including historical research and research on the character of the local built environment.

#### **4.5.29 Design guides**

**4.5.30** Design guides developed by local authorities to shape and advise on a number of areas such as residential, shopfront, area design and urban design. The guidance can be informed by research into the local area or typical historical form and detail. The research which informs the document is sometimes included as background information.

## **5 Understanding the value of historic built environment research**

### **5.1 Value of research to those outside the planning system**

**5.1.1** The workshop delegates were asked who might find planning led research to be of use and they identified a wide range of people interested in research:

- Academics
- Dedicated amateurs (e.g. members of local/county historical/archaeological groups),
- Planning applicants
- Objectors
- Those developing neighbourhood plans
- For use with project based work (e.g. Buildings Preservation Trust).
- Giving more knowledge to the local communities and having more local groups feeding into the process pays dividends
- Wide range of people interested in research
- Historic England to inform both regional and national work (i.e., historic farmsteads in Lincolnshire, or Setting of small cathedral cities studies)

### **5.2 Value of research**

**5.2.1** It was clear from the discussions at the workshop that there is a wide range of potential interest amongst both professionals and the public for access to the research if it can be made more available.



- 5.2.2 Much of the information produced is of local importance although some is of national importance. It is difficult to say that one piece of research might be more valuable than another because the standards of research and the depth of detail vary so greatly from item to item.
- 5.2.3 For example not all Conservation Area Appraisals are equal. Some contain old documents, historic map progression and detailed historical research which others take basic historical details from existing published sources.

## 6 Potential approaches to widening access to planning-led research

- 6.1 The workshop discussions generally favoured more than one route for dissemination of the material and in general supported a combination of approaches to widen access to research material generated through the planning system.
- 6.2 **Place research on Local Authority planning service website**
- 6.2.1 The current situation usually involves material, which relates directly to the submission of the planning application, being available on the Local Authority's web site.
- 6.2.2 However extracting the relevant research material from the remainder is a tortuous and complex process. The system is not designed to provide a research tool and it is not possible to look for relevant research without knowing the details of the application. There is little opportunity for searching and cross searching. Separating the research from the context of the application may be detrimental.
- 6.2.3 A lot of pre-determination information can be relatively minor for simple proposals. A cut off point of application size might be helpful to ensure that major work is included. But this could still miss intensive research which is carried out on smaller applications.
- 6.3 **Adding research material to the Historic Environment Record**
- 6.3.1 To be meaningful and useful to researchers or the public the research information may need to be considerably disaggregated from the remainder of the application, appeal, statement of significance etc. The information in its submitted format is unlikely to be usable without input from a buildings history expert or possibly a suitably skilled HER officer. The HER, where accessible on line through the local authority's own website or the Heritage Gateway is in a format and location the public can access but not all HERs are so universally accessible. At present the Heritage Gateway contains uploaded

material from a number of HERs but by no means all of them. Other HERs are developing their own web based systems but their existence does not preclude additional use of the Heritage Gateway.

- 6.3.2 The workshop discussion revealed that some HERS already attempt to disentangle the fundamental research components from the more planning specific material when entering data into the HER.
- 6.3.3 HERs vary in terms of consistency of structure, content and coverage. Whilst this is inevitable at present, given the way they have developed there are still great inconsistencies in the approach to development of building material. Some HERs and the officers responsible for them embrace the incorporation of all historic environment material and the linkages with the planning system. Others still feel that the HER is neither a planning nor a buildings history resource. In the absence of a substantial national investment in the development of a specific national HER infrastructure, HERs decide their own priorities and access to research through the HER is already variable.
- 6.3.4 With resource and other pressures it is not likely to be feasible to require all HERs to add such information. Whilst there is an aspiration for HERs to be consistent in both structure, content and coverage this is not currently the case and HERs should consider the value of ensuring these planning led research records are integrated consistently and in a way which makes the information contained within them accessible.
- 6.3.5 Building related research and investigation is not generally a priority of Historic Environment Records. The IHBC HER21 Information and Partnerships research put consultation with Historic Environment Record practitioners at its heart and established the first nationally-supported listing of building-related information for consideration by HERs. It presented a series of recommendations to develop consistency of built environment data in HERS, develop priorities for local data requirements and ways of developing building related content and wider access to information. The project will examine where the HER might be the appropriate location for material and where other settings might be more appropriate.
- 6.3.6 Both the Southport report and the IHBC's HER21 research recognised a perceived difference between approaches to 'records'. The authors of the Southport Report noted that "Those with an archaeological focus have seen it as fundamental to ensure a long-lasting record in the HER and archive centre and through publication; those with a built environment/conservation focus have tended to view records as enabling informed decision-making rather than being an end in themselves," (3.4.9).
- 6.3.7 Pre application research is currently less likely to find its way into the HER. The format in which the data was presented may influence this. But post approval intervention such as that in completion of

conditions is often processed, published, deposited with the HER as grey literature.

6.3.8 Planning led research is able to enhance HER database records but the reports may need to then be archived via OASIS and the Archaeology Data Service with other associated material deposited as appropriate to local studies library or county record office. Enhancing HER records with planning led research linked back through use of permanent URLs to the original source information (archives and other information) which are held digitally elsewhere.

