

Inclusion of Heritage in Asset Management Plans (Stage 2 – Case Study Report)

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Historic England



Acknowledgements and Authors' Note

Any mistakes which appear in this report are to be regretted and are due to errors and omissions on behalf of the authors and in no way can be attributed to those interviewed. The analysis and views expressed are the views of the authors only and based on working with the staff in two case study local authorities and of English Heritage staff involved in the project. It is hoped that the report will provide a firm foundation for developing 'best practice' guidance for the inclusion of heritage in Asset Management Plans.

Contents

	Executive Summary	1
1.0	Introduction	2
1.1	Overall Context	2
1.2	Purpose of Document	2
1.3	The Nature of Asset Management & Asset Management Plans (AMPs)	3
1.4	‘Best Practice’ in Property Asset Management	4
1.5	Definition of Heritage Assets	4
2.0	Study Methodology	5
2.1	Outline of Methodology	5
3.0	Asset Management Plans (AMPs)	6
3.1	Key Requirements	6
3.2	Other Options for including Heritage in AMPs	6
4.0	Heritage Asset Strategies	8
4.1	Different Type of Heritage Strategies	8
4.2	Key Requirements	8
	Appendices	
A	List of Participants	10
B	Integrating Heritage into Asset Management Plans	11
C	Heritage Asset Template	12

Executive Summary

NPS were commissioned to investigate the inclusion of heritage in local authority asset management plans (AMPs). The fact finding part of this work included meeting with five case study local authorities (chosen to provide a mix in terms of size and type) in order to understand current practice. Further to this two case study authorities were chosen for more detailed work in developing Asset Management Plans and Heritage Strategies. This report is the findings from this more detailed work.

The recommended treatment for heritage in asset management is for an explicit reference to the 'heritage portfolio' within the AMP but with a separate strategy document to amplify the council's approach to its heritage assets. This identification and reference to the concept of a 'heritage portfolio' (with all this implies in terms of specific management) is a key mechanism for raising the profile of heritage assets.

Heritage can be identified relatively easily within an AMP through the simple categorisation and quantification of assets by type. This categorisation should enable the heritage portfolio to be identified as a specific sub-portfolio. This approach will then enable the identification of specific management objectives, targets and policies for the heritage portfolio; perhaps emphasising more of a stewardship role than for other parts of the portfolio.

In addition to this there are a range of other points of intervention in a typical AMP document where the profile and importance of heritage can be raised through a brief narrative or reference.

With heritage assets identified as a specific portfolio within the AMP this provides a reference point for the amplification of managing heritage assets through a separate heritage assets strategy.

There is no specific format and content for a heritage strategy as this will vary according to the purpose, scope and nature of the strategy. However it is possible to advance a simple 'template' as a starting point for a heritage strategy (based on council owned land and buildings which are heritage assets). This template included in this document can be modified to suit specific needs and provides a starting point for developing a strategy.

The Stage 2 work has allowed the production of an AMP and a heritage strategy which whilst specific to the two specific case study authorities concerned can act as 'exemplars' for other local authorities to follow. These are provided as separate documents to this report.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Overall Context

An English Heritage commissioned report (Local Authority Heritage Assets: Current Issues and Opportunities, March 2012) identified that many local authorities did not know what heritage assets they owned and were therefore not managing these properly. The report recommended the promotion of improved management of heritage assets with the inclusion of information on their designation, status, condition and management within local authority asset management plans (AMPs).

English Heritage engaged NPS to work with a small number of local authorities as they updated their asset management plans to assess the information that should be held on heritage assets; the processes required for their effective management; and to develop exemplars of 'best practice' which can serve as models for wider application to all local authorities. The assumption is that further guidance will be produced in an English Heritage publication 'Managing Local Authority Heritage Assets'; to be produced at a later date.

The work we undertaken in two stages. Stage 1 was scoping and fact finding – working with 5 local authorities to assess the current position with stage 2 focussed on improving AMPs – working with two local authorities to update AMPs and develop Heritage Asset Strategies and providing recommendations on 'best practice'. The two authorities for stage 2 were selected from the Stage 1 authorities with both chosen because of their desire to update existing strategies. This report is the outcome from the Stage 2 work.

During the life of this project English Heritage split into two organisations; English Heritage and Historic England. The organisation with the continued responsibility for the management of the project was Historic England. Whilst references within this report are to English Heritage, they refer to English Heritage before 1st April 2015; and Historic England post 1st April 2015.

