

Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage

Historic England Advice Note 7 (Third Edition)





Summary

This Historic England Advice Note (HEAN) aims to provide a comprehensive guide to local heritage lists, outlining the benefits as well as the different steps involved in the process of creating or revising a list. It is illustrated with diverse examples from different local heritage lists across the country, reflecting the ability for local heritage listing to capture what makes a place special and unique.

This HEAN is part of a series of documents about local heritage lists:

Historic England 2026 Local Heritage Listing: Toolkit

Historic England 2026 Local Heritage Listing: Case Studies

Historic England 2025 Local Heritage Lists: The National Perspective, Historic England Research Report Series 38/2025

The HEAN can be used alongside the accompanying toolkit and case studies, which show how local heritage lists can be adapted depending on resource and the local context. The HEAN and accompanying documents are aimed at all those involved in the identification of non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs) and the development and upkeep of local heritage lists, including Local Planning Authorities (LPAs), civic and amenity societies and local communities.

This version has been prepared by Caroline Kendall, informed and supported by a range of colleagues within Historic England, as well as feedback from the wider sector.

The HEAN is based on the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) at the time of publication.

This advice should be read in conjunction with other relevant Good Practice Advice and Historic England Advice Notes.

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Front cover: Fingerpost sign, Waterloo Bridge, London Borough of Lambeth. Added to the London Borough of Lambeth's local heritage list in 2023. The fingerpost was nominated by a local resident as an important remnant of a wider GLC-era waymarking scheme. It was originally illuminated. [Chris Redgrave © Historic England Archive DP528125]



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Jamia Masjid Al-Madina, Waterloo Road, Middlesbrough, Tees Valley. Included on Middlesbrough's Local Heritage List. Alan Bull © Historic England Archive DP486736



The basics

What is a local heritage list?

1. Local heritage lists are lists of non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs) which, due to their local heritage significance, have been identified as being of value to a particular place and the community who live and work there. All NDHAs (not just those included in local heritage lists) are afforded a degree of protection through the planning system, although this is less than the protection given to designated heritage assets. A heritage asset being included on the local heritage list doesn't prevent future change, but it does mean that any proposed changes should carefully consider the potential effect on the asset. The planning context for local heritage lists is set out later in this document.
2. Local heritage lists are usually developed by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), often with the input of civic societies or other local organisations and the local community. The **Historic Environment Record** (HER) should also be involved. Developing (or refreshing) a local heritage list is a way of identifying, conserving and celebrating elements of the local historic environment which enrich and enliven the area. Crucially, local heritage lists can provide people based in that area with the opportunity to have their say on the heritage that is of value to them and their community.
3. Research conducted in 2025 found that at least 70% of LPAs in England have one or more local heritage lists, although coverage varies across the country and in some LPAs the list may be outdated, or may not cover the whole local authority area.¹ In other LPAs there may be multiple lists covering different parts of the area, for instance if a new unitary authority has inherited the lists of several district or borough councils. This situation is likely to increase where there is local government reorganisation.

What is a heritage asset?

4. The definition of a heritage asset comes from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).²

¹ Local Heritage Lists: The National Perspective, Historic England Research Report Series, 38/2025

² National Planning Policy Framework, Annex 2: Glossary (2024) 73



5. The NPPF defines significance as: 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.³
6. The NPPF defines designated heritage assets as World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Park and Gardens, Registered Battlefields or Conservation Areas designated under the relevant legislation. Details of World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Park and Gardens and Registered Battlefields can be found on **the National Heritage List for England** (the NHLE).
7. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides further detail on what constitutes a non-designated heritage asset, explaining that: Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets. A substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage significance to merit identification as non-designated heritage assets.⁴

What are the benefits of a local heritage list?

8. Local heritage lists are a key part of a holistic approach to heritage protection, in which heritage assets are given consideration within the planning system according to their significance. As well as promoting their conservation, local heritage lists are a way of identifying those heritage assets which are of value locally and giving the local community a voice in the process. Some of the different benefits resulting from local heritage lists are explored below.
9. The local community benefits because:
 - They are given a role in identifying, celebrating and conserving heritage that is important to them;
 - They have the opportunity to learn more about the heritage of their local area, increasing pride in place;

³ National Planning Policy Framework, Annex 2: Glossary (2024) 78

⁴ Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 039, Reference ID: 18a-039-20190723 (2019)



- The process may lead to the reuse and conservation of heritage assets in the local area, enhancing quality of place;
- Their local green spaces, such as parks and gardens, may be celebrated and protected, bringing benefits for wellbeing, nature and the environment;
- They may benefit from engagement and participation opportunities and may subsequently become more engaged with heritage. Engaging with heritage has been found to have **wellbeing benefits**.

10. The LPA benefits because:

- They can take a proactive approach to heritage protection by identifying NDHAs at an earlier stage in the planning process;
- They can build positive relationships with local communities, groups and societies;
- They can increase public understanding of the role of planning and heritage conservation;
- They have better evidence and tools to support placemaking through both plan and decision-making, which can help to reinforce the character of an area.

