



**HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS
FOR
SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

**INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT
MARCH 2019**

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Produced for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
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1 Instructions/terms of reference

- 1.1 Following initial enquiries from Messrs Maurice Barlow and Martin Saunders I have been engaged by Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council to provide Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) in connection with six sites that are proposed for development in the forthcoming Review of the Solihull Local Plan. The services to be provided are as set out in various e-mails and letters to Messrs Barlow and Saunders and are the subject of a formal contract signed by all relevant parties.
- 1.2 The **HIA's have** been prepared by David Burton-Pye MBE, Chartered Town Planner and Historic Environment Consultant, acting on the instructions referred to above.
- 1.3 I have an ONC in Surveying Cartography and Planning, an HNC in Surveying Cartography and Planning (with distinction) and a Diploma in Town Planning - all from Birmingham Colleges. I was elected as a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute in 1983. I joined the Association of Conservation Officers in 1987 and in 1999 when this was inaugurated as the Institute of Historic Building Conservation I was accepted as a member of that Institute. My MBE was awarded in 2002 for Services to Conservation and Tourism in Staffordshire.
- 1.4 Prior to establishing my own practice in May 2011 I worked for 39 years in local planning authorities, mainly at South Staffordshire Council, where I had responsibility for conservation, design and tourism for some 30 years and during which time I held senior managerial positions. In addition to my role with the district council I was secretary and/or chairman to the West Midlands branch of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (and its predecessor the Association of Conservation Officers) from 1990 to 2009. I was a member and former secretary

of the council of management of the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust. In 2003 I was nominated as the local **planning authorities' representative for the Lichfield Diocesan Advisory Committee** and I served on that body in my capacity as a Chartered Town Planner until July 2018.

- 1.5 This report has been produced by David Burton-Pye for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council as part of the Local Plan Review. The report is copyright and it may not be reproduced in whole or in part for any other purpose nor may it be relied upon by others for any other purpose.

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- 2 Introduction and methodology
- 2.1 This report assesses the potential impact that development of the sites in question would have on the significance of heritage assets either within the sites or in their vicinity.
- 2.2 The basis for such assessments is embodied in primary legislation and in various policy guidance as outlined in Section 3 of this statement.
- 2.3 **The terms “significance” and “heritage assets” were introduced initially in the English Heritage “Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance” 2008 and the former Planning Policy 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, now embodied in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) revised July 2018. “Conservation Principles” is in the process of being updated and revised to more reflect the terminology used in the legislation and the NPPF. Although this revision is a consultation draft and hence only carries limited weight its proposed references to interests as opposed to values gives a clear indication of emerging views. The NPPF is clear in setting out the requirements placed on applicants in preparing and presenting their proposals and on local authorities in dealing with them. This report follows these requirements.**
- 2.4 The planning system generally has become more of an **“evidence based” system and hence this report follows current best practice and is based on an examination of the evidence contained in Historic Environment Records, various documents and an examination and inspection of the sites and buildings.**
- 2.5 Significance is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF Appendix 2, Glossary) as **“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be**
- archaeological
 - architectural
 - artistic
 - historic
- Significance derives from an asset’s presence and also from its setting.”**
- 2.6 The setting of a heritage asset is also defined in the NPPF Glossary as follows: **“The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral”.**
- 2.7 **Two of these terms, “architectural” and “historic” interest are embodied in legislation in that buildings (and parks and gardens) selected as being of “special” interest receive statutory protection through their inclusion in lists and registers respectively.**
- 2.8 **“Archaeological interest” is defined thus in the NPPF; “There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.”**
- 2.9 **“Conservation Principles” (English Heritage 2008) advocated that heritage values can be understood by considering**
- Evidential value
 - Historical value
 - Aesthetic value
 - Communal value

2.10 Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity. Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to present. It tends to be illustrative or associative. Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values but tend to have additional and specific aspects.

2.11 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) originally published in 2012 – revised 2018 - is considered in detail in Section 3 of this statement. It indicates that heritage assets lie on a spectrum of interest/significance by stating at paragraph 184 that

"Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations."

2.12 This Heritage Statement assesses these degrees of significance of Heritage Assets by measuring their importance using the criteria set out in Table 1 below.

It assesses the significance of listed buildings according to the criteria set out in Table 2.

The criteria for measuring the sensitivity of a heritage asset to further change is set out in Table 3.