1.2 Purpose of Document

This report has been prepared by NPS on behalf of English Heritage. It is intended to provide a brief summary of how best to include heritage in asset management plans drawing on practical work undertaken with Manchester City Council and the City of Lincoln Council during the latter part of 2014. More specifically the report is intended to:-

- Recommend ways in which ‘heritage’ can be recognised and included in Asset Management Plans
- Provide an outline template for an asset management plan (AMP) which can be used by local authorities as a framework for developing their AMPs and which includes heritage as integral to the AMP.
- Recommend ways in which heritage asset strategies can be developed – with a focus on likely scope, format and content of heritage asset strategies.
- Provide an outline template for an heritage asset strategy which can be used by local authorities as a framework for developing heritage asset strategies.

As a result of the stage 2 work exemplar documents are available for other local authorities to follow or amend as relevant. These are two AMPs and two Heritage Asset Strategies.

1.3 The Nature of Asset Management and Asset Management Plans (AMPs)

Asset management is *about optimising the utilisation of assets in terms of service benefits and financial return*. This means matching the portfolio to the needs of the organisation and ultimately ensuring publicly owned assets derive maximum benefit for the citizens the organisation serves. It is a distinctive activity separate from operational day to day management of individual buildings; concerned at a strategic level with changing the size, nature and composition of the portfolio to ensure maximum benefit in support of organisational objectives. Demonstrating an effective approach to asset management is important to overall organisational performance. Asset management policy and practice needs to be reviewed regularly to ensure it is consistent with latest guidance and relevant to the organisation’s own priorities. As a key resource property underpins service delivery and increasingly a link is being made between effective asset management and organisational capability and reputation.

The development of Corporate Asset Management Plans (AMPs) is no longer a mandatory requirement for local authorities. Their development and annual updating is however ‘best practice’; although the impetus for councils to produce AMPs has reduced with the demise of CPA (Comprehensive Performance Assessment) and CAA (Comprehensive Area Assessment). There is now less audit attention on whether councils have an AMP. As a consequence of these changes fewer authorities have current AMPs.

The format and content of AMPs has also changed from their initial inception in 2001/02; when they used to adopt a prescriptive format focussing on describing processes to now greater variations in both format and content. Most AMPs tend to be relatively short documents (20-30 pages); usually focussing on the portfolio as a whole (or parts of it) rather than individual property assets and often contain links to other documents that amplify their contents. AMPs are now often described as property strategies perhaps reflecting an increasing impetus to more broadly describe the operating context for local authorities and articulating the strategic direction for asset management and specific actions in response to this. Whilst generally being publically available through council web sites they tend to be written in a style for internal council uses (for senior officers and Members).

1.4 'Best Practice' in Property Asset Management

Over the last twenty years there has been a range of published guidance – from government departments; the Audit Commission and professional & practitioner associations such as the RICS. These now constitute a substantial body of literature about 'how to do' asset management. One characteristic of UK published guidance on asset management is that it does not, as a general rule, indicate any relative priority in elements of practice – so it is hard to distinguish the relative importance of any one criterion. To date there has been limited, if any, 'best practice' criteria around the management of heritage assets included with the substantial body of published guidance on asset management.

1.5 Definition of Heritage Assets

A heritage asset is defined by the National Planning Policy Framework as being:

"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. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)."

There are number of categories of designated heritage assets used in England:

World Heritage Sites; Scheduled Monuments; Listed Buildings; Protected Wreck Sites; Registered Parks and Gardens; Registered Battlefields, and Conservation Areas.

In addition to those designated assets, there are also those assets that are locally significant and this significance is formally reflected by their inclusion on local lists, which are maintained by local authorities. There are no national categories for what can be included on local lists and it is entirely at the discretion of the local authority.

While designated assets have statutory protection, those which are identified locally and not designated have no statutory protection (though they do receive protection under the National Planning Policy Framework). Just because an asset has not been formally designated, it does not necessarily mean it does not possess any heritage significance. Under the National Planning Practice Guidance:

“Local planning authorities may identify non-designated heritage assets. These are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but are not formally designated heritage assets” (Paragraph 39)’

For the purposes of this study the widest interpretation of heritage assets has been adopted to include both designated and non-designated assets.