11. The heritage sector benefits because:

- Local heritage lists allow for the recognition of a broad range of heritage values;
- Local heritage lists can complement the statutory designations;
- A diverse range of heritage types can be identified and conserved, and new audiences can be engaged;
- Local heritage lists provide another source of information about the local historic environment, alongside existing sources such as the HER.

12. Amenity societies, civic societies and other local groups benefit from:

- An opportunity to share their specialist knowledge;
- An opportunity to build new relationships with the LPA and the wider community;
- An opportunity to articulate what is of value to them and their members.

13. Developers benefits because:

- NDHAs are identified in site allocations and area regeneration plans, leading to schemes which are locally responsive and more likely to gain the buy-in of local communities;



- NDHAs are recognised at an earlier stage in the planning process, which helps to reduce uncertainty and reduce the risk of delays;
- Vacant or underutilised buildings of value to the local community are recognised for their heritage significance, encouraging reuse consistent with that significance.

14. Owners/residents/people involved in managing an NDHA benefit because:

- Their asset is recognised and celebrated as being of value locally;
- They may be able to increase their knowledge about the history and importance of their asset, as well as being able to contribute their own knowledge as part of the process;
- They have greater clarity about the planning considerations for any future works to the asset;
- They better understand the need to care for and maintain the asset.

Non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs) in the planning system

15. Because the conservation of NDHAs is managed through the planning process it is important that the planning context is understood, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). This is summarised below.

16. The NPPF states that:

- The planning system is plan-led, and that those plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment;⁵
- When determining applications, LPAs should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;⁶
- When determining applications, LPAs should take into account the effect of the application on the significance of an NDHA, requiring a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset. Planning applications can be refused on the grounds of harm to an NDHA.⁷

⁵ National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 203 (2024) 59

⁶ IBID

⁷ National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 216 (2024) 61



17. The PPG states that:

- Plan-making authorities should make clear and up to date information on NDHAs accessible to provide greater clarity and certainty. This should include information on the selection criteria used;⁸
- In relation to Neighbourhood Plans, the PPG also states that it is beneficial for NDHAs to be clearly identified at the start of the plan-making process.⁹

18. There is no separate consent regime for NDHAs, and the level of weight accorded to NDHAs in decisions is lower than that of designated assets. Nonetheless, they are an important part of the historic environment.

19. A local heritage list would constitute a material consideration when assessing planning applications. It is for the decision maker to decide what weight is to be given to the material considerations in each case.

Permitted Development Rights

20. Many types of development are covered by Permitted Development Rights (PDRs), an upfront, national grant of planning permission. LPAs can remove PDRs by issuing an Article 4 Direction, meaning submission of an application for planning permission is required.

21. Research commissioned by Historic England found that buildings on local heritage lists represent the second most common type of heritage asset (after conservation areas) to which an Article 4 Direction has been applied.¹⁰ If the LPA has made an Article 4 direction which relates to NDHAs, this will enable them to consider and manage the impact on the NDHA in relation to that particular form of development.

How can NDHAs be identified?

22. The PPG¹¹ states that all decisions to identify NDHAs must be based on 'sound evidence'. There are several ways in which they can be identified, including:

- Through the development of a Local Plan;
- Through the development of Neighbourhood Plan/s;
- Through conservation area appraisals and reviews;

⁸ Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 18a-040-20190723 (2019)

⁹ Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 18a-005-20190723 (2019)

¹⁰ Heritage-related Article 4 Directions, Avalon Planning & Heritage for Historic England (2025)

¹¹ Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 18a-040-20190723 (2019)



- Through the development or revision of a local heritage list;
- Through decision-making on planning applications.

23. Whatever the method of identifying NDHAs, the local community and groups which form part of that community (such as amenity or civic societies, neighbourhood forums, town or parish councils) can play a valuable role. As well as helping to identify NDHAs, they can also support the development and revision of local heritage lists. The different methods of identifying NDHAs are explored in more detail below.

Through the Local Plan process

24. Local planning authorities are required to make a Local Plan, setting out planning policies which will guide planning decisions in their area, including those covering heritage assets. A Local Plan may contain a stand-alone policy on locally listed heritage assets;
25. Work on a local heritage list can provide an important source of evidence to support Local Plan production;
26. Local Plan policies can clearly differentiate the approach taken to applications affecting NDHAs from the approach taken to applications affecting designated heritage assets, to reflect the different considerations for locally listed heritage assets and those that are statutory listed. This has the benefit of creating more certainty for applicants (those applying for planning permission) and decision makers;
27. Careful consideration should be given as to whether in addition to having a policy on NDHAs, the local heritage list itself should be part of the Local Plan. The advantage of including the list within the Local Plan is that it ensures that those heritage assets on the list are prominent as part of the Local Plan. The potential disadvantage is that any amendments which might be needed to the local heritage list are then undertaken as part of the Local Plan review, which may not be as reactive as they run on 5-year cycles;
28. Instead, the relevant Local Plan policy (e.g. on NDHAs) could usefully make explicit reference to the local heritage list, in whatever form it has been produced, and the selection criteria made clear. Signposting to an external document in this way would still provide a clear steer for decision makers and applicants as to what needs to be considered during the planning application process, while allowing for flexibility for entries to be added to or removed from the local heritage list;



29. Site allocation policies can also identify the presence of locally listed heritage assets and set an expectation for their retention, where they feel that this is beneficial to the place-making vision for the site.