IMPORTANCE	INDICATIVE CRITERIA
VERY HIGH	<p>*HA's of acknowledged international significance</p> <p>*HA's that can contribute significantly to acknowledged international research objectives</p>
HIGH	<p>*Scheduled Ancient Monuments</p> <p>*Grade I and Grade II* buildings</p> <p>*Grade I Registered Parks and Gardens and Conservation Areas containing very important buildings</p> <p>*Other listed buildings that can be shown to have exceptional qualities in their fabric or historical associations not adequately reflected in their listing</p>
MEDIUM	<p>*Grade II Listed Buildings</p> <p>*Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens</p> <p>*Conservation Areas containing buildings that contribute significantly to its character</p>
LOW	<p>*Setting that has been compromised</p> <p>*Locally Listed Buildings</p> <p>*Historic Buildings of modest quality in their fabric or historical associations</p>
VERY LOW	<p>*Buildings of no architectural or historic interest</p> <p>*Buildings of an intrusive character</p>
UNKNOWN	<p>*Buildings with some hidden or inaccessible potential for historic significance</p>

TABLE 1 Criteria for measuring the importance of heritage assets

LEVEL	INDICATIVE CRITERIA
VERY HIGH	Components notable in a Grade I or Grade II* Listed Building or Registered Park and Garden or a Conservation Area
HIGH	Components essential to the listing of a Grade II Listed Building or Registered Park and Garden
MODERATE	Individual elements make up part of the components that add to the importance of a Grade II Listed Building or Registered Park and Garden
LOW	Individual elements make up part of the components that aid readability but do not add to the importance of the building
VERY LOW	Components that detract from or mask the significance of the building

Table 2 Criteria for measuring the value of historic fabric

LEVEL	INDICATIVE CRITERIA
VERY HIGH	The original setting has been influenced by limited degrees of incremental changes that are a modern reflection of aspects of the original setting
HIGH	The original setting has been limited by medium degrees of incremental changes, some of which are modern reflections of the original setting
MEDIUM	The original setting has been influenced to a large degree by incremental changes, some of which are not in keeping with the setting of the original HA
LOW	Some aspects of the original setting have been compromised at specific locations within that setting
VERY LOW	The original setting has been widely compromised

Table 3 Criteria measuring the sensitivity of a heritage asset to further change

2.13 This statement notes that Solihull MBC has identified a number of locally listed buildings which available to view via the following link <http://www.solihull.gov.uk/Portals/0/Planning/LocalListHeritageAssets.pdf>, which includes the following explanatory note.

"This Local List of Heritage Assets describes all the locally listed buildings of special architectural or historic interest in Solihull. More recent additions have fuller descriptions but this does not indicate greater significance, it merely reflects the more detailed description of statutorily listed heritage assets seen since 2000. These heritage assets make an important contribution to the character of Solihull, whilst not being of sufficient importance to merit inclusion on the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic merit held by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Heritage assets with a reference number are those that were transferred to the list at the abolition of grade 3 listed buildings in 1974. Those without a reference number have been added since that date. All are Locally Listed and the lack of a reference does not imply any distinction between them.

Because these heritage assets form such a significant part of Solihull's heritage, the Council, when considering planning applications for their alteration or extension, will always wish to ensure that their special character is retained.

The statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest in Solihull can be consulted in Solihull Connect, Central Library, Solihull. List entries can be accessed online through the Historic England website under the National Heritage List. Photographs of many are found at Images of England, also on the Historic England website".

The author of this report notes that the Council has no published criteria for selection of locally listed buildings.

2.14 Site visits were carried out on various occasions as set out in the individual site assessments and on most of these site visits the author was accompanied by Martin Saunders, Conservation Officer with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council. The site visits were generally carried out in fine weather when trees were in full leaf and again when leaves had fallen. On most visits the ground was dry. Extensive field walking was undertaken in order to assess the potential impact of development on the heritage assets in question in relation to their immediate and wider settings. In addition, car borne assessments were made from all roads in the vicinity of the sites.

- 2.15 Photographs were taken on a Canon 70d DSLR camera fitted with a Canon 17-55mm f2.8 lens with the lens generally set at 35mm focal length to approximate the normal field of view experienced by most people. At each site sequences of photographs were taken and in subsequent post-image processing these photographs were combined into panoramic views by using Canon Photostitch software.

2.16 Sections 3 and 4 of this report summarise the legislative background, government policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and advice published by Historic England in connection with the allocation of development sites in local plans and also the setting of heritage assets. This is then followed by assessments of each site insofar as they may impact on the various heritage assets identified during the gathering of evidence.

3 The Legislative Requirements, National Planning Policy Framework and local planning policies

3.1 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting to consider the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

3.2 Section 72 of this act requires that “... **with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area ... special attention shall be paid to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area**”.

3.3 At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the commitment to sustainable development set out in paragraph 7 as follows.

“The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

3.4 NPPF paragraph 8 states that

“Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

a) *an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*

b) *a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support **communities’ health, social and cultural well-being**; and*

c) *an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon **economy**”.*

3.5 The presumption in favour of sustainable development is set out in NPPF Paragraph 11 which states that

*Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development
For plan-making this means that:
a) plans should positively seek opportunities to*

- meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;*
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:*

i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or

ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

For decision-taking this means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

3.6 NPPF Paragraph 12 states that

"The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a

*planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be **followed**".*

3.7 NPPF Paragraph 170 states that

"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to end enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes ...(in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)"

3.8 Section 16 of the NPPF sets out policies for conserving and enhancing the historic environment and sets out clearly the requirements for both applicants and local planning authorities for development proposals that affect the historic environment.

