



Planning and Development
in the Historic Environment:
A Charter for English Heritage
Advisory Services

ENGLISH HERITAGE

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHARTER

English Heritage wants to improve the quality and delivery of its services to those who are involved in changing or influencing change to the historic environment. This charter explains the steps we are taking to achieve this, and our commitment to delivering advisory services for planning and development in partnership with other agencies.

Aimed at owners of historic sites, local planning authorities and the development industry, the charter covers both the statutory advice we give and our response to requests for preliminary opinion and advice. It also covers advice on policy and management issues such as conservation plans.

This is the Second Edition of the Charter and incorporates minor changes in response to suggestions received from those who use our services. It sets out what level of service you can expect from English Heritage. It does not deal with the services of other bodies, in particular local planning authorities. In most cases they will be the first point of contact.

This Charter explains what English Heritage is and is not able to do if we are to engage successfully with the modernised planning system.

THE ROLE OF ENGLISH HERITAGE

English Heritage is the Government's advisor on the historic environment. We are consulted by local authorities, ecclesiastical bodies and others on a wide range of policy and development activities. Central to our role in the planning system is the advice we give to local planning authorities and Government Departments on development proposals affecting listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments and registered parks and gardens.

We have a network of staff across England who have a wide range of skills, but it is neither possible nor necessary for us to engage with every planning issue. We will usually only get involved in schemes which include proposals with the potential for major change or damage to nationally important heritage assets.

Alongside our commitment to helping people who want to make changes to historic places, we have to fulfil our primary role, which is to protect the historic environment for the benefit of present and future generations. Our advice is informed by Government policy and guidance and we publish wide-ranging guidance of our own on management of the historic environment.

HELPING US TO HELP YOU

We want to work constructively with all our clients. You can help us most effectively by:

- checking that we are the right people to ask and whether what you require is not better supplied elsewhere in the public and private sectors. Enquiries on proposals likely to require statutory approvals (other than for scheduled monument consent) should be made to the local planning authority in the first instance
- providing us with as much relevant information as possible at the earliest stage in the development process; experience shows that this saves us all time and money

FRAMEWORK FOR PROVIDING ADVICE

In cases where we have an interest, English Heritage will:

- identify the individual requirements of the client
- match the skills required to the needs of the case
- identify named staff for each case, and confirm the arrangements for contacting them
- ensure the delivery of constructive, clear, relevant and concise advice, consistent with good conservation practice
- provide advice against an agreed timetable
- review performance through evaluation and feedback

CORPORATE ADVICE FROM ENGLISH HERITAGE

We communicate all our advice by letter, often dispatched electronically. The member of staff whose knowledge best fits the need for advice will sign the letter, which may also draw on the expertise of other members of English Heritage staff or our advisory committees and panels. The letter represents our corporate advice on behalf of our Commission, our policy-making body.

In very rare cases Commission and/or an Advisory Committee made up of independent external experts will debate the content of the advice at one of its meetings, and report it in minutes which are subsequently made available on the English Heritage website.

INITIAL OR PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

On initial contact, English Heritage will:

- determine the nature of the enquiry, the issues it raises and whether we need to be involved

Once the need for us to be involved has been confirmed, we will:

- agree the form of the advice to be given, a timetable for its delivery, and the information upon which it is to be based

Sometimes it will be clear that we need have no involvement at all. In such circumstances, we will help with identifying alternative appropriate sources of advice within 21 days of contact. Even where we need to be involved it is as important to contact others such as the local authority or amenity societies. We will encourage prospective applicants to include them in consultations whenever possible.

Advice can often be based on the initial information provided. However, we may need additional information for full and proper consideration and ultimately for informed decision-making. This may involve meetings, the submission of further documentation and sometimes the commissioning of necessary surveys or studies. Each case will therefore generate its own programme.

When we are consulted on infrastructure and other proposals with prescribed deadlines for response, we will aim to meet such deadlines, taking into account our corporate responsibilities and priorities.

Unless agreed otherwise, we will aim to dispatch advice within 21 days of receipt of a written request accompanied by adequate information.

INFORMATION TO ACCOMPANY CONSULTATIONS WITH ENGLISH HERITAGE

In order to be able to offer detailed advice we need a full understanding of the impact of the proposed works so that we can assess their impact on the historic environment. In some circumstances, we also need to understand why the changes are proposed. The range of information we may ask for is listed over leaf.

STATUTORY AND FORMAL ADVICE

Local planning authorities and the Government notify and consult us on a range of applications affecting the historic environment, and we have specific statutory functions in London.

On receipt of any consultation, we will:

- confirm our interest, and carry out an initial assessment to determine how it will be handled and the nature of any response
- identify the need for additional information and, where necessary, agree a suitable timetable for giving advice
- provide advice within the agreed timetable, and in particular respond to notifications of listed building consent and planning applications within 21 days of receipt unless otherwise agreed
- provide relevant information and advice, and present it clearly and concisely

In a very few cases, English Heritage Commission and/or an Advisory Committee made up of independent external experts need to consider a case. Where this is so, it may not be possible to meet the 21-day target and we will seek to agree a longer period with the relevant parties.