Through the development of Neighbourhood Plans

30. Where a community wants to take up the opportunities offered by neighbourhood planning, the legislation enables 3 types of organisation, known as qualifying bodies, to lead it:

- a parish or town council;
- a neighbourhood forum;
- a community organisation.

31. Neighbourhood Plans are required to be evidenced, subject to public and stakeholder consultation, independent examination and a referendum;

32. A local heritage list prepared as part of a Neighbourhood Plan for an area is likely to be produced through the community because these plans are researched, written and voted on by the people who live in the neighbourhood;

33. However, local heritage lists prepared in this way can lead to unequal coverage across the local authority area, as well as differences in presentation, criteria and datasets.

Through the conservation area appraisal and review process

34. Conservation areas are designated by LPAs to recognise an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance;

35. During the conservation area appraisal process, unlisted buildings and other features that make a 'positive contribution' to the architectural or historic interest and character or appearance of a conservation area are sometimes identified. More information can be found in 'Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (HEAN 1)';

36. Some conservation area appraisals contain a list of NDHAs as an appendix, however it will be more practical for an LPA to maintain one single local heritage list than to have multiple lists of NDHAs, with different criteria and presentation;

37. Where NDHAs in conservation areas are to be included in a local heritage list, the relevant conservation area appraisal would be a good starting point for understanding the significance and context for the NDHAs in question. The conservation area



appraisal may also set out useful assessment criteria that could be replicated, or modified, for a local heritage list;

38. Conservation areas are sometimes subject to review, and their boundaries may be changed as part of this process. There may be heritage assets that were previously within a conservation area boundary (but which have subsequently been excluded via boundary changes) which would warrant individual recognition and could therefore be a good candidate for a local heritage list;
39. In addition to conservation areas, some LPAs have identified areas of special local character. These are areas which the LPA consider should be recognised in some way, but which are not considered to be recognised and designated as a conservation area. These may have names such as Areas of Townscape Quality or Areas of Local Historic Interest. Such areas may be NDHAs when identified through assessment against appropriate criteria and subject to the same policies as other NDHAs, although it is the area that is considered to be the asset rather than individual features within it.

Through decision-making on planning applications

40. NDHAs may also be identified by the LPA during the decision-making process on planning applications, as evidence emerges;
41. Any such decisions to identify NDHAs should be made in a way that is consistent with the identification of NDHAs for inclusion in a local heritage list, such as ensuring that the asset meets the criteria;
42. Such NDHAs should be properly recorded, and information about them made publicly available, for instance through an addition to a local heritage list, and through recording in the Historic Environment Record (HER). However the inclusion of an asset in a HER does not itself identify it as an NDHA, because it does not reflect the planning judgement needed to determine whether it has a degree of heritage significance which merits consideration in planning decisions;
43. When establishing a local heritage list, it may be helpful to provide planning officers and committees with instructions on how to identify NDHAs whilst considering a planning application, including where it is reasonable to request additional information from applicants to help make decisions;
44. LPAs should consider whether their local heritage list process provides sufficient flexibility to enable local listing within the application process either by officers,



members or the planning committee, without delaying decisions on planning applications.

If NDHAs can be identified in other ways, why have a local heritage list?

45. Local heritage lists provide clarity at an earlier stage in the development process and (depending on the way they were setup) can remain dynamic, allowing flexibility in our developing understanding of the historic environment. Many local heritage lists are open to new additions as assets are identified, for instance through decision-making on planning applications. According to a 2025 survey, 71% of responding LPAs stated that their local heritage list remained 'open' to new assets in this way.
46. Having NDHAs identified through different processes and with different criteria may also lead to variations in presentation, disparities in coverage and inconsistent datasets. This may make it difficult to incorporate the various lists together, as well as creating a situation where various sources of information exist that need to be searched when understanding whether or not an asset has been identified as an NDHA. This may also be the case where various local heritage lists exist within an area, for instance due to local government reorganisation.
47. For ease of reference, the LPA may choose to combine multiple existing lists into one master list, assessed against the same selection criteria. In the absence of a master list, or during its compilation, LPAs should ensure that local heritage lists can be easily accessed at a single point of reference; where possible this should be a geospatial single point of reference such as a planning portal.
48. Importantly, a local heritage list is also a way to identify NDHAs that allows community views to be taken into consideration more proactively, decisively and consistently. Whilst all methods of identifying NDHAs are legitimate, an NDHA identified through the local listing process benefits by being developed through collaboration with communities and local groups, where possible. This gives local heritage lists greater community buy-in, and the benefits are more widely understood and experienced.