3.9 NPPF Paragraph 184 states that

"Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations."

3.10 NPPF Paragraph 185 states that

"Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

- a) *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) *the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- c) *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
- d) *opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place”.*

3.11 NPPF Paragraph 187 states that
“Local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and be used to:

- e) *assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment; and*
- f) *predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future”.*

3.12 NPPF Paragraph 188 states that
“Local planning authorities should make information about the historic environment, gathered as part of policy-making or development management, publicly accessible”.

3.13 NPPF Paragraph 189 states that

“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. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation”.

3.14 NPPF Paragraph 190 states that

“Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal”.

3.15 NPPF Paragraph 191 states that

“Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision”.

3.17 NPPF Paragraph 192 states that

“In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and **distinctiveness**".*

3.18 NPPF Paragraph 193 states that

"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its **significance**".

3.19 NPPF Paragraph 194 states that

"Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) *grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
- b) *assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional".*

3.20 NPPF Paragraph 195 states that

"Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated

heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) *the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) *no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) *conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) *the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into **use**".*

3.20 NPPF Paragraph 196 states that

"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable **use**".

3.21 NPPF Paragraph 197 states that

"The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage **asset**".

- 3.22 NPPF Paragraph 198 states that
*"Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has **occurred**".*
- 3.23 NPPF Paragraph 199 states that
*"Local planning authorities should 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 accessible⁶⁴. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be **permitted**".*
- 3.24 NPPF Paragraph 200 states that
*"Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated **favourably**".*
- 3.25 NPPF Paragraph 201 states that
*"Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a **whole**".*
- 3.26 NPPF Paragraph 202 states that
*"Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those **policies**".*
- 3.27 The NPPF Glossary defines setting and significance of heritage assets as follows:
- Setting of a heritage asset: The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
- Significance (for heritage policy): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not **only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting**. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value **described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value** forms part of its significance.
- 3.28 The relevant policy in the 2013 adopted Local Plan is Policy P16.
The Council recognises the importance of the historic environment to the Borough's local character and distinctiveness, its cultural, social, environmental and economic benefits and the effect this has on civic pride. The Council considers the following characteristics make a significant contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of the Borough and where applicable, development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how these characteristics have been conserved:

The historic core of Solihull Town Centre and its adjacent parks;

The historical development and variety of architectural styles within the Mature Suburbs and the larger established rural settlements of Meriden, Hampton-in-Arden, Balsall Common, Knowle, Dorridge, Bentley Heath, Hockley Heath, Cheswick Green and Tidbury Green;

The Arden landscape, historic villages, hamlets, farmsteads, country and lesser houses and the distinct medieval core of historic rural settlements including Berkswell, Barston, Temple Balsall, Meriden Hill, Walsal End, Hampton-in-Arden, Bickenhill and Knowle;

Parks, gardens and landscape including common, woodland, heathland and distinctive fieldscapes as defined in the Warwickshire Historic Landscape Characterisation; and

The canal and railway network, including disused railway lines and the working stations at Solihull, Olton, Dorridge and Shirley, together with associated structures.

*Development will be expected to preserve or enhance heritage assets as appropriate to their significance, conserve local character and distinctiveness and create or sustain a sense of place. In Solihull, heritage assets include: Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas and also non-designated assets; buildings, monuments, archaeological sites, places, areas or landscapes positively **identified in Solihull's Historic Environment Record** as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, such as those identified on the Local List.*

All applications and consents that affect the historic environment will be expected to have considered and used the evidence in the Solihull Historic Environment Record to inform the design of the proposal. This should be explained in the accompanying Design and Access Statement or, for significant proposals, in a Heritage Statement.

Proposals seeking to modify heritage assets for the mitigation of and adaptation to the effects of climate change will be expected to be sympathetic and conserve the special interest and significance of the heritage asset or its setting.

- 3.29 The relevant policy in the current (2016) Draft Local Plan is also Policy P16.