6.3.9 ***There was general agreement that the HER was potentially one of the suitable locations for some aspects of this research but that other locations should also be considered, and possibly necessary.***

6.3.10 ***HERs may be able to develop a more inclusive data-gathering strategy using an 'enriching the HERs' approach, modelled on the innovative and widely applauded 'enriching the list' strategy***

#### 6.4 Adding research material to the Heritage Gateway

6.4.1 Expansion of the Heritage Gateway to include a dedicated section for the promotion of planning led research would allow users to access useful data alongside HER information. Such an expansion of the existing resource would require a further development project on the part of Historic England and further investment in a programme to develop a specific resource that sits as part of the Heritage Gateway.

6.4.2 As material cannot be added directly to the Heritage Gateway, which is itself a portal to existing databases not a database in itself, this would require initiation of a new inventory system which could be to be accessible and searchable on the Heritage Gateway.

6.4.3 ***The use of the Heritage Gateway was considered one of the most useful possible ways of increasing access to planning led research. The use of the Heritage Gateway to expand the available data would also allow users to combine their search with on-line access to locally held records and national web resources. Planning led research material sources could be added to the Heritage Gateway centrally by creating a new inventory system to be accessible through the Heritage Gateway and allow the records to display when local searches are done along with other material. Such an expansion of the existing resource would require a further development project on the part of English Heritage and some further investment.***

#### 6.5 Adding research material to a wiki based system such as Enriching the List

- 6.5.1 The wiki approach to listing records, Enriching the list, allows members of the public to contribute photographs, historical information, changes to the building since listing and information about the building.
- 6.5.2 The general public & owners can now add information alongside the list description in the National Heritage list. The information is added on a related page and does not affect the statutory List Description that it sits alongside.
- 6.5.3 However addition to this kind of wiki based resource does not allow research data to be indexed and as a result is only subsequently of use for the original site it is attached to, and can not be cross searched.
- 6.5.4 ***It is possible that this approach could be used to provide a repository for planning generated research although it might not cover the whole historic environment, just those areas of statutory designation.***
- 6.5.5 ***The research could be added by researchers, applicants, agents and local authority staff but might also need to have an officer or officer directly employed in this field to sift and add material.***

## 6.6 Adding research material to OASIS other national programmes

- 6.6.1 The original aim of the OASIS project was to provide an online index for archaeological grey literature that has been produced through developer funded fieldwork and also fieldwork undertaken by volunteers.
- 6.6.2 "The OASIS data capture form was designed to help in the flow of information from data producers, such as contracting units and community groups, through to local and national data managers, such as HERs and NMRs. The resulting information is validated by the relevant NMR (Historic England's Excavation Index and the RCAHMS' CANMORE records) and passed onto the ADS for inclusion in its on line catalogue, ArchSearch."<sup>19</sup> ArchSearch will search by site, type of monument and so on and "either provide direct web links through to the grey literature reports or at least act as a pointer to the physical holding place of a report or archive"<sup>19</sup>.
- 6.6.3 OASIS already contains over 5000 building survey records. Whilst there have been various initiatives to improve built heritage content and develop standards, consistency and access such as HER21 & HIAS, "the feedback ADS has gathered to date indicates that experts in the built historic environment feel that the form is more suited to

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<sup>19</sup> <http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main>

archaeological recording rather than gathering data relevant to historic buildings.”<sup>19</sup>

6.6.4 The development of HERALD the successor to OASIS through the Heritage Information Access Strategy includes assessment of the type of specialist vocabularies and terminologies used for historic buildings that are not currently used by OASIS and looking at how what are called ‘Historic Building Events’ would be recorded.

6.6.5 The HERALD (Historic Environment Records Archives Links and Data) & HIAS (Heritage Information Access Strategy) initiatives have been working to promote OASIS to built heritage sector and review the proposed built heritage module. HERALD is a project for gathering the user requirements for changes to the current OASIS online recording system. HERALD is looking at the potential to gather and provide access to a wider range of information from the sector. The terminology needs to be appropriate for the built environment and Planning audience but currently such initiatives have not reached a wider audience.

6.6.6 ***Although OASIS may provide an existing resource into which planning led research can be deposited, it was not widely known by the delegates at the workshop. It was felt that the OASIS system would need to be subjected to extensive user testing, better promoted and developed to be more accessible to all and to better cover non-archaeological research if it were to have any potential to play a constructive role in work of this type.***

## 6.7 **A combination of national and local systems**

6.7.1 Access to information to HER, Heritage Gateway and OASIS are not mutually exclusive. Historic England are working to make the three work more effectively and seamlessly as part of HIAS (Heritage Information Access Strategy).

## 6.8 **Development of a new national resource for planning led research**

6.8.1 An entirely new system could be developed but it seems that there are already adequate multiple systems where research could be made more available. This would both be costly in terms of development and there may be no system available to populate it.

## 6.9 **Cost of making material more accessible**

6.9.1 Making access to all types of planning led research more simple and public will have a resource implication for all routes to access. The main cost to widening access within the current system is the separation of research from other related documentation. This might involve extracting one document from the Planning application but without the context of the application the research might have less

meaning. Alternatively the research element might be buried within another document. Working out what aspects of the research are off value and what parts are needed requires professional input and this cost will apply to all methods of dissemination outside simply putting the whole application onto the Local Authority or other web site.