Boiler House designed by Sir Basil Spence, University of Sussex, Brighton, East Sussex. Included on Brighton and Hove's Local Heritage List. James O. Davies © Historic England Archive DP439657



Getting started on a new or revised local heritage list

The different stages of a local heritage list project

49. These stages are recommended whether the project is to review an existing local heritage list or to develop a new one. The process should be seen as cyclical – no local heritage list will ever be considered ‘complete’, and reviews and revisions of the list should also seek to engage the local community where possible. Much as the demographics of a community aren’t static, neither is the built environment, nor our understanding of heritage and its associated values.



Key stages in the development or revision of a local heritage list



Identifying stakeholders for a local heritage list project

50. Most local heritage lists have been developed by LPAs with input from local groups and the local community. According to a 2025 survey conducted by Historic England, 86% of responding LPAs said that the local heritage list had been developed with community input and 78% of responding LPAs said that the local heritage list had been revised with community input.
51. In many cases the local heritage list process will have been initiated by the LPA, working closely with communities, local groups, amenity societies, neighbourhood forums and more. Where the LPA is unable to undertake this work, then alternative options for leading on the development or revision of the local heritage list could be considered, provided that the LPA is supportive and that the approach is compliant with national policy. Agreement on processes, including assessing nominations and the sign-off or adoption procedure, should be agreed in advance.
52. Pooling resources across neighbouring LPAs can also help where capacity is lacking, although some LPAs may have to take different approaches to aspects of the project (for instance in the sign-off of the final list), depending on their Local Plan policies. The list below gives an indication of the different stakeholders within the area who could be involved in a local heritage list project.

The community, local leaders, local groups and organisations

53. The local community has an important role in supporting the overall process, including the nomination of assets and potentially the development of selection criteria. They should be engaged from the start to ensure buy-in and understanding of the project;
54. It would be useful to conduct a stakeholder mapping exercise at outset to identify the many communities that make up the local area, and to identify local leaders and representative bodies through which to reach out to these communities.

Amenity, civic societies and local history groups

55. Local history, archaeology, civic societies and other amenity groups will be able to bring their experience and knowledge of the local area and its heritage to any local heritage list project;
56. It is worth bearing in mind that these groups, whilst knowledgeable, may not represent the whole community, and so it is also important to engage other groups alongside those with specialist heritage knowledge and interest.



Further ideas for potential groups to engage with can be found in '[Local Heritage Listing: Toolkit](#)' (Historic England, 2026).

Owners

57. The management of any NDHA on a local heritage list will also be easier if it is included on the list with the knowledge of the owner. Owners should generally be advised of the intention to locally list an asset, including an explanation of the planning implications;
58. Whilst the process offers a good opportunity to develop a dialogue with owners and to provide them with information on the significance of their property, it is also important to put in place a process for handling any concerns about the proposed inclusion of an asset on a local heritage list.

Historic Environment Record (HER)

59. The local HER will be an essential partner in any local heritage list project. Not only are they a key source of information about the historic environment, but HER colleagues have specialist knowledge and skills and will be able to ensure the final list can be embedded within the existing HER. They should be involved early in the project to enable this.

Other potential participants

60. Town and parish councils can play a vital part in helping to establish and eventually formalise the list;
61. Local planning consultants can be a useful source of knowledge and as stakeholders can provide challenge to ensure a more balanced range of views;
62. As well as providing a useful source of research and support for the project, involving students on heritage or other related courses at colleges and universities could provide them with beneficial practical experience.

Promoting the local heritage list project

63. When developing a new local heritage list, or updating an existing one, it is a good idea to bring together interested parties before the process begins, to develop awareness and encourage community involvement. This will also ensure that the process remains transparent and has buy-in locally, as well as raising awareness for homeowners.



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64. This could happen virtually through a webinar (recorded and uploaded for those not able to attend), or through in-person events such as town hall meetings, an exhibition or drop-in sessions in accessible local venues. To encourage participation from as many local groups as possible, this engagement could take place on their own terms, for instance in their usual venue and at their usual meeting time. Take the lead from local leaders about what type of engagement works best for their members or the communities they represent.
65. A well-considered promotion and outreach campaign, working across planning, conservation and community teams at local authority level, and in partnership with leaders of diverse local communities, organisations and heritage groups, is the best way of ensuring that local heritage lists are inclusive and representative of the communities that surround them. Using methods such as posters and flyers, newspaper articles or a feature on local radio could also help to reach people with reduced access to digital technologies.

A template press release and social media posts are available in '[Local Heritage Listing: Toolkit](#)' (Historic England, 2026).



Buddhapadipa Thai Temple, Calonne Rd, London. Included on the London Borough of Merton's Local Heritage List. © Historic England Archive DP528541



Defining the scope and criteria of the local heritage list

Defining the scope of the local heritage list

66. One of the benefits of local heritage listing is the flexibility to recognise a wide range of heritage types and associated heritage interests. This can often include types of heritage which would not be suitable for statutory designation, but which together form part of the unique character of a place. Local heritage lists can include all types of heritage assets, including (but not limited to):

- Buildings (such as a railway station or a chapel);
- Structures (such as docks or canals);
- Places and spaces (such as a town square or terrace);
- Designed landscapes (such as cemeteries or town parks);
- Natural landscapes (such as a stream or tor);
- Monuments (such as war memorials or a tomb);
- Public artworks (such as mosaics or sculptures);
- Archaeological remains (below or above ground, such as the remains of a kiln or furnace);
- Street furniture (such as post boxes or telephone kiosks);
- Wayfinding (such as milestones or fingerposts);
- Other elements of the historic environment such as historic routeways, cobbles, setts, parish or ward boundary markers, ghost signs, gable end murals and more.