Policy P16 Conservation of Heritage Assets and Local Distinctiveness

*The Council recognises the importance of the historic **environment to the Borough's local character and distinctiveness**, and to civic pride, and the cultural, social, environmental and economic benefits that its conservation brings. Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved as appropriate to their significance, sustained and enhanced, and put to viable use consistent with their conservation.*

The Council considers that the following characteristics make a significant contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of the Borough:

- *The historic core of Solihull Town Centre and its adjacent parks;*
- *The historical development and variety of architectural styles within the Mature Suburbs and the larger established rural settlements of Meriden, Hampton-in-Arden, Balsall Common, Knowle, Dorridge, Bentley Heath, Hockley Heath, Cheswick Green and Tidbury Green;*
- *The Arden landscape, historic villages, hamlets, farmsteads, country and lesser houses and the distinct medieval core of historic rural settlements including Berkswell, Barston, Temple Balsall, Meriden Hill, Walsal End, Hampton-in-Arden, Bickenhill and Knowle;*

- *Parks, gardens and landscape including common, woodland, heathland and distinctive fieldscapes as defined in the Warwickshire Historic Landscape Characterisation; and*
- *The canal and railway network, including disused railway lines and the working stations at Solihull, Olton, Dorridge and Shirley, together with associated structures.*

Development proposals that impact upon this character and significance will be expected to demonstrate how this impact has been assessed and minimised, using a recognised process of assessment, involvement, evaluation and design.

*Development will be expected to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, conserve local character and distinctiveness, create or sustain a sense of place and seek and take opportunities to enhance the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place. In Solihull, heritage assets include; Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas and also non-designated assets. The latter include buildings, monuments, archaeological sites, places, areas or **landscapes positively identified in Solihull's Historic Environment Record**, or during development management work as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, such as those identified on the Local List of Heritage Assets. The historic landscape includes ancient woodlands, hedgerows and field boundaries, and archaeological features such as earthworks.*

All applications that affect the historic environment will be expected to have considered and used, as a minimum the evidence in the Solihull Historic Environment Record to

inform the design of the proposal. Heritage assets should be assessed using further sources and appropriate expertise where necessary. This should be explained in the accompanying Design and Access Statement or, for significant proposals, in a Heritage Statement.

Proposals seeking to modify heritage assets for the mitigation of and adaptation to the effects of climate change will be expected to be sympathetic and conserve the special interest and significance of the heritage asset or its setting.”

4 Historic England – Good Practice Advice and Advice Notes

4.1 Three publications are relevant to this assessment exercise namely

- The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans - Historic England Advice Note 3 (AN 3)
- The Historic Environment in Local Plans – Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning:1 (GPA 1)
- The Setting of Heritage Assets - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (GPA 3)

In addition, this report acknowledges a fourth publication namely Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment; Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning:2 (GPA 2). However, GPA 2 is directed more at the process of making and deciding planning applications and has less relevance at the stage of identifying sites in the local plan making process.

The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans – Historic England Advice Note 3

4.2 This Note sets out three stages for the site allocation process as follows

- Stage 1 Evidence gathering makes particular reference to the Historic Environment record and other evidence held by the local planning authority. It should relate to designated and non-designated assets and inform the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

It could include characterisation work and update existing information on the significance of assets and assessment of their setting.

Site specific studies may also be necessary

- Stage 2 Site Selection. This process needs to be detailed enough to support the inclusion of appropriate sites; justify the omission of sites where there is identified harm; set out clear criteria for sites that are acceptable in principle which can be developed in terms of impact on heritage assets for example in relation to size, design, or density.

- Stage 3 Site Allocation Policies. These are a positive features of plans highlighting specific criteria against which development needs to be judged. Their text should provide clear references to the historic environment and specific heritage assets where appropriate.

The policy ought to be detailed enough to provide information on what is expected and where it will happen on the site. Mitigation and enhancement measures should be set out within the policy. So too could design principles (and design codes) to make development more sustainable and acceptable.

4.3 The Site Selection Methodology identifies five steps as follows:

- Step 1 Identify which heritage assets are affected by the potential site allocation
- Step 2 Understand what contribution the site (in its current form) makes to the significance of the heritage assets
- Step 3 Identify what impact the allocation might have on that significance
- Step 4 Consider maximising enhancements and avoiding harm
- Step 5 Determine whether the proposed site allocation is appropriate in light of **the NPPF's test of soundness**

The Historic Environment in Local Plans – Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning:1 (GPA 1)

- 4.4 This Note supplements AN 3 and sets out advice on a variety of issues including gathering evidence, sources of evidence and its application, the establishment of a positive strategy for conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, the identification of inappropriate development, development management policies and site allocations.

The Setting of Heritage Assets - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning:3 (GPA 3)

- 4.5 GPA 3 is especially relevant to the current report and the focus that it has on the impact of development on the proposed sites on heritage assets. It expands on the advice in the NPPF and states that the following matters may affect the understanding or extent of setting.

- 4.6 The extent of setting
- While setting can be mapped in the context of an individual application or proposal, it does not have a fixed boundary and cannot be definitively and permanently described for all time as a spatially bounded area or as lying within a set distance of a heritage asset because what comprises a heritage **asset's setting may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve** or as the asset becomes better understood or due to the varying impacts of different proposals; for instance, new understanding of the relationship between neighbouring heritage assets may extend what might previously have been understood to comprise setting.