Designated Heritage Assets Including:	Non Designated Heritage Assets Including:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listed Buildings (including attached & curtilage structures) • Conservation Areas • Scheduled Monuments • Registered Parks & Gardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings of Local Interest • Areas of archaeological interest • Unregistered Parks and Gardens • Buildings, monuments, places, areas or landscapes identified as having significance in terms of the historic environment

2.0 Stage 2 Methodology

2.1 Outline of Methodology

The work was undertaken on an iterative basis involving staff from the two case study authorities and representatives from English Heritage. Initial focus was on agreeing the scope, format and content of the required documents followed by review of sections as they were written. NPS took the lead in drafting documents and sharing for review. Progress was made through periodic face to face meetings plus e-mail exchanges. A list of the participants in the stage 2 work is given in Appendix A.

3.0 Asset Management Plans (AMPs)

3.1 Key Requirements

AMPs have broader focus than simply heritage assets and therefore heritage tends to get overlooked. Two specific and relatively modest changes to existing AMPs are considered essential to raising the profile of heritage through AMPs. These are:-

- ***Identifying & Quantifying the Heritage Portfolio*** - The Stage 1 analysis identified that heritage was rarely mentioned in existing AMPs and the size of the heritage base not quantified at all. This is perhaps the most fundamental requirement for inclusion within AMPs yet also one likely to have the most impact in raising the profile of heritage. However the identification and quantification of heritage assets is problematic because most authorities tend to categorise their portfolios along the lines required for capital accounting purposes and valuations required for inclusion in the annual statement of accounts. There is a difference between the property and accountancy needs in this respect. However, the approach adopted at the two case study authorities provided a pragmatic approach to this without being too onerous and both case study authorities were able to quantify the heritage portfolio.
- ***Management Objectives for the Heritage Portfolio*** - The approach above promotes heritage assets as a distinct sub-portfolio of the overall portfolio; and which requires its own management objectives, data needs and targets. The approach adopted in the case study AMPs provides this focus at an early point in the AMP. Alongside categorisation of the portfolio to identify heritage assets as a property 'type' it is important to identify on-going management objectives. Whilst many authorities do this it tends to be at a whole portfolio level and the categorisation used through the case study authorities provides a simple framework for defining management objectives for each sub-portfolio. This allows differing management objectives for heritage assets to be identified with emphasis placed on 'stewardship' and 'curation'. This can be a mechanism for highlighting the different treatment of heritage assets.

3.2 Other Options for Including Heritage in AMPs

In working with the case study authorities other approaches were used to emphasise the importance of heritage in the AMP without distorting the main focus of the AMP which is a strategic document covering the whole portfolio. These included:-

- ***Mention 'heritage' through the foreword*** – Many authorities have a short foreword to introduce their AMP often endorsed by a senior officer and / or member. It is relatively simple within this to include a simple statement reflecting the importance of heritage to the council and the community.
- ***Heritage examples of Asset Management in Action*** – A few authorities use a section with AMPs to document and illustrate practical examples of asset management (often on a site or property specific basis). This provides a simple opportunity to include at least one or two specific heritage projects which have been undertaken or are in progress.
- ***Reference to heritage in the strategic context*** – At the heart of any AMP is an analysis of the strategic operating environment and the implications this has for the broad direction for the management of the portfolio. In most cases it is possible and relevant to include reference to heritage in this section.
- ***Reference to heritage asset strategy*** – Most AMPs are amplified through further additional policies and strategies (e.g. an office strategy or a maintenance strategy). Heritage Asset Strategies or heritage policies and procedures should be reference through the AMP.
- ***Section on heritage policy*** – In some cases it is possible to amplify heritage policy within a specific but small section of the AMP. This is consistent with the approach adopted through many AMPs which amplify various specific asset management policies through the body of the AMP or as appendices.
- ***Some specific heritage pPis*** – Most AMPs are used as a mechanism to report property performance through use performance indicators. Whilst the prescribed national property performance indicators currently do not reference heritage assets specifically, best practice recommends authorities develop 'local' performance indicators. A few specific indicators can be developed for the heritage asset portfolio which would be consistent with the categorisation for the portfolio advocated above.
- ***Specific Actions related to Heritage*** – AMPs have an action plan as an integral part of identifying the broad direction for managing the property portfolio. Whilst these will tend to be limited to a relatively small number of strategic actions it is relatively simple to integrate one action relating to the heritage portfolio as part of this.