67. The types of heritage to include can be determined locally, and will directly influence the criteria, as there will need to be appropriate criteria for identifying and assessing across the different types of heritage assets. Before creating a new local heritage list, or reviewing an existing one, it will also be useful to decide on an approach to its development and presentation, especially if the local heritage list is likely to cover large areas. Some possible approaches include:

- Thematic: looking at the area in terms of distinct themes (for example, industrial structures, military structures, high street buildings or public artworks);
- Asset type: similar to the thematic approach, but structuring the local heritage list based on asset type (for example, buildings, artworks, street furniture or parks and gardens);



- Geographic: breaking down the area into smaller component areas, for instance by parish, ward or neighbourhood. This may be especially useful for LPAs covering large areas or which are rich in heritage assets.

Defining the focus of a project to review the local heritage list

68. Where a project is intended to revise or review an existing local heritage list, defining the scope of the project in advance will help to maximise the resources available, especially where these are limited. Examples of areas for focus could include:

- Reviewing those heritage assets which straddle both the local heritage list and any local heritage at risk register;
- Reviewing the oldest entries on the local heritage list;
- Focusing on addressing gaps or poor coverage, for example through area studies;
- Reviewing and combining existing local heritage lists for different areas within an LPA, for instance if the boundaries of the local authority have changed;
- Addressing types of heritage that are poorly represented (periods, asset types etc).

Examples of NDHAs included on local heritage lists in England

These examples highlight the rich variety of assets included on local heritage lists.

Bandstand, Elsecar Park, South Yorkshire. Included on Elsecar's Local Heritage List



© Historic England Archive

Former bank, Redruth, Cornwall. Included on Redruth's Local Heritage List.



© Historic England Archive

Footbridge, Bishop's Hull, Somerset. Included on Somerset's Local Heritage List



© Somerset County Council



St John's Methodist Church, Littleport. Included on East Cambridgeshire's Local Heritage List



© East Cambridgeshire District Council

Former Fire Station, Maclure Road, Rochdale, Lancashire. Included on Rochdale's Local Heritage List



© Historic England Archive

Levells Cottage, Kirtling. Included on East Cambridgeshire's Local Heritage List



© East Cambridgeshire District Council

Drinking Fountain, Brierley Hill, West Midlands. Included on Dudley's Local Heritage List



© Historic England Archive

Fingerpost, Elsecar, South Yorkshire. Included on Elsecar's Local Heritage List



© Historic England Archive

Cow sculptures, Milton Keynes. Included on Milton Keynes' New Town Heritage Register



© Historic England Archive

Developing criteria for the local heritage list

69. Local heritage lists will be more valuable if supported by objective, publicly available criteria. Public engagement in the development of the criteria can help to ensure that the community's valued heritage can be recognised. Some criteria may be common



between local heritage lists, with other criteria added or adapted to respond to the locally distinctive heritage of the area.

70. The criteria and process used to assess assets should be made publicly available; this can be included with the published list so that it is clear how the significance of the assets on the local heritage list have been assessed and how to add further assets if needed.

71. Many local heritage lists now contain an explanation of how the individual assets on the list meet the criteria, which provides clarity on where the asset's significance lies. This can help owners and planners in the future management of the assets. Below are suggested criteria which can be edited or added to, to reflect the heritage of the local area.

72. Age:

- Does the asset represent a particularly early stage of development in the local area?
- Does the asset represent a period of development in the local area that made an important contribution to its character and distinctive identity?
- The age of a heritage asset may add to its value, but newer assets may be considered too where they meet other criteria.

73. Rarity:

- Does something about the heritage asset make it a rare example? It might be rare as something that was always unusual or one of just a few surviving examples of something that was once common within the region, or a very local area.
- If the asset type is more common, is there an individual asset which represents either an unusual example, or a good, representative example which could be included?

74. Design, Architectural, Aesthetic or Artistic Interest:

- Does the asset possess intrinsic aesthetic value, for instance in its design, construction, materials, the techniques used or other distinctive characteristics?
- Does the asset have interest as a good example of a particular style, movement or tradition?
- Has the asset been identified as something that has aesthetic value even if its design was originally functional, or has it gained aesthetic or artistic interest as a result of its influence on artworks, such as painting, poetry or literature?



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- Was the asset designed by a particular architect, designer, artist or craftsman of local or regional importance?

75. Landmark or Streetscape Status:

- Is the heritage asset an important or recognisable part of the street or townscape, that contributes to pride in place and local identity?

76. Historical Association:

- Does the heritage asset have a strong connection to a locally important person, group, cultural practice or event, or a story from the area's past?

77. Historic Interest:

- Does the asset have interest in the story it can tell us about the history of the local area, contributing to local identity?