- Extensive heritage assets, such as landscapes and townscapes, can include many heritage assets and their nested and overlapping settings, as well as having a setting of their own. A conservation area will include the settings of

4.7 Views and Setting

The contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, including a variety of views of, across, or including that asset, and views of the surroundings from or through the asset, and may intersect with, and incorporate the settings of numerous heritage assets.

Views which contribute more to understanding the significance of a heritage asset include:

- those where relationships between the asset and other historic assets or places or natural features are particularly relevant;
- those with historical associations, including viewing points and the topography of battlefields;
- those where the composition within the view was a fundamental aspect of the design or function of the heritage asset; and
- those between heritage assets and natural or topographic features, or phenomena such as solar and lunar events.

- 4.8 Assets, whether contemporaneous or otherwise, which were intended to be seen from one another for aesthetic, functional, ceremonial or religious reasons include:
- military and defensive sites;
 - telegraphs or beacons;
 - prehistoric funerary and ceremonial sites;

- historic parks and gardens with deliberate links to other designed landscapes, and remote 'eye-catching' features or 'borrowed' landmarks beyond the park boundary.

4.9 Particular views may be identified and protected by local planning policies and guidance. This does not mean that additional views or other elements or attributes of setting do not merit consideration. Such views include:

- views identified as part of the plan-making process, such as those identified in the London View Management Framework (LVMF, Mayor of London 2010) and Oxford City Council's View Cones (2005);
- views identified in character area appraisals or in management plans, for example of World Heritage Sites;
- important designed views from, to and within historic parks and gardens that have been identified as part of the evidence base for development plans, such as those noted during English Heritage's 2001 upgrading of the national Register of Historic Parks and Gardens; and
- views that are identified when assessing sites as part of preparing development proposals.

4.10 Setting and the significance of heritage assets

Setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, though land within a setting may itself be designated (see below Designed settings). Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset. This depends on a wide range of physical elements within, as well as perceptual and associational attributes pertaining to, the heritage asset's surroundings. The following paragraphs examine some more general considerations relating to setting and significance.

- **Cumulative change**
Where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development affecting its setting, to accord with NPPF policies, consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset. Negative change could include severing the last link between an asset and its original setting; positive change could include the restoration of a building's original designed landscape or the removal of structures impairing views of a building.
- **Change over time**
Settings of heritage assets change over time. Understanding this history of change will help to determine how further development within the asset's setting is likely to affect the contribution made by setting to the significance of the heritage asset. Settings of heritage assets which closely resemble the setting in which the asset was constructed are likely to contribute to significance but settings which have changed may also themselves enhance significance, for instance where townscape character has been shaped by cycles of change and creation over the long term.
- **Appreciating setting**
Because setting does not depend on public rights or ability to access it, significance is not dependent on numbers of people visiting it; this would downplay such qualitative issues as the importance of quiet and tranquillity as an attribute of setting, constraints on access such as remoteness or challenging terrain, and the importance of the setting to a local community who may be few in number. The potential for appreciation of the asset's significance may increase once it is interpreted or mediated in some way, or if access to currently inaccessible land becomes possible.

- **Buried assets and setting**
Heritage assets that comprise only buried remains may not be readily appreciated by a casual observer, they nonetheless retain a presence in the landscape and, like other heritage assets, have a setting. For instance: The location and setting of historic battles, otherwise with no visible traces, may include important strategic views, routes by which opposing forces approached each other and a topography that played a part in the outcome. Buried archaeological remains may also be appreciated in historic street or boundary patterns, in relation to their surrounding topography or other heritage assets or through the long-term continuity in the use of the land that surrounds them. While the form of survival of an asset may influence the degree to which its setting contributes to significance and the weight placed on it, it does not necessarily follow that the contribution is nullified if the asset is obscured or not readily visible.
- **Designed settings**
Many heritage assets have settings that have been designed to enhance their presence and visual interest or to create experiences of drama or surprise and these designed settings may also be regarded as heritage assets in their own right. Furthermore, they may, themselves, have a wider setting: a park may form the immediate surroundings of a great house, while having its own setting that includes lines-of-sight to more distant heritage assets or natural features beyond the park boundary. Given that the **designated area is often restricted to the 'core'** elements, such as a formal park, it is important that the extended and remote elements of design are included in the evaluation of the setting of a designed landscape.
- **Setting and urban design**
As mentioned above (para 3, The extent of setting), the numbers and proximity of heritage assets in urban areas mean that the protection and enhancement of setting is

intimately linked to townscape and urban design considerations, including the degree of conscious design or fortuitous beauty and the consequent visual harmony or congruity of development, and often relate to townscape attributes such as lighting, trees, and verges, or the treatments of boundaries or street surfaces.