- 6.9.2 Additionally there will be costs of developing or adapting current systems to accommodate material of a different type.
- 6.9.3 It was suggested there might be a possibility of charging for queries to support the costs of system but this may exclude genuine public interests.

## 7 Conclusion & Recommendations

- 7.1 Locally HERs and nationally ADS, Heritage Gateway and OASIS were all considered possible elements in a suite of starting points for the location for storage of this research. This could be individually or more likely a combination of all of these. But to do this successfully the managers of the resources would need to be aware that the information they are gathering may be different to that usually collected, uses different terminology and the end users of the material might differ.
- 7.2 Whichever system or suite of systems is used it needs to be developed as an integrated, centralised resource, with simple easy access and clear signposting. A clear mechanism with suitable data gathering, resources and management processes to put the research in place and good signposting so it can be recalled are essential
- 7.3 Initially more consistent planning led research is needed to ensure that all applications and pieces of work contain something that is worth making public and in order to achieve that better standards and guidance are required along with the maintenance of proper professional standards.
- 7.4 **The wider use of planning led research requires a central authority to coordinate and make it easier. It was the recommendation of the workshop that Historic England should help generate a partnership capable of developing, this resource.**
- 7.5 **Develop in HERs a more inclusive data-gathering strategy using an 'enrich the HERs' approach, modelled on the innovative and widely applauded 'enrich the list' strategy.**
- 7.6 **Rather than imposing existing abstract archaeology data gathering models on built environment resources, instead build on the reality of the data sources for the historic built environment by developing an integrated suite of resources - possibly tied together by the Heritage Gateway – each capable of**

**reflecting agreed areas of built environment data management, such as**

- **HERs, for more archaeology-driven data**
- **national and local archives/libraries etc, for more document-driven data (architects practice archives, academics archives etc) and**
- **national and local community networks for more planning-driven data that feeds into an expanded 'enrich the list' strategy**

7.7 There are many pieces of useful research which are being produced and then lost outside the planning process. A delegate at the workshop declared that "every applicant is a researcher". Can those outside the planning system ultimately share in and benefit from every researchers work?

## Appendix 1

### Programme & Attendance for Workshop on Planning-led research and investigation for the historic built environment.



#### Workshop on Planning-led research and investigation for the historic built environment.

**Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2015**

The Carriage Shop, Derby Roundhouse

#### Workshop Programme

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| 10.30am | Registration and coffee  |
| 11.00am | Introduction and welcome   |
|         | Introducing the types of research involved   |
|         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <i>Research informing planning</i>; Liz Mayle, Historic Building Consultant</li><li>2. <i>Research following application approval or refusal</i>; Ramona Usher, CGMS</li><li>3. <i>Research guiding policy and local authority action</i>; Harriet Bell</li></ol> |
|         | Introducing the data management issues   |
|         | Karen Parkin, Records management and information assurance, Nottingham City Council.   |
| 12.00pm | Round table discussion in groups: <i>Research informing planning</i>   |
| 1.15pm  | Lunch  |
| 2.00pm  | Round table discussion in groups: <i>Research following application approval or refusal</i>  |
| 3.00pm  | Tea  |
| 3.20pm  | Round table discussion in groups: <i>Research guiding policy and local authority action</i>  |
| 4.20pm  | Closing discussions  |
| 4.30pm  | Close  |





## Appendix 2

### **WORKSHOP ON PLANNING LED RESEARCH AND INVESTIGATION FOR THE HISTORIC BUILT ENVIRONMENT DISCUSSION OVERVIEW**

#### **SESSION 1 RESEARCH INFORMING APPLICATIONS**

##### **Discussion Points**

Identifying the research elements

Draw up a list of those types of building research which apply.

- Heritage Statements
  - Statements of significance
  - Cultural heritage assessment as part of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)
  - Local resident or amenity body research to resist development - local historians and oral history. PLACECHECK as a starting place for community contribution
  - Design and access statements
  - Neighbourhood plans
  - Design and Access Statements
  - Historic Buildings Appraisals
  - Historic Landscape Characterisation
  - Research frameworks by HE are very archaeology orientated (and not really planning lead).
  - Research for listing (is this technically planning lead research); Thematic Surveys, principle of selection, selection guides
- How is this research currently available to the public and those not directly involved in the planning process? *Do they know it is there and how can they get to it?*

A lot of information is not very accessible to the public and often the public don't know where to go to find information.

The format of much pre-determination research is dictated by the specific requirement underlying the need for that research and that format may well not be conducive to more general use by the public. Could a "Written Scheme of Investigation" include a requirement for some form of populist executive summary?

Other research is available through:

- Catholic church work (diocesan archive)
  - Specialist journal
  - RIBA library
  - University library
  - Logged on database
- Is it desirable to separate out the research elements of the statement of significance from other parts of the application? *Many Local Authorities*

*have internet access to the whole application but to find this research requires often requires one to search for the building, then for the specific application, and then within the application for the statement of significance, and then within the statement of significance for the relevant information.*

- It is desirable to separate the various elements and that this separation should be built in from the start. The somewhat tortuous process in extracting information from the LPA website is clearly accurate. It is potentially complicated to access case information from a council web site – you'd have to know what to look for.
- Non-technical summary in applications may be useful. If available to the wider public information should be in language that is understood by a wider variety of people and backgrounds.
- History and development is useful to be separated out.
  