78. Archaeological or Evidential Interest:

- Does the asset provide us with evidence about the development of the local area, and the people and cultures that lived and worked there?
- Does the asset provide material evidence of past human activity, which shows how people and places have developed? This might be buried or above ground archaeological remains.

79. Social or Communal Value:

- Does the asset contribute to local identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence, contributing to the 'collective memory' of a place?
- Does the asset have meaning for a community (or communities) as part of their collective experience of a place?

80. Collective or Group Value:

- Does the asset have a clear visual, designed, functional or historic relationship to other assets in the vicinity?
- Does the asset have value collectively as part of an assemblage of assets which might be geographically dispersed but have a functional relationship?
- Is the asset's value increased because of its relationship with other assets?

Historic England's Conservation Principles (2010) can be a useful guide to understanding heritage values.



Understanding the local historic environment

81. The preparation of an overarching statement setting out the significance of the local historic environment can be a useful tool for developing local selection criteria. This might take the form of a statement which sets out what is distinct or characteristic about an area. The preparation of such a statement is also a good opportunity to encourage wider community involvement. The statement could cover themes such as:

- Key periods of development;
- Characteristic style and materials (such as local stone);
- Social history;
- Intangible traditions and practices;
- Patterns of settlement;
- Infrastructure;
- Landscapes;
- Street plans;
- Street furniture;
- Key local figures, groups, or events.

Historic England provides guidance on assessing the heritage interest of an area in Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments.

There is also a similar process set out in Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (Second Edition).



Tyne Tunnel Ventilation Tower (South Side), Jarrow, South Tyneside. Included on South Tyneside's Local Heritage List. Alan Bull © Historic England Archive DP486729



Identifying and assessing nominations

Identifying potential candidates for the local heritage list

82. A range of methods can, and should, be used to identify candidates for the local heritage list. If reviewing an existing list, it may be beneficial to review assets already on the list, to test them against the current or revised criteria. Some potential sources of information on candidates for the local heritage list are included below, but this is not exhaustive:

- Public nomination: The value and benefit to local communities of meaningful heritage participation is well-recognised. Well-designed social media campaigns, and the use of digital mapping and polling platforms can significantly raise the profile and increase the reach of such campaigns beyond the usual communities and groups that participate in heritage;
- Local history or archaeology groups, friends' groups, amenity and civic societies: Many groups and organisations also have an interest in, and maintain records on, potentially suitable assets and may be able to add to local knowledge if included in the process;
- Existing research publications, books (such as the relevant Pevsner guides), blogs, podcasts and oral histories;
- Existing databases and crowdsourced mapping tools;
- Listing advice reports: Records of assets considered, but rejected, for national designation can be good candidates, provided they meet the local selection criteria. An assessment carried out for national designation, even if unsuccessful, will help in understanding the heritage asset;
- Local archives, local records offices and local studies libraries;
- Local Historic Environment Records (HERs);
- Historic maps;
- Previous planning decisions which have identified NDHAs;
- County Gardens Trusts can be a useful source of information on designed landscapes, including through their research and recording activity;
- Designed landscapes that have been identified in the Historic England Register Review are included in lists held by Historic England and by HERs.

The kind of material available in HERs is listed in [Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment](#), and through individual [HER audits](#).



Capturing public nominations

83. Public nomination should form a key element of the process, and this will be helped if supported by a simple and easy to use nomination process, for instance using a digital form or editable PDF. It is also helpful to provide advice to people submitting nominations on the type and amount of information required to support the nomination, for instance in the form of an accompanying 'how to guide' or a recorded webinar.
84. The nomination form, or accompanying guidance document, should also set out any restrictions on eligibility, for instance signposting members of the public to the NHLE so that they can ensure the asset is not already included on the statutory list. If assets in conservation areas are to be excluded this should also be made clear, and the reasons for exclusion explained. The types of heritage that can be nominated (for instance buildings, designed landscapes, archaeological remains etc) should also be explained on the form, or in the accompanying guidance.
85. As the nominator may not have access to detailed information about the historic environment, or have the same familiarity with architectural terms, the experience of local experts, students, voluntary organisations or local authority staff will be a valuable addition in conducting additional research to support the nomination and in explaining how it meets the criteria. The more information that can be provided about the significance of the asset and the reasons for its inclusion, the more effective its identification as an NDHA will be.
86. The ability for the nominator to upload or attach photographs or other supporting information will be beneficial when assessing the nomination. Clarity on the location of the asset will also be essential – using mapping software which allows users to drop a pin, requesting grid references or What3Words locations may support with this.
87. Consider the language used in the form to ensure it is accessible to experts and non-experts alike and offer alternative formats for accessibility if possible. Drop-in sessions (for instance at a local library or community venue) could be offered for anyone requiring extra support with the process.

An optional template nomination form is available in the accompanying '[Local Heritage Listing: Toolkit](#)' (Historic England, 2026).