A summary of the opportunities for integrating heritage into AMPs is given in Appendix A. This uses a simple standard AMP template to illustrate where a narrative could be included within an AMP to highlight and emphasise the relevance of managing heritage assets. It is by no means a comprehensive list of ideas and not a prescribed format for an AMP but rather an illustration of what might be possible.

4.0 Heritage Asset Strategies

4.1 Different Types of Heritage Asset Strategies

The scope and nature of heritage strategies can be varied; depending on whether they include all heritage assets (both property and non-property) and whether they are restricted to council owned heritage assets or all heritage assets in a defined area (regardless of ownership). For the purpose of this report and as a result of the work with the two case study authorities the recommendations through this report are restricted to a heritage strategy restricted to property and land assets which a council owns. A simple template illustrating the possible format and content of an Heritage Strategy is given in Appendix C.

4.2 Key Requirements

As indicated above the nature of a heritage strategy can vary depending on a range of factors. Despite these variations a strategy should as a minimum include these key elements:-

- **Purpose & Scope** - Strategy is important as it sets a broad direction for management and provides a framework around which to coordinate action and resources. Any heritage strategy should clarify its scope and intended purpose (what assets are included or excluded; time horizon of the strategy; intended audience etc.)
- **Identification, definition & quantification of heritage assets** – through the strategy it will be important to identify and define the different categories of heritage assets (which could include locally listed heritage assets) and for each category to quantify the number of assets owned.
- **Analysis of operating context (challenges & opportunities)** – At the heart of any heritage strategy should be an analysis of the strategic operating environment and the broad direction that needs to be set in response to this. This may cover a

range of policy and resource pressures relating to heritage assets, incipient problems in the portfolio and any specific issues around investment needs. It also needs to reflect the opportunities that heritage assets may present looking forward.

- **Action Plan** – A strategy will inevitably need to include an action plan. Whilst the resource implications, timing and priority of actions may not be explicitly defined a set of actions is likely to be included. This provides an opportunity to articulate key strategic priorities for managing the heritage portfolio over an above on going day to day management activities.
- **Case Studies** – Whilst not an explicit requirement a strategy can also provide an opportunity to include some specific case studies to illustrate managing heritage assets in action. Such an approach with use of graphics and images can help to break up the narrative of the strategy as well provide amplification or illustration to some of the key points identified through the strategy.
- **Monitoring Arrangements** – Within a strategy there will need to be a simple statement of how the strategy will be reviewed and how success may be measured. Such a section can provide a point in which to identify the refresh frequency for the strategy. Optionally it could also could some key performance targets for managing heritage assets which can be monitored and reported on an annual basis. The exact nature of PIs to measure success in managing heritage assets will need to be identified by each individual authority – these could range from simple quantitative PIs such as the number of heritage assets at risk to more qualitative measures such as citizens’ perception of conservation, amenity and risk for heritage assets.

Appendix A – List of Participants

Manchester City Council

Michael Plane ¹	Development Surveyor
Paul Mason ¹	Group Manager Urban Design & Conservation
Kate Kendall ²	Heritage at Risk Project Officer