- But the system is not designed as a pure research tool. Is it fair to expect the planning system to be such a tool?
- Separating research from context – would be a negative thing.
- Historical research and analysis, should be reasonably objective, and could be separated from a second stage, which uses that research to assess the impact of a proposal on the heritage asset.
- A lot of pre-determination information can be pretty minor and not very interesting, especially on simple proposals. How to select the good stuff?
  
- How research that has gone into a plan might be mined and deposited within the HER. It was felt that there might be an ownership issue here depending on who had actually constructed the plan. Keeping it in its original format with original credits would ensure it was appropriately acknowledged.
- Some HERs already disentangle the fundamental research components from the more planning specific stuff when entering data into the HER
  
- If so how could one separate out the research elements from other aspects of the application? *How to draw out the research elements from the descriptions of the proposal.*
  - Desirability of distinguishing between research (neutral) and application (more subjective)
  - The group considered separating out research elements out of statement of significance (i.e., History and Development sections) but further discussion agreed the documents should be put on in their entirety
  - Add the research to the HER – the HER officer would then do the separating and it would be in a format and location the public can access
  - A search by case number or NGR might be too complex for the average person.
  - Perhaps add to the HE guidance that there may be useful research in this particular repository.

- Could the Planning Portal have a heritage 'tick' box to help alert the user about potentially useful research? A cost benefit analysis of this would be needed.
- Possibility of charging for queries to support costs of system.

#### Knowledge and possible use of research

- Are the public and other professionals aware that original research informs the consideration of applications?
  - The public as a whole is not generally so aware but there is a greater level of awareness among those already involved in the HE sector, either professionally or as dedicated amateurs.
- Who apart from the planning authority would find this research of use?
  - Wide range of people interested in research
  - Promoting heritage—links local authority to amenity groups
    - Academics
    - Dedicated amateurs (e.g. members of local/county historical/archaeological groups),
    - Planning applicants
    - Objectors
    - For neighbourhood plans
    - For project based work (e.g. Buildings Preservations Trust).

#### Widening access to research

- Is this research generally of enough strategic importance for wider dissemination? *Is it just locally interesting or specific to just a particular building or could it be more important on a wider basis*
  - History and development sections of the statement would be useful for wider use.
  - If done well heritage statements can be a good resource.
  - What would be the value of a statement of significance if it were never used again?
  - Some degree of synthesis could make it so but most individual pieces of work are likely to be very specific.
  - Access to research via the HER is variable.
  - Would the value of accessing the research (if charged) outweigh the cost?
- Would the value outweigh possible costs?
  - Managing expectations (potentially high resource required for this work)
  - Widen access to research – if the value of the research outweighs the cost then yes. Great if a developer pays but what about householders? Should they pay? Most thought unreasonable to charge householders, who have already paid for a statement of significance.
- Should this research be better utilised and made more widely accessible and how could this be done?
  - Social media has a big part to play these days in engaging people –especially in local issues and neighbourhood planning.

- Is there a way to integrate a requirement for wider dissemination of this research into common practice within the local authority?
  - Planning conditions seem the obvious route here. The system fails to recognize that research into standing historic buildings needs to be formally deposited in the way that is recognized for sub-surface archaeology. The onus, therefore, is on the LPA HE specialist to ensure that planning policies, planning conditions, and guidance incorporate that requirement.
  - Is it preferable to have a specialist to 'translate' research information?
  - Public engagement is one thing but understanding what's there is different. We suggested this could be solved by a 'layered' approach to accessing information.
  
- Is there is a role for a strategic approach over a larger area, a region or even nationally to draw this together?
  - Multiple ways in may be preferable – adding to the HER and accessed through other systems such as the Heritage Gateway or the successor of OASIS
  - Should certainly be an Online resource
  - Where do we go for what information–clearing house–National archive oversight
  
- Options for Storage, retrieval and hosting? What other partners should be involved? *Private companies, museums, universities, research bodies, HERs, libraries, archives etc.*
  - Widen public access rather than professional. Make research available to the public – currently it is not really available, certainly not easy to access and is not widely enough known about.
  - The value of all the research is greater than their sum of its parts and that there is, therefore, a need for a strategic approach at some level.
  - Both the HER and OASIS were mentioned in this context
  - Historic buildings under-represented compared with archaeology
  - Planning systems talking to HERs is a resource and practicality issue.
  - Important link between the local studies HER and records office which could be improved
  - Would the value of accessing the research (if charged) outweigh the cost?
  - HERs are the best place for information – points to other areas of research – available to everyone.
  - Where of good quality the whole statement should be added to the HER.
  - There should also be a National Online database with HERs locally kept but Historic England keeping nationally
  - There is no single way into existing research.
  - And remember the importance of the history of the people in the buildings – archaeological research and historic building research should go into the same HER.
  
- Is it for the researcher to promote their own findings?

