



# Historic England

## HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT GOOD PRACTICE ADVICE IN PLANNING

### **Note 3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets**

#### **Introduction**

1 The purpose of this Historic England Good Practice Advice note is to provide information on good practice to assist local authorities, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties in implementing historic environment policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the related guidance given in the National Planning Practice Guide (PPG). It should be read in conjunction with Good Practice Advice notes 1 (The Historic Environment in Local Plans) and 2 (Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment). This good practice advice acknowledges the primacy of the NPPF and PPG, supporting the implementation of national policy, but does not constitute a statement of Government policy itself, nor does it seek to prescribe a single methodology or particular data sources. Alternative approaches may be equally acceptable, provided they are demonstrably compliant with legislation, national policies and objectives<sup>1</sup>.

2 The advice in this document, in accordance with the NPPF, emphasises that the information required in support of applications for planning permission and listed building consents should be no more than is necessary to reach an informed decision, and that activities to conserve or invest need to be proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets affected and the impact on the significance of those heritage assets. At the same time those taking decisions need enough information to understand the issues.

#### **Relationship of setting to curtilage, character and context**

3 Setting is separate from the concepts of curtilage, character and context:

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<sup>1</sup> Good Practice Advice note 3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets supersedes *The Setting of Heritage Assets: English Heritage Guidance* (2011).

- **Curtilage** is a legal term describing an area around a building and, with listed structures, the extent of curtilage is defined by consideration of ownership, both past and present, functional association and layout. The setting of a historic asset will include, but generally be more extensive than, its curtilage (if it has one)<sup>2</sup>.
- The **character** of a historic place is the sum of all its attributes, which may include: its relationships with people, now and through time; its visual aspects; and the features, materials, and spaces associated with its history, including its original configuration and subsequent losses and changes. Heritage assets and their settings contribute to character but it is a broader concept, often used in relation to entire historic areas and landscapes.
- The **context** of a heritage asset<sup>3</sup> is a non-statutory term used to describe any relationship between it and other heritage assets, which are relevant to its significance, including cultural, intellectual, spatial or functional. They apply irrespective of distance, sometimes extending well beyond what might be considered an asset's setting, and can include the relationship of one heritage asset to another of the same period or function, or with the same designer or architect.

### The extent of setting

4 The NPPF makes it clear that the setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.<sup>4</sup> All of the following matters may affect the understanding or extent of setting:

- While setting can be mapped in the context of an individual application or proposal, it does not have a fixed boundary and cannot be definitively and permanently described for all time as a spatially bounded area or as lying within a set distance of a heritage asset because what comprises a heritage asset's setting may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve or as the asset becomes better understood or due to the varying impacts of different proposals; for instance, new understanding of the relationship between neighbouring heritage assets may extend what might previously have been understood to comprise setting.
- Extensive heritage assets, such as landscapes and townscapes, can include many heritage assets and their nested and overlapping settings, as well as having a setting of their own. A conservation area will include the settings of

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<sup>2</sup> See Historic England Good Practice Advice note 2, Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment.

<sup>3</sup> A range of additional meanings is available for the term 'context', for example in relation to archaeological context and to the context of new developments, as well as customary usages. Setting may include associative relationships that are sometimes referred to as 'contextual'.

<sup>4</sup> NPPF glossary.

listed buildings and have its own setting, as will the village or urban area in which it is situated (explicitly recognised in green belt designations)<sup>5</sup>.

- The setting of a heritage asset may reflect the character of the wider townscape or landscape in which it is situated, or be quite distinct from it, whether fortuitously or by design (e.g. a quiet garden around a historic almshouse located within the bustle of the urban street-scene).
- Setting in urban areas, given the potential numbers and proximity of heritage assets, is therefore intimately linked to considerations of townscape and urban design and of the character and appearance of conservation areas. The character of the conservation area, and of the surrounding area, and the cumulative impact of proposed development adjacent, would suggest how much impact on the setting should be taken into account<sup>6</sup>.

## Views and Setting

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

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

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

7 Assets, whether contemporaneous or otherwise, which were intended to be seen from one another for aesthetic, functional, ceremonial or religious reasons include:

- military and defensive sites;
- telegraphs or beacons;
- prehistoric funerary and ceremonial sites;
- historic parks and gardens with deliberate links to other designed landscapes, and remote 'eye-catching' features or 'borrowed' landmarks beyond the park boundary.

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<sup>5</sup> The Courts have held that it is legitimate in appropriate circumstances to include within a conservation area the setting of buildings that form the heart of that area (*R v Canterbury City Council ex parte David Halford*, February 1992; CO/2794/1991). And NPPF paragraph 80, for example, makes it clear that historic towns are regarded as having a setting.

<sup>6</sup> In primary legislation, the setting of conservation areas is not a statutory duty. However, the NPPF states that the setting of a designated heritage asset can contribute to its significance.

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

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

Where complex issues involving views come into play in the assessment of setting – whether for the purposes of providing a baseline for plan-making or for development management – a formal views analysis may be merited. One approach to assessing heritage significance within views is provided by Historic England in *Seeing the History in the View: A Method for Assessing Heritage Significance within Views* (2011). Additional advice on views is available in *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, published by the Landscape Institute.

### Setting and the significance of heritage assets

9 Setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, though land within a setting may itself be designated (see below *Designed settings*)<sup>7</sup>. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset. This depends on a wide range of physical elements within, as well as perceptual and associational attributes pertaining to, the heritage asset's surroundings. The following paragraphs examine some more general considerations relating to setting and significance.