- **Setting and economic and social viability**
Sustainable development under the NPPF can have important positive impacts on heritage and their settings, for example by bringing an abandoned building back into use or giving a heritage asset further life. However, the economic and social viability of a heritage asset can be diminished if accessibility from or to its setting is reduced by badly designed or insensitively located development. For instance, a new road scheme affecting the setting of a **heritage asset, while in some cases increasing the public's** ability or inclination to visit and/or use it, thereby boosting its social or economic viability and enhancing the options for the marketing or adaptive re-use of a building, may in others have the opposite effect.

4.11 A Staged Approach to Decision-Taking

All heritage assets have significance, some of which have particular significance and are designated and the contribution made by their setting to their significance also varies. And, though many settings may be enhanced by development, not all settings have the same capacity to accommodate change without harm to the significance of the heritage asset. This capacity may vary between designated assets of the same grade or of the same type or according to the nature of the change. It can also depend on the location of the asset: an elevated or overlooked location; a riverbank, coastal or island location; or a location within an extensive tract of flat land may increase the sensitivity of the setting (i.e. the capacity of the setting to accommodate change without harm to the heritage **asset's significance**). **This requires the implications of**

development affecting the setting of heritage assets to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

4.12 Protection of the setting of heritage assets need not prevent change; indeed change may be positive, for instance where the setting has been compromised by poor development. Many places are within the setting of a heritage asset and are subject to some degree of change over time. NPPF policies, together with the guidance on their implementation in the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG), provide the framework for the consideration of change affecting the setting of undesignated and designated heritage assets as part of the decision-taking process.

4.13 **Amongst the Government's** planning objectives for the historic environment is that conservation decisions are **based on the nature, extent and level of a heritage asset's** significance and are investigated to a proportionate degree. Historic England recommends the following broad approach to assessment, undertaken as a series of steps that apply proportionately to complex or more straightforward cases:

- Step 1: identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
- Step 2: assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);
- Step 3: assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance;
- Step 4: explore the way to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm;
- Step 5: make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

These steps are set out in detail below.

4.14 Step 1: identifying the heritage assets affected and their settings

The starting point of the analysis is to identify those heritage assets likely to be affected by the development proposal. For this purpose, if the development is capable **of affecting the contribution of a heritage asset's setting to its significance or the appreciation of its significance, it can be considered as falling within the asset's setting.**

4.15 It is important that, at the pre-application or scoping stage, the local authority, having due regard to the need for proportionality:

- indicates whether it considers a proposed development has the potential to affect the setting of a particular heritage asset; or
- **specifies an 'area of search' around the proposed development within which it is reasonable to consider setting effects; or**
- advises the applicant to consider approaches such as a **'Zone of Visual Influence' (ZVI) or 'Zone of Theoretical Visibility' (ZTV) in relation to the proposed development** in order to better identify heritage assets and settings that may be affected.

NB **A 'Zone of Visual Influence' defines the areas from which a development may potentially be totally or partially visible by reference to surrounding topography. The analysis does not take into account any landscape artefacts such as trees, woodland, or buildings, and for this reason is increasingly referred to as a 'Zone of Theoretical Visibility'.**

- 4.16 For developments that are not likely to be prominent or intrusive, the assessment of effects on setting may often be limited to the immediate surroundings, while taking account of the possibility that setting may change as a result of the removal of impermanent landscape or townscape features, such as hoardings or planting.
- 4.17 The area of assessment for a large or prominent development, such as a tall building in an urban environment or a wind turbine in the countryside, can often extend for a distance of several kilometres. In these circumstances, while a proposed development may affect the setting of numerous heritage assets, it may not impact on them all equally, as some will be more sensitive to change affecting their setting than others. Local planning authorities are encouraged to work with applicants in order to minimise the need for detailed analysis of very large numbers of heritage assets. They may give advice at the pre-application stage (or the scoping stage of an Environmental Statement) on those heritage assets, or categories of heritage asset, that they consider most sensitive as well as on the level of analysis they consider proportionate for different assets or types of asset.
- 4.18 Where spatially extensive assessments relating to large numbers of heritage assets are required, Historic England recommends that Local Planning Authorities give consideration to the practicalities and reasonableness of requiring assessors to access privately owned land. In these circumstances, they should also address the extent to which assessors can reasonably be expected to gather and represent community interests and opinions on changes affecting settings.
- 4.19 Step 2: Assessing whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s)
- The second stage of any analysis is to assess whether the setting of a heritage asset makes a contribution to its significance and the extent and/or nature of that contribution. We recommend that this assessment should first address the key attributes of the heritage asset itself and then consider:
- the physical surroundings of the asset, including its relationship with other heritage assets;
 - the way the asset is appreciated; and
 - **the asset's associations and patterns of use.**
- 4.20 Assessment Step 2: Assessing whether, how and to what degree settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) provides a (non-exhaustive) check-list of the potential attributes of a setting that it may be appropriate to consider in order to define its **contribution to the asset's heritage values and significance**. In many cases, only a limited selection of the attributes listed will be of particular relevance to an asset. A sound assessment process will identify these at an early stage, focus on them, and be as clear as possible what emphasis attaches to them. In doing so, it will generally be useful to consider, insofar as is possible, the way these attributes have contributed to the significance of the asset in the past (particularly when it was first built, constructed or laid out), the implications of change over time, and their contribution in the present.
- 4.21 The local authority Historic Environment Record is an important source of information to support this assessment and, in most cases, will be able to provide information on the wider landscape context of the heritage asset as well as on the asset itself. Landscape Character Assessments, Historic Landscape Character guidance and Conservation Area Appraisals are important sources in this regard.