Assessing candidates for the local heritage list

88. Providing clarity on the assessment process for applicants is important to ensure transparency, including any scoring criteria to be used. This could be provided in an accompanying guidance document or on the local heritage list project webpages.
89. To qualify for local heritage listing, nominated assets will need to be eligible and meet the requirements of the selection criteria and national planning policy. It is important to identify any assets that should not be added to the local heritage list at this stage, including buildings or sites already included as designated heritage assets in the NHLE, as these are already subject to other forms of protection and duplication would be both unnecessary and unhelpful.
90. Assessment processes are helpful in identifying errors or inaccuracies in supporting information. Selection panels can be an effective way in which to assess nominated assets independently. The panel's primary responsibility will be to assess the nominated assets against the criteria and to produce a shortlist that can be presented for public consultation. The panel may include representatives from civic or amenity societies and others with an interest in or knowledge of the local historic environment, alongside local councillors and LPA officers. Membership could helpfully be drawn from a representative cross-section of the community and not restricted to professionals or those with specialist heritage expertise.



Hammonds of Hull (later House of Fraser), Ferensway, Kingston upon Hull. Included on Hull's Local Heritage List. Alun Bull © Historic England Archive DP486117



Finalising the local heritage list, and keeping it up to date

Consulting on the proposed local heritage list

91. Once there is a shortlist of nominations that have been assessed for inclusion, public comment should be sought in the form of a consultation. Comments received in response to the publication of the shortlist may be of additional use in confirming the suitability of adding an asset to the local heritage list, for instance in addressing factual errors or providing more information about the importance of an asset.
92. Particular attention should be given to responses received from the owners of assets as these will assist in developing future management strategies. Although there is no statutory requirement to consult owners before adding an asset to the local heritage list, involving homeowners in the process and inviting comment will help to build confidence and may provide information that is important for understanding the asset's significance.
93. It is also important to ensure that owners understand what inclusion on the local heritage list means for them and are given adequate time to respond. The responsibility for assessing any requests not to add to the list could fall to the selection panel or local authority staff, but it is important that a proportionate procedure is put in place for handling such requests from owners, and that this procedure is adequately publicised.

Getting the local heritage list signed off

94. The sign-off process should have been agreed and clearly communicated at the start of the project to prevent delays - the process used may also depend on how the list was compiled.

Lists led by the LPA

95. Once the assets on the shortlist for nomination have passed all the necessary checks and the consultation process has been completed (including managing any objections from homeowners), the final step is for sign off at the appropriate level. This process varies between LPAs, and could include:
 - Presentation of the local heritage list at a planning committee;
 - Presentation to a panel of experts and representatives of the local community;
 - Presentation to local councillors for decision making;



- Delegated authority for sign-off by a Cabinet Member with responsibility for heritage;
- Delegated authority for sign-off by senior leadership in the planning team.

Lists led by community groups

96. Where a community group is creating the list, this will need to be signed off by the group itself prior to being adopted by the local authority concerned. The approval and adoption process should be discussed and agreed with all parties from the start of the project, to ensure the process is transparent and understood by all involved. Formal adoption ensures public confidence and maximises the influence of the local heritage list as a material consideration, ensuring it is given proper weight in planning decisions.

Lists led by Parish or Town Council or Neighbourhood Forums

97. Where a Parish or Town Council, or Neighbourhood Forum, is preparing a local heritage list for a Neighbourhood Plan, the LPA will be an important stakeholder at the examination stage. The LPA will be the body responsible for considering the examiner's recommendations, whether to take the plan to referendum and, ultimately, whether it should be made. As such, it is sensible to work closely with the LPA's heritage or conservation team from an early stage, who will ultimately be responsible for informing the council's decisions affecting assets on the local heritage list.

Publishing the local heritage list

98. It is crucial that the LPA publishes the local heritage list to ensure that it enables appropriate consideration of NDHAs through the planning system and to provide the public with evidence of a transparent approach. Ideally, the published local heritage list should include:

- Information on how the list was developed or revised, when this took place, what approach was taken and what the criteria are (this could be in an appendix or supplementary document);
- An explanation as to how the list will inform the LPAs decision-making on heritage assets (this could be in an appendix or supplementary document);
- What the list means for owners (this could be in an appendix or supplementary document);
- Photographs and/or a description to help with identification;
- Location information to help with identification (digital identifiers such as URPNs, co-ordinates or What3Words will help to improve accuracy);
- Mapping, or a link to a separate map (such as a layer on the LPA's existing GIS map);
- A brief description;



- A brief explanation of which criteria each asset meets, and if possible, how the asset meets those criteria.

An optional template list entry is available in the accompanying '[Local Heritage Listing: Toolkit](#)' (Historic England, 2026).

99. Depending on the approach taken, the document could be divided by type, theme or geographic area. Many local heritage lists are organised by geographic areas such as wards or parishes, with a map at the start of each section showing the distribution of locally listed heritage assets across each geographic area. Accessibility and value to users is likely to be maximised by an innovative and imaginative approach to presentation, with links to maps or additional information where possible.
100. Linking the local heritage list to the LPA's geographic information system (GIS) will also guarantee that planning applications affecting assets on the local heritage list can take full account of the significance the community attaches to those assets. This will further ensure local heritage lists are able to inform LPA decision-making. In addition, this will allow someone interested in buying an asset on the local heritage list to identify that it is included by consulting the map of planning constraints.
101. As well as publishing it, the finalisation of the local heritage list could also be an opportunity to celebrate the success of the project. There could be a launch event, a pop-up exhibition or a social media campaign to celebrate and showcase some of the assets added to the local heritage list. Sharing the finished document with all those involved in its creation is also a positive opportunity to thank them for their input.
102. Evaluating the process may also be helpful for future iterations of the list, for instance identifying what worked well and what would benefit from improvement if the project was undertaken again.