- Views differed on this and it is bound up with the issue identified below and that of contractor:client relationships.
- Other ways of promoting and disseminating suggested by delegates
  - Access to research via the HER is variable.
  - Would the value of accessing the research (if charged) outweigh the cost?
- Issues, problems and legalities? What issues of ownership and Intellectual Property Rights might occur? Are there privacy issues for building owners?
  - Once an application is lodged with the Local Authority it is in the public domain anyway.
  - Some clients may be concerned about security if for example floor plans are in public domain or detailed description of Georgian fire place (e.g. target for thieves) Google earth may be more of a threat!
  - Some householders may regard documents which include photographs of the inside of their house as a security risk /intrusion into their privacy. This fear may just a matter of perception of course, given that the document will have already been on a publically forum.
- Other data management issues?
  - Is Historic Environment data was subject to the same scrutiny and question that was articulated by Karen Parkin? We established that the HER audit programme does this and the same rigour needs to be applied for any development of built HE data.
  - Within the limits necessitated by costs and cuts issues and lack of resources, including personnel, be aware of the need to meet a minimum standard.

## **Other points made**

### **Quality of research**

- Quality of the submission needs to be of a minimum level, some fall short of what is needed.
- Perhaps grading of statements basic/intermediate/detailed would be helpful.
- Research prior to determination of an application- there is little control over what an assessment contains, that validation procedures are poor, a tick box affair, and that there is insufficient guidance about the level of info required to inform as assessment of significance. These do contain excellent research that could be of use, but only in some cases, other applications are poor. Additional guidance / levels needed. Rarely ends up on HER or anywhere else except LPA website. Some valuable research – little utilised other than to inform planning decision.
- Standard of information important–checklist
- Some local authorities have information on providing statements of significance for example Oxford City Council

## **Bias**

- Be aware of possible bias in the research
- It is necessary to recognise the bias inherent in each part depending on the author and their relationship to the site.
- Consultants assess the significance of building and certify no adverse effects on the building but can you trust a clients' representative – can they be unbiased?
- Research is selective.

## **Use of material**

- There is always a danger of information in HERs or other public sources being plagiarised.
- Information can be taken out of context [which renders it misleading].

## **HER**

- HER may be the obvious place to keep the information.
- Access to research via the HER is variable. Not all counties keep the same kind of information so should the HER be centralised or a mixture of both?
- Can archaeological record systems deal with building records? Archaeology is inherently destructive whereas historic building research is looking at records.
- A true HER (i.e. not just the current ones which are archaeology with a bit of building information tacked on) and the appropriate level would be county, or possibly regional.
- HERs are relevant for buildings as well as archaeological sites as they offer less bias.
- Where there is new information available on a heritage asset this can be included in the HER.
- Do they all need to be added to the HER? – Yes put all on regardless of quality, but must be searchable for ease of use.

## **Accessibility**

- Research is most accessible online.
- Research has to be available online, countywide and searchable.
- Challenges presented by integrating HE repositories with planning systems and/or accessing them and how to keep pre-approval research available.

## **SESSION 2**

### **RESEARCH FOLLOWING APPLICATION APPROVAL OR REFUSAL**

Areas which contain research can include

1. Public Inquiry expert witness proof of evidence
2. Appeal statements
3. Outcome of discharge of Conditions
4. Building recording and fieldwork, assessment, analysis and report.

#### **Discussion Points**

Identifying the research elements

- Draw up a list of those types of building research which apply. Include those identified by Ramona Usher in her introduction and any others the group can suggest. This will ensure everyone is sure they are talking about the right area but also will allow us to be sure we have covered all type of research.
  - Planning Conditions
  - Produced in support of appeal statements / public inquiries.
  - Building recording - Level 1 basic visual record, Level 2 a descriptive record, Level 3 an analytical record, Level 4 comprehensive analytical record. Something hitherto unseen may be discovered
- How is this research currently available to the public and those not directly involved in the planning process? *Do they know it is there and how can they get to it?*
  - As part of the planning process – on council planning sites in some cases
  - Through the HER in some areas but not all. Promotion of HER needed
  - Is PINS on the planning portal – can appeal documents be accessed? Judgement information online? What happens to information after a Public Inquiry?
  - Post determination research – conditions requiring recording / investigation – info of better quality generally, always goes on HER

Knowledge and possible use of research

- How much original research on buildings is generated through the post application phase of the planning system rather than informing application decisions?
  - Post Application– may include primary research, drawing and existing evidence together, prosecution, enforcement
  - Public Inquiry & appeals- analysing and testing existing information. Sometimes primary research if it has not been done before depending on the case
  - Building case on significance and extent of harm
  - Freedom of information requests
- Who apart from the planning authority would find this research of use?
  - As session 1

- Wide range of people interested in research
- Promoting heritage–links local authority to amenity groups
- Academics
- Dedicated amateurs (e.g. members of local/county historical/ archaeological groups),
- Planning applicants
- Objectors
- For neighbourhood plans
- For project based work (e.g. Buildings Preservations Trust).