4.22 This assessment of the contribution to significance made by setting will provide the baseline for establishing the effects of a proposed development on significance, as set out in 'Step 3' below. It will, therefore, be focused on the need to support decision-taking in respect of the proposed development. A similar approach to assessment may also inform the production of a strategic, management or conservation plan in advance of any specific development proposal (see section 3), although the assessment of significance required for studies of this type will address **the setting of the heritage asset 'in the round', rather than focusing on a particular development site.**

4.24 Assessment Step 2: Assessing whether, how and to what degree settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s)
The starting point for this stage of the assessment is to consider the significance of the heritage asset itself and then establish the contribution made by its setting. The following is a (non-exhaustive) check-list of potential attributes of a setting that may help to elucidate its contribution to significance. Only a limited selection of the attributes listed is likely to be particularly important in terms of any single asset.

The asset's physical surroundings

- Topography
- Other heritage assets (including buildings, structures, landscapes, areas or archaeological remains)
- **Definition, scale and 'grain' of surrounding streetscape, landscape and spaces**
- Formal design
- Historic materials and surfaces
- Land use
- Green space, trees and vegetation
- Openness, enclosure and boundaries
- Functional relationships and communications
- History and degree of change over time

- Integrity
 - Issues such as soil chemistry and hydrology
- Experience of the asset
- Surrounding landscape or townscape character
 - Views from, towards, through, across and including the asset
 - Visual dominance, prominence or role as focal point
 - Intentional intervisibility with other historic and natural features
 - Noise, vibration and other pollutants or nuisances
 - **Tranquillity, remoteness, 'wildness'**
 - Sense of enclosure, seclusion, intimacy or privacy
 - Dynamism and activity
 - Accessibility, permeability and patterns of movement
 - Degree of interpretation or promotion to the public
 - The rarity of comparable survivals of setting
 - **The asset's associative attributes**
 - Associative relationships between heritage assets
 - Cultural associations
 - Celebrated artistic representations
 - Traditions

4.25 Step 3: Assessing the effect of the proposed development on the significance of the asset(s)
The third stage of any analysis is to identify the range of effects a development may have on setting(s) and evaluate the resultant degree of harm or benefit to the significance of the heritage asset(s). In some circumstances, this evaluation may need to extend to cumulative and complex impacts which may have as great an effect on heritage assets as large-scale development and which may not only be visual.

4.26 The range of circumstances in which setting may be affected and the range of heritage assets that may be involved precludes a single approach for assessing effects. Different approaches will be required for different

circumstances. In general, however, the assessment should address the key attributes of the proposed development in terms of its:

- location and siting
- form and appearance
- additional effects
- permanence

4.27 Assessment Step 3: Assessing the effect of the proposed development (see below) provides a more detailed list of attributes of the development proposal that it may be appropriate to consider during the assessment process. The list is not intended to be exhaustive and not all attributes will apply to a particular development proposal. Depending on the level of detail considered proportionate to the purpose of the assessment, it would normally be appropriate to make a selection from the list, identifying those particular attributes of the development requiring further consideration and considering what emphasis attaches to each. The key attributes chosen for consideration can be used as a simple check-list, supported by a short explanation, as part of a Design and Access Statement, or may provide the basis for a more complex assessment process that might sometimes draw on quantitative approaches to assist analysis.

4.28 In particular, it would be helpful for local planning authorities to consider at an early stage whether development affecting the setting of a heritage asset can be broadly categorised as having the potential to enhance or harm the significance of the asset through the principle of development alone; through the scale, prominence, proximity or placement of development; or through its detailed design. Determining whether the assessment will focus on spatial, landscape and views analysis, on the application of urban design considerations, or on a combination of these approaches will clarify for the

applicant the breadth and balance of professional expertise required for its successful delivery.