Embedding the local heritage list in the HER

103. As well as being published on the LPA's website, the local heritage list should also be added to the HER. HERs are unique repositories of information relating to landscapes, buildings, sites and artefacts. Their content underpins the identification, recording, protection and conservation of the local historic environment and the interpretation of historic environment designation and planning decisions. The NPPF emphasises the importance of HERs in providing a core of information for plan-making and decision-taking.



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104. In addition to supporting all aspects of local heritage list preparation, HERs are also repositories for the lists themselves. To ensure that HERs are kept up-to-date, and that local heritage lists are accessible, clear procedures are needed to support the swift addition of local heritage lists to the relevant HERs, as well as for any amendments which are subsequently made to the lists.
105. HER recording guidelines vary across the country but all include information about location: collecting digital **geospatial data** is best practice. Individual HERs are best placed to provide detailed advice on how to collect and collate supporting data. Early consultation with the HER is recommended to reduce the risk of duplicating records. Regular liaison with the HER will help ensure updates are consistent, accurate and timely.
106. Where NDHAs are identified and are not on the local heritage list, for example through the decision-making process for planning applications, arrangements will need to be in place for updating both the list and the HER.

Keeping the local heritage list up to date

107. Local heritage lists benefit from periodic review and revision. A review may include adding new buildings or sites or removing those that no longer fulfil the selection criteria. The review period is best decided at the local level but could be timed to coincide with other milestones such as the review of the local or neighbourhood plan.
108. As with the development of the local heritage list, the review process should also seek to involve the local community, ensuring transparency about the reasons for the review, the process for review and how the public and local groups can engage with the process.
109. No local heritage list can ever be considered definitive. Provided the local heritage list is open to new assets, LPAs should ensure that officers have the ability to assess heritage assets for inclusion on the local heritage list on an ad-hoc basis, and either the delegated authority to add them to the list (and the HER), or to seek a rapid decision through a clearly defined procedure, for instance through sign-off by senior leadership within the planning team with that delegated power. Homeowners should still be given the opportunity to contest a decision through a publicised process.
110. Removal of assets from the list may be appropriate in circumstances where an asset no longer meets the criteria. Having a transparent process in place for this, which may include an opportunity for consultation, will help to ensure transparency. Some LPAs maintain and publish a secondary list of assets which have been removed from the local heritage list, either because they have been added to the



NHLE, or because they no longer meet the criteria, for instance due to demolition or substantial alteration. Ensuring that information about these assets is retained and made available means that its contribution to the area's history can still be understood, even if the physical asset is no longer visible.

111. A change in the local heritage list criteria may also prompt a review. But even where there is no external prompt, it is still useful to revisit the list to check that heritage assets included still merit inclusion and to check that any heritage assets identified in the planning process have been added, thereby maintaining a local heritage list's value and relevance. As with earlier stages, local groups and the local community can helpfully support with the process of keeping the local heritage list up to date.



Sheath Lane Railway Footbridge, Oxshott, Surrey. Included on Elmbridge's Local Heritage List. Chris Redgrave © Historic England Archive DP528511



Local heritage list checklist

Getting started

- Have you articulated why this is important for your area, and sought stakeholder buy-in?
- Have you decided on your strategic approach, i.e. will the list be linked to the local plan?
- Have you identified local partners, and do you have a plan for engaging with them?
- Do you have a plan to promote the project, to engage the public with the process?
- Do you have a plan for sign-off or approval of the proposed list?
- Have you reviewed assets on the existing list, if there is one?

Defining the scope and criteria

- Have you defined what asset types will be included, i.e. buildings, archaeological remains etc?
- Do you have a draft list of criteria, bearing in mind the local context?
- Do you have a plan to consult with the public about the proposed criteria?

Identifying and assessing nominations

- Do you have an accessible mechanism to invite nominations?
- Do you have a plan to promote the nomination process?
- Have you asked local civic societies and other groups for their input?
- Have you looked at other sources of information for potential candidates?
- Do you have a plan for reviewing or assessing nominations, such as a panel?
- Do you have photographs of all the nominations?
- Have you mapped the boundaries of all the nominations?
- Do you have a plan for consulting with the public on the draft list?
- Do you have a proportionate and transparent appeals process in place?

Finalising, sharing and keeping the list up to date

- Have all owners/occupiers been consulted?
- Have you checked that the assets nominated aren't already included on the NHLE?
- Do you have a plan for sharing the final list in an accessible format?
- Has the final list been submitted to the HER?
- Do you have a plan for ensuring the list remains dynamic and up to date, for instance a process for assessing new nominations?
- Have you evaluated the process, identifying any future improvements?



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