#### Widening access to research

- Is this research generally of enough strategic importance for wider dissemination? Can it be practically grouped together with the work generated under the session 1 heading or are there differences in how it could be accessed?
  - Post application processes–information of local importance in general, some is of national importance
- Would the value outweigh possible costs?
  - There would be a resource implication
- Should this research be better utilised and made more widely accessible and how could this be done? Do the same methods and issue apply here as in session 1 or are their differences? So the following questions may already have been answered but should be considered briefly so for example:
  - Should there be a national body to draw together information of wider significance e.g. via Historic England. The OASIS system could be better promoted and developed to be more accessible to all and to better over non archaeological research
  - Storage retrieval and hosting, Digital archive, OASIS
  - Promote OASIS
  - Not one destination for reports. Historic England recommends OASIS. Need a single gatekeeper
  - The OASIS Project – not known by many but used by archaeologists
  - Heritage wiki? The general public & owners can now add information to the list description in the National Heritage list in the form of enhancing the list. The info is added on a related page and is much like Wikipedia – it does not affect the statutory List Description that will sit alongside the designation listing.
  - An example such as the LARA in Lincoln and the way this is used, as a multi-layer tool, where you can click on a site and find out about archaeology underneath a building, the building itself, links to statements of significance produced for a site could be linked in a system like this. All agreed this would be a great idea but we also all agreed it was probably impossible to achieve!
  - A national framework will still be ad hoc on the willingness of individuals to deposit it (Support through the NPPF which says deposited with HER)
  - Any intervention post approval should be processed, published, deposited with the HER and accessible as grey literature. As



- o opposed to pre- app research which is less likely to be added in this way
  - o Retrieval should be easy
  - o Signposting is important
- *Is there a way to integrate a requirement for wider dissemination of this research into common practice within the local authority?*
  - o Proper condition writing could include some form of public engagement element
- *Is there is a role for a strategic approach over a larger area, a region or even nationally to draw this together?*
  - o Given that post determination recording is driven by a desire to enhance our knowledge of the wider HE rather than to inform a specific planning application, it seems appropriate that decisions to require such work should be informed by a proper research strategy – more so than in relation to pre-determination research
- *Options for Storage, retrieval and hosting? What other partners should be involved? Private companies, museums, universities, research bodies, HERs, libraries, archives etc.*
  - o Museums,
  - o Records offices,
  - o Archaeological Data Services,
  - o National Archives
  - o HER
- *Is it for the researcher to promote their own findings?*
- *Other ways of promoting and disseminating suggested by delegates*
  - Church Heritage Record as a prototype for the built Historic Environment as it links to its own on-line planning system. Maybe it's time to consider something complementary to an HER as long as the links are there between them.
- *Issues, problems and legalities? What issues of ownership and Intellectual Property Rights might occur? Are there privacy issues for building owners?*
  - o Yes there are in a way that archaeology doesn't suffer so much from.
  - o There are over 300 planning authorities and each keeps their own records in their own way.
  - o Important to set standards
- *Other data management issues?*
  - o Integration required

### **Other points**

#### **Link between pre app and post app research.**

- The pre and post application research can end up being completely

divorced from each other, the latter not being able to utilize the former. So the research that went into the statement of significance is not maximized later.

- The process for post app research is better managed and accessible but that links through to pre app research were needed.

### **Bias**

- Be aware of bias depending on who is producing the information and there can be too much [quality -v- quantity].
- Appeals research to back up what's been said before or find extra issues. Can this just be spin, would the bulk of research that may be useful already have been covered prior to refusal? Research should be objective if presenting to a public enquiry or appeal. This body of research might still be useful.

### **Conditions**

- Could a condition of any approval be to ensure that any pre app research was accessed? This way the later research might affect any information in a subsequent application – i.e. it might affect the statement of significance.
- There are a variety of conditions used. Model conditions would be useful but CLG don't want that. In the HE GPA2 there is an example condition primarily for archaeology and that has been approved by CLG, this could be adapted for buildings. Depending on the level of information you know what you want to get back (i.e., the level of recording required using the Understanding Historic Buildings Guidance note).
- Model conditions would be helpful. (IHBC toolbox?)
- Standard conditions must be enforceable.
- If it is a condition of the planning application that this comes in then it could be added to the HER and available locally and nationally.
- Condition required on decision notices that requires lodging info with HER /OASIS?
- Information is needed before the decision is made not after. Need more information before works commence
- Appropriate level conditions–Recording
- Watching brief–Recording what is being affected

### **Building Recording**

- Written scheme more archaeological than historic buildings therefore out of their 'comfort zone'. Are they aware it can be done? Archaeologists ask for conditions but not historic building professionals.
- Building recording can have less bias – more easily stored in HER, National Archive and photos to Record office.
- Agreed Conservation Officers do not use historic building recording enough

### **Public Inquiries**

- In Public Inquiries all the information is not always kept. The question is, should it be kept - but there would be far too much. There is an

obligation only to keep the decision and associated documents and there is no national approach.

- Active, reactive, Public Inquiry is disproportionate.
- Public Inquiries needs context – it often comes down to one key point in appeal which can't be separated from the whole or it erroneously appears to be the most important not the most contentious when recording it.
- Appeal research – potentially a very good source of additional research, especially for public inquiries, often produced by highly qualified consultants, and more often than not, the LPA conservation specialist, which could all be of value and used more widely. Scope to for national research (HE – impact of wind farm apps, for example).
- Public Inquiry - all agree that the information can be valuable but produced as part of an adversarial process.
- Depends on the complexity and intricacy of an appeal (i.e., a full hearing, compared to written reps) which at a higher level would be examined more intently, and may have the best quality of research. Appeals may draw interest from amenity groups and the wider public and may include their research too
- Is research done for an appeal in the public domain? If professionals don't know his then there is no hope for general public. Presume it's all with the Inspectorate, only get appeal decision on LA website.
- Information from appeals should be with application information, but appeal Info may just be any interpretive document containing arguments, rather than new research. If an appeal is won, a condition could be to added that all research information is sent to the HER and so be available via the planning system

## **SESSION 3**

### **RESEARCH GUIDING POLICY AND LOCAL AUTHORITY ACTION**

*(from around 3.20pm to 4.05pm allowing five minutes to reach a consensus, recap, summarize and conclude on this session.)*

From 4.05pm to 4.20pm ask each person to say one thing about the day – a key point they have drawn out of it, their single most important conclusion on the discussion, a suggested recommendation or a comment on the day.