- Location and siting of development
 - Proximity to asset
 - Extent
 - Position in relation to landform
 - Degree to which location will physically or visually isolate asset
 - Position in relation to key views
 - The form and appearance of the development
 - Prominence, dominance, or conspicuousness
 - Competition with or distraction from the asset
 - Dimensions, scale and massing
 - Proportions
 - Visual permeability (extent to which it can be seen through)
 - Materials (texture, colour, reflectiveness, etc)
 - Architectural style or design
 - Introduction of movement or activity
 - Diurnal or seasonal change
 - Other effects of the development
 - Change to built surroundings and spaces
 - Change to skyline
 - Noise, odour, vibration, dust, etc
 - Lighting effects and 'light spill'
 - Change to general character (e.g. suburbanising or industrialising)
 - Changes to public access, use or amenity
 - Changes to land use, land cover, tree cover
 - Changes to archaeological context, soil chemistry, or hydrology
 - Changes to communications/accessibility/permeability
- Permanence of the development
- Anticipated lifetime/temporariness
 - Recurrence
 - Reversibility

Longer term or consequential effects of the development

- Changes to ownership arrangements
- Economic and social viability
- Communal use and social viability

4.29 Step 4: Maximising enhancement and minimising harm

Maximum advantage can be secured if any effects on the significance of a heritage asset arising from development **liable to affect its setting are considered from the project's inception**. Early assessment of setting may provide a basis for agreeing the scope and form of development, reducing the potential for disagreement and challenge later in the process.

4.30 Enhancement may be achieved by actions including:

- removing or re-modelling an intrusive building or feature;
- replacement of a detrimental feature by a new and more harmonious one;
- restoring or revealing a lost historic feature or view;
- introducing a wholly new feature that adds to the public appreciation of the asset;
- introducing new views (including glimpses or better framed views) that add to the public experience of the asset; or
- improving public access to, or interpretation of, the asset including its setting.

4.31 Options for reducing the harm arising from development may include the relocation of a development or its elements, changes to its design, the creation of effective long-term visual or acoustic screening, or management measures secured by planning conditions or legal agreements. For some developments affecting setting, the design of a development may not be capable of sufficient adjustment to avoid or significantly reduce the harm, for

example where impacts are caused by fundamental issues such as the proximity, location, scale, prominence or noisiness of a development. In other cases, good design may reduce or remove the harm, or provide enhancement, and design quality may be the main consideration in determining the balance of harm and benefit.

4.32 Where attributes of a development affecting setting may cause some harm to significance and cannot be adjusted, screening may have a part to play in reducing harm. As screening can only mitigate negative impacts, rather than removing impacts or providing enhancement, it ought never to be regarded as a substitute for well- designed developments within the setting of heritage assets. Screening may have as intrusive an effect on the setting as the development it seeks to mitigate, so where it is necessary, it too merits careful design. This should take account of local landscape character and seasonal and diurnal effects, such as changes to foliage and lighting. The permanence or longevity of screening in relation to the effect on the setting also requires consideration. Ephemeral features, such as hoardings, may be removed or changed during the duration of the development, as may woodland or hedgerows, unless they enjoy statutory protection. Management measures secured by legal agreements may be helpful in securing the long-term effect of screening.

4.33 Step 5: Making and documenting the decision and monitoring outcomes

It is good practice to document each stage of the decision-making process in a non-technical way, accessible to non-specialists. This should set out clearly how the setting of each heritage asset affected contributes to its significance and what the anticipated effect of the development, including any mitigation proposals, will be. Despite the wide range of possible variables, normally this analysis should focus on a limited number of key attributes of the

asset, its setting and the proposed development, in order to avoid undue complexity.

- 4.34 The true effect of a development on setting may be difficult to establish from plans, drawings and visualisations, although the latter are becoming increasingly sophisticated. Once a development affecting setting that was intended to enhance, or was considered unlikely to detract from, the significance of a heritage asset has been implemented, it may be helpful to review the success of **the scheme in these terms and to identify any 'lessons learned'**. This will be particularly useful where similar developments are anticipated in the future.

5 The heritage impact assessments

5.1 Each site is assessed using a consistent methodology.

- Site boundaries are shown on an aerial photograph derived from Google Earth and a current Ordnance Survey map with a general description of the site.
- Information from the Historic Environment Records is included supplemented where appropriate by archival evidence accessed via the Warwickshire County Record Office.
- The Archaeological Assessments provided by Warwickshire Archaeological Information and Advice to Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council for all sites included in the Local Plan Review are copied together with mapping to show archaeological monuments and historic landscape character.
- Historic mapping is included for each site.
- Extensive photographic evidence is included to show heritage assets potentially affected by the proposed development sites together with photographs of the sites. At least two visits have been made to each site and the surrounding areas.
- The potential impact of development on the heritage assets is assessed and described according to the legislative requirements, the National Planning Policy Framework and guidance provided by historic England.
- Where appropriate each impact statement considers how harm to heritage assets can be minimised and also how the significance of heritage assets might be enhanced.