STATUTORY CONSULTATIONS

The circumstances in which English Heritage is notified of and consulted upon applications affecting the historic environment are set out in legislation and Government guidance. Broadly speaking, English Heritage must be consulted on:

- listed building consent applications relating to a Grade I or II* listed building or for demolition or partial demolition of a Grade II listed building
- applications for planning permission for development which affects the setting of a Grade I or II* listed building and (in some circumstances) for development which affects the character or appearance of a conservation area or a registered park and garden
- all applications for scheduled monument consent

In Greater London, English Heritage has statutory powers and must be consulted on a wider range of applications.

The full list of planning and listed building consent applications on which we must be consulted can be found on our website, or on request from any one of our regional offices.

GUIDE TO THE RANGE OF INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH ENGLISH HERITAGE ON PROPOSALS AFFECTING NATIONALLY IMPORTANT HERITAGE ASSETS

The type and amount of information needed may vary according to the kind of development proposed. The following informs the basis for assessing the impact of changes to the historic environment:

- A plan showing the site, its location, extent and context
- Photographs, dated, numbered and cross-referenced to a plan, showing the site and its context in general and the area of proposed change in detail
- A statement of significance which demonstrates an understanding of the historical, archaeological and architectural interest of the site

Measured drawings as existing and as proposed to show, where appropriate:

- all floor plans
- any external and internal elevations affected by the works

- sections through floor, roof and wall structures, where these are affected by the works
- perspectives or photomontages, models or computer visualisations, to show the impact of new works on the heritage asset and its setting
- landscape works, to include contours and planting schemes
- other material necessary to provide a full understanding of the impact of the works on the significance of the heritage asset and its setting

Drawings should be at a sufficient scale to show the impact of the proposals on the asset and its setting, usually 1:50. Plans, elevations and sections as existing should indicate areas proposed for demolition.

A written explanation of the proposed works to include:

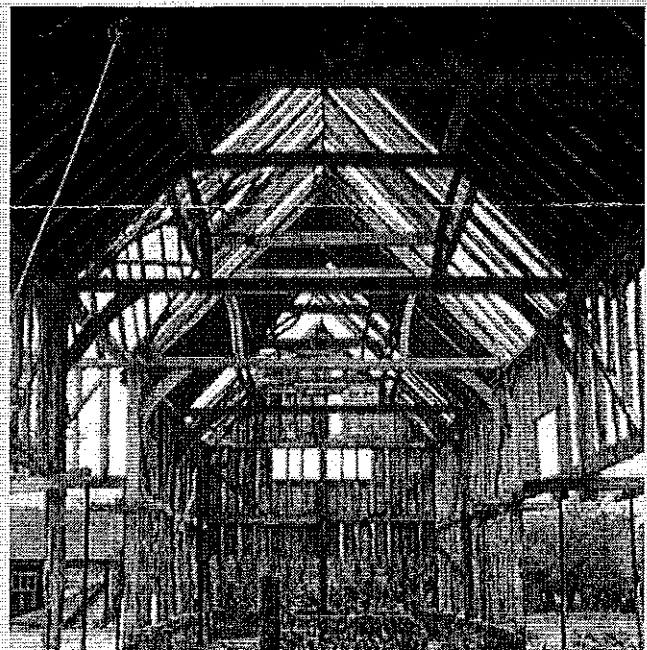
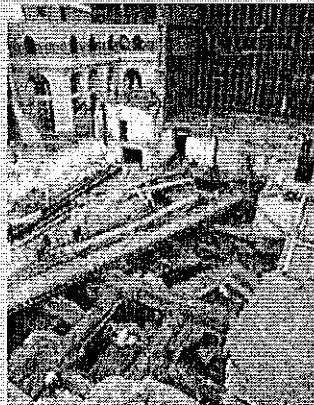
- an assessment of the impact of the works on the significance of the asset
- a statement of justification explaining why the works are desirable or necessary (this should include development appraisal where appropriate)
- an archaeological assessment or field evaluation and a mitigation strategy, where important archaeological remains may exist
- a structural report by an engineer familiar with heritage assets, which identifies defects and proposes remedies, when works include significant elements of demolition or rebuilding.

When proposed works include the total or substantial demolition of a listed building, or any significant part of it, the statement of justification should be based on the following criteria, as set out in detail at 3.19, PPG15:

- the condition of the building, the cost of repairing and maintaining it in relation to its importance and to the value derived from continued use
- the adequacy of efforts made to retain the building in use, including evidence that the building has been offered on the open market at a realistic price
- the merits of alternative proposals for the site

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

English Heritage is subject to the Freedom of Information Act. All information held by the organisation will be accessible in response to a Freedom of Information request, unless one of the exemptions in the Act applies.



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www.english-heritage.org.uk

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If you would like any more information on English Heritage's advisory services for planning and development in the historic environment, please contact the relevant regional office. Feedback on any aspect of our service should be addressed to the regional director.

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