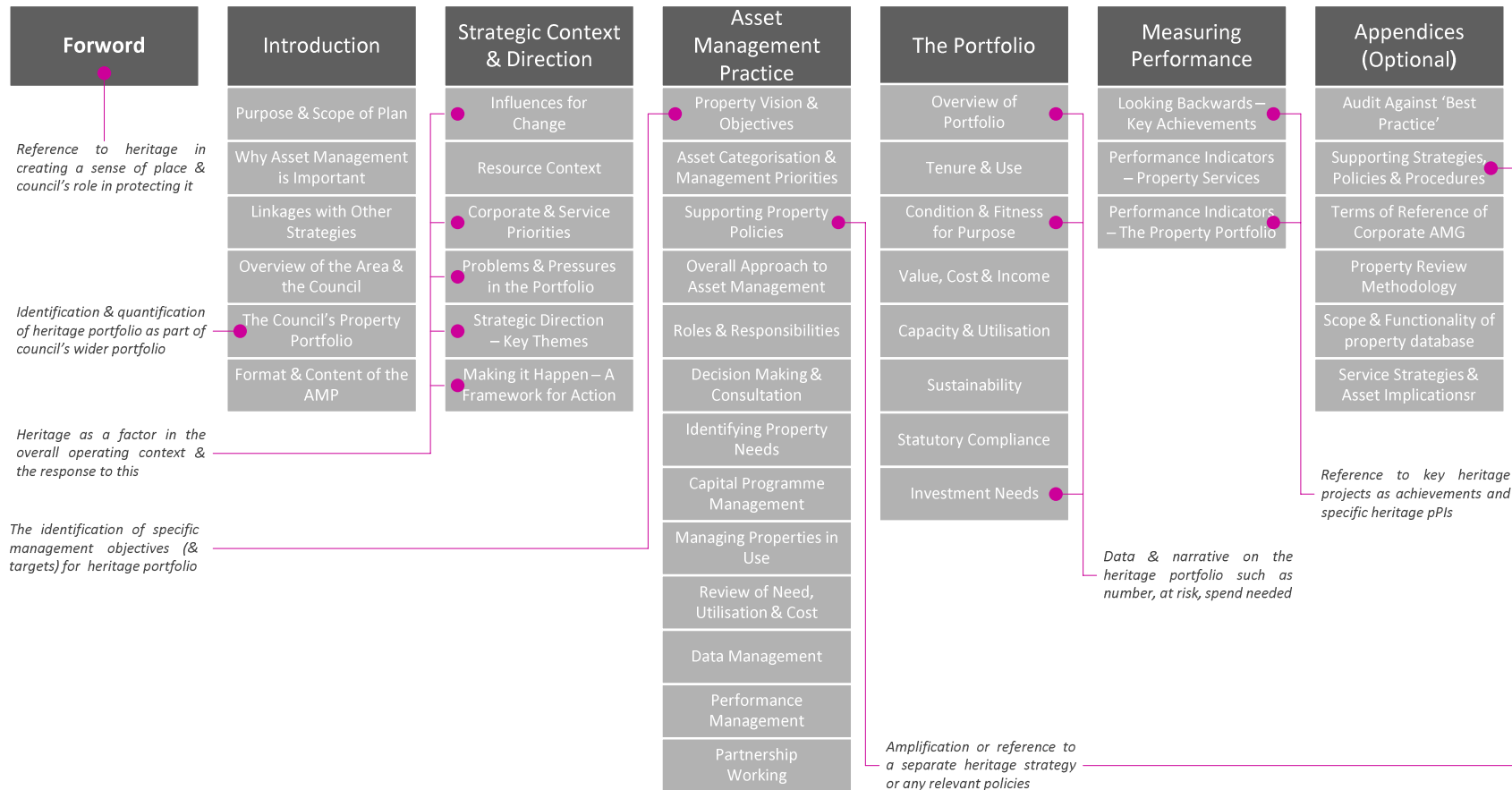
City of Lincoln Council

Mark Wheeler ¹	Property Manager
Nicola Collins ¹	Heritage and Planning Enforcement Team Leader
Sarah Harrison ¹	Principal Conservation Officer
Paul Bodenham ²	Local Engagement Adviser

- 1 Local Authority representative
- 2 English Heritage representative

Appendix B – Integrating Heritage into Asset Management Plans

There is no specific format and content for an Asset Management Plan. In general it needs to be relatively short with the main body between 16 to 24 pages plus supplementary appendices. The structure below is presented as a possible approach but this should be modified to suite individual needs. This template identifies where the importance and relevance of 'heritage' can be reflected through the AMP.



Appendix C- Format & Content of an Heritage Asset Strategy

There is no specific format and content for a Heritage Asset Strategy. This can vary according to the nature and scope of the strategy (council owned assets, all assets in an area or buildings and non-building assets). In general it needs to be relatively short with the main body between 12 to 20 pages plus supplementary appendices. The structure below is presented as a possible approach but this should be modified to suite individual needs

Foreword	Context	Strategic Influences & Strategic Direction	Heritage Management in Action	Roles & Responsibilities	Measuring Performance	Appendices (Optional)
Introduction	Nature of Historic Assets	Challenges & Opportunities	Case Study (1)	Management of Heritage Assets	Monitoring Arrangements	Reference to National Guidance
Why are Heritage Assets Important	Nationally Significant Heritage	Buildings at Risk	Case Study (2)	Skills & Capacity Required	Measuring Success	Schedule of Heritage Assets
Purpose & Scope of Strategy	Locally Significant Heritage	Direction & Key Priorities	Case Study (3)			
Linkages with Other Plans & Policies	National Policy Guidance	Framework for Action	Case Study (4)			
	Local Policy Guidance Role of the Council		Case Study (5)			

Mix of case studies to illustrate different approaches to managing heritage assets