Then using these ideas get the group to agree on a single sentence which sums up your discussions on research throughout the day – it can be a summary of what you agreed were the most important aspects of research, a statement as to whether you felt the research was important enough to provide wider access, how you felt wider access might be achieved etc.

*Areas which contain research can include*

- 1. Local listing*
- 2. Conservation area designation, appraisal and management*
  - a. historical research*
  - b. historical map regression*
  - c. characterisation studies and character and townscape analysis*
- 3. Owner generated research such as windfall work as a result of owner interest in their building. Sometimes submitted a part of application but sometimes just coming into the local authority for general interest.*

### **Discussion Points**

Identifying the research elements

- Draw up a list of those types of building research which apply. Include those identified by Harriet Bell in her introduction and any others the group can suggest. This will ensure everyone is sure they are talking about the right area but also will allow us to be sure we have covered all type of research.
  - Direct planning related research
    - Conservation Area designations
    - Conservation Area appraisals
    - Management Plans
    - Conservation Plans
    - Historic Area Assessments
    - Local listings
    - Local and Neighbourhood plans; Many Neighbourhood plans don't seem to have any heritage input. My Place website gives information for how to prepare a neighbourhood plan, which does include heritage.
    - Characterization studies
    - Local heritage review
    - Individual projects
    - University generated research
    - Heritage at Risk surveys and Buildings at Risk register – these are important markers and can inform policy (through an at risk strategy),

- Area action plans (regeneration, THI and PSICA `s)
- THI – sometimes grants pay for research that is required
- Village Design Statements
- Strategic Housing allocations
- Design guides
- Almost all historic environment professionals both in the LPA and private consultants, will have their own catalogue of data gathered for personal interest, and as part of researching projects (i.e., fairly extensive photo records which could be of immense use to the LPA as a photographic record) but this would be very time consuming to catalogue for wider use

#### Other related research

- What happens to research done on a building to determine if it should be designated? Particularly if designation is not given. This info should be readily available and could be used to expand or form a local list.
- Historic pubs – HE has some information and CAMRA
- Management plans for world heritage sites
- Countryside stewardship – farm buildings
- Funding bids
- Extensive urban survey

How is this research currently available to the public and those not directly involved in the planning process? *Do they know it is there and how can they get to it?*

- Generally, this kind of research is more accessible than other areas and more widely known about
- Wide group agreement this is more readily available and more widely known about (CA Appraisals for example), but other research is not perhaps
- The route practitioners took to accessing information on built Historic Environment seemed to depend on your discipline, age, whether you still practised or not. For example, local history? Conservation statement? Pevsner? Google? We accepted that technology has changed all this and accessibility is key.
- Some of these pieces of work are more widely available through the LPA, particularly those that form part of the plan- and decision-making processes.
- There was some doubt about whether this sort of work is finding its way into the HER – it was suggested that the format in which the data was presented may influence this (PDFs seem to be favoured by HERS)
- More widely used to inform policy because of a lack of LPA resource.
- Access local listing information on LA website
- Appraisals for management plans should be in public domain

Knowledge and possible use of research

- How much of this work is primary research and how much is secondary research collecting together information on a building or area? Does this difference matter?
  - Not all Conservation Area Appraisals are equal. Some contain old documents and some new ones follow HE guidance and not all contain historic map progression.
  - Little is truly original primary research but that would not be to disparage secondary work.
- Who apart from the planning authority would find this research of use?
  - Giving more knowledge to the local communities and having more local groups feeding into the process pays dividends
  - Wide range of people interested in research
  - Historic England to inform both regional and national work (i.e., historic farmsteads in Lincolnshire, or Setting of small cathedral cities studies)
  - Academics,
  - Student research
  - Dedicated amateurs (e.g. members of local/county historical/archaeological groups)
  - Planning applicants
  - Objectors

#### Widening access to research

- Is this research generally of enough strategic importance for wider dissemination? Can it be practically grouped together with the work generated under the session 1 heading or are there differences in how it could be accessed?
- Should this research be better utilised and made more widely accessible and how could this be done? Do the same methods and issue apply here as previously or are their differences? Does the fact that some work covers areas rather than individual buildings make a difference
  - Make aware of information available–publicity
  - Grey literature ‘disappears’.
  - Signposting to who can provide information– IHBC, historic buildings trust
  - Promoting heritage–links local authority to amenity groups
  - Important link between the local studies HER and records office which could be improved
  - Ownership of information–planning process is in the public domain
  - Could also include information from other organisations both local and national
  - HER/OASIS are not well known and hard to navigate.
  - Oasis could be used for historic building as well as archaeology but this is held back by lack of resources.
  - Access to pre and post app research. Is there a design solution for an interface? HIAS
  - Wiki approach? Simple interfaces and user support.
  - Tended towards a model that linked through to formal and informal information repositories. Some would be closed, like HER records, but others open – say social media modules.

- Google search.
  - IT infrastructure for local government. Macro and micro levels of access, signposts, Heritage Gateway, planning applications.
  - Compatibility between users and providers.
- So the following questions may already have been answered but should be considered briefly
    - *Is there a way to integrate a requirement for wider dissemination of this research into common practice within the local authority?*
    - *Is there is a role for a strategic approach over a larger area, a region or even nationally to draw this together?*
    - *Options for Storage, retrieval and hosting? What other partners should be involved? Private companies, museums, universities, research bodies, HERs, libraries, archives etc.*
    - *Is it for the researcher to promote their own findings?*
    - *Other ways of promoting and disseminating suggested by delegates*
  - Issues, problems and legalities? What issues of ownership and Intellectual Property Rights might occur? Are there privacy issues for building owners?
  - Other data management issues?
    - Need contextual evaluation (what is good quality? What is understandable? What's useful?)
    - Want interactive informative process with list description to update with new research findings (what is the process for this if it exists?). How can this be done without damaging the integrity of the statement of significance?
    - Is there an option for a repository of accompanying information that isn't in the same document? NHLE link to Gateway? It is linked in the Church Heritage Record
    - Record Management important –planning portal, HER all reports long, HER fees (commercial)
    - Future proofing information

## **Other issues**

### **Local lists**

- What research behind local list, what are the criteria? HE Guidance exists on what should be considered but don't think there is a requirement to use this guidance.
- Some LPA research is likely to have been undertaken to compile the list, which may contain buildings by architects of local note, etc., and this would be of interest to local history groups.
- It would be useful to have the reports from Historic England when designation has been rejected

## **Community involvement**

- Community: capitalize on research that's not commonly understood- from engagement with community, by engaging through social media.
- Recognize that this is an unrecognized and untapped resource and consider building community engagement into statements of significance.
- Consultation with local groups
- Use of volunteers e.g. Neighbourhood plan, buildings at risk. They are more likely to know about HER
- Wider education process. What information is available on way to find it? Outreach to local people of all ages
- Information available to members of the public? If it is grass roots local people are more likely to know about it and access it



## OVERALL SUMMARY POINTS

- Lots of things have been slipping through the cracks of the systems. Still areas where good work is not really made public.
- Research should be done right at the outset. Knowledge/ Guidance on what needs to be done by who and when would be helpful.
- Recognising subjectivity is important and requiring more objective heritage assessments
- Central authority to coordinate and make it easier. Recommend historic England comes forward and develops it.
- Lack of standards. Difficult for local planning authority and client– Quality. Important Historic England take the lead–research to inform planning process?
- More consistent research is needed.
- Proper professional standards are important
- Clear guidelines for those using reports and undertaking research.
- Need to keep a clear idea of why we are doing this – better understanding? Better enjoyment?
- There is a lot of information that needs to be filtered and directed appropriately.
- Potential is huge, concern of difference in LA’s approach - conditions not always imposed and lots of variables
- A big promotional job would be required
- The wording of condition is it important. Standard conditions?
- Concerns that research is not valuable to clients so limited time allocated for this work in private consultancy. Would be helpful if someone did say in conditions in guidance that research is needed
- Context of how it is written, who commissioned it and why– Bias check. Context of report is important.
- Clear mechanism– Data management process with the resources to deposit it (enforceable) & signposted so it can be recalled
- Centralised archive–easy access, simplified process, should not be complicated, clear signposting.
- A “one Stop Shop” approach is required to capture and make available the results of research
- There are existing suitable resources such as HER & Oasis for built architecture as well as archaeology
- One option – probably the best at present – would be enhanced HERs but another could be a beefed up Heritage Gateway
- General agreement that the HER, ADS and OASIS were all good locations for storage of this research.
- Central data resources like HER/OASIS are great, if open to all would be very helpful.
- Underpinning all of this is cost implications and resourcing. Heritage information is about costs. More resources are required for HERs
- “Every applicant is a researcher”
- Research is not just done for the local planning authority - Other organisations should also put research in the public domain– Network rail, NHS, MOD, Company archives.

## **SUMMING UP SENTENCE**

1. Subject to adequate filtration the research can be distilled to the HER, notwithstanding the issue of adequate funding.
2. A "one Stop Shop" approach is required to capture and make available the results of research. One option – probably the best at present – would be enhanced HERs but another could be a beefed up Heritage Gateway. This raises issues of resourcing and proper professional standards are important
3. There is a problem that needs fixing, due to lack of standards. Need to know context, who commissioned and why in order to decide how much weight to attach. Need to centralise research information and clear signposting.
4. Some planning documents contain excellent research that could be of use, but it rarely ends up on HER or anywhere else except LPA website. Underpinning all of this is cost implications, and there was general agreement that the HER, ADS and OASIS were all good locations for storage of this research. A multi-layer tool, would be ideal where you can click on a site and can find out about archaeology underneath a building, the building itself with links to statements of significance. All agreed this would be a great idea but we also all agreed it was probably impossible to achieve!
5. Develop the Heritage Gateway to accommodate a broader user base to access additional heritage asset information pertinent to the planning process, e.g. local authority websites, Facebook, Pinterest etc.