- **Cumulative change**

Where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development affecting its setting, to accord with NPPF policies, consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset.

Negative change could include severing the last link between an asset and its original setting; positive change could include the restoration of a building's original designed landscape or the removal of structures impairing views of a building.

- **Change over time**

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<sup>7</sup> The setting of World Heritage Sites may be protected as 'buffer zones' – see PPG, paragraph: 033 Reference ID: 2a-033-20140306.

Settings of heritage assets change over time. Understanding this history of change will help to determine how further development within the asset's setting is likely to affect the contribution made by setting to the significance of the heritage asset. Settings of heritage assets which closely resemble the setting in which the asset was constructed are likely to contribute to significance but settings which have changed may also themselves enhance significance, for instance where townscape character has been shaped by cycles of change and creation over the long term.

- **Appreciating setting**

Because setting does not depend on public rights or ability to access it, significance is not dependent on numbers of people visiting it; this would downplay such qualitative issues as the importance of quiet and tranquillity as an attribute of setting, constraints on access such as remoteness or challenging terrain, and the importance of the setting to a local community who may be few in number. The potential for appreciation of the asset's significance may increase once it is interpreted or mediated in some way, or if access to currently inaccessible land becomes possible.

- **Buried assets and setting**

Heritage assets that comprise only buried remains may not be readily appreciated by a casual observer, they nonetheless retain a presence in the landscape and, like other heritage assets, have a setting<sup>8</sup>. For instance:

- The location and setting of historic battles, otherwise with no visible traces, may include important strategic views, routes by which opposing forces approached each other and a topography that played a part in the outcome.
- Buried archaeological remains may also be appreciated in historic street or boundary patterns, in relation to their surrounding topography or other heritage assets or through the long-term continuity in the use of the land that surrounds them.

While the form of survival of an asset may influence the degree to which its setting contributes to significance and the weight placed on it, it does not necessarily follow that the contribution is nullified if the asset is obscured or not readily visible.

- **Designed settings**

Many heritage assets have settings that have been designed to enhance their presence and visual interest or to create experiences of drama or surprise and these designed settings may also be regarded as heritage assets in their own right. Furthermore they may, themselves, have a wider setting: a park may form the immediate surroundings of a great house, while having its own

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<sup>8</sup> These points apply equally, in some rare cases to designated heritage assets such as scheduled monuments or Protected Wreck Sites that are periodically, partly or wholly submerged, e.g. in the intertidal zone on the foreshore.

setting that includes lines-of-sight to more distant heritage assets or natural features beyond the park boundary<sup>9</sup>. Given that the designated area is often restricted to the ‘core’ elements, such as a formal park, it is important that the extended and remote elements of design are included in the evaluation of the setting of a designed landscape.

- **Setting and urban design**

As mentioned above (para 3, *The extent of setting*), the numbers and proximity of heritage assets in urban areas mean that the protection and enhancement of setting is intimately linked to townscape and urban design considerations, including the degree of conscious design or fortuitous beauty and the consequent visual harmony or congruity of development, and often relate to townscape attributes such as lighting, trees, and verges, or the treatments of boundaries or street surfaces<sup>10</sup>.

- **Setting and economic and social viability**

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

## A STAGED APPROACH TO PROPORTIONATE DECISION-TAKING

10 All heritage assets have significance, some of which have particular significance and are designated<sup>11</sup> and the contribution made by their setting to their significance also varies. And, though many settings may be enhanced by development, not all settings have the same capacity to accommodate change without harm to the significance of the heritage asset. This capacity may vary between designated assets of the same grade or of the same type or according to the nature of the change. It can also depend on the location of the asset: an elevated or overlooked location; a riverbank, coastal or island location; or a location within an extensive tract of flat land may increase the sensitivity of the setting (i.e. the capacity of the setting to accommodate change without harm to the heritage asset’s significance). This requires the implications of development affecting the setting of heritage assets to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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<sup>9</sup> Reference is sometimes made to the ‘immediate’ ‘wider’ and ‘extended’ setting of heritage assets, but the terms should not be regarded as having any particular formal meaning.

<sup>10</sup> See also GPA 2 *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking and Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (English Heritage, 2008)

11 Protection of the setting of heritage assets need not prevent change; indeed change may be positive, for instance where the setting has been compromised by poor development. Many places are within the setting of a heritage asset and are subject to some degree of change over time. NPPF policies, together with the guidance on their implementation in the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG), provide the framework for the consideration of change affecting the setting of undesignated and designated heritage assets as part of the decision-taking process<sup>12</sup>.

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

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

Each of these steps is considered in more detail below.

Development proposals involving the setting of single and less significant assets and straightforward effects on setting may be best handled through a simple check-list approach and can usefully take the form of a short narrative statement for each assessment stage, supported by adequate plans and drawings, etc.

Cases involving more significant assets, multiple assets, or changes considered likely to have a major effect on significance will require a more detailed approach to analysis, often taking place within the framework of Environmental Impact Assessment procedures<sup>13</sup>. Each of the stages may involve detailed assessment procedures and complex forms of analysis such as viewshed analyses, sensitivity matrices and scoring systems. Whilst these may assist analysis to some degree, as setting is a matter of qualitative and expert judgement, they cannot provide a systematic answer. Historic England recommends that, when submitted as part of a Design and Access Statement, Environmental Statement or evidence to a Public Inquiry, technical analyses of this type should be seen primarily as material supporting a clearly expressed and non-technical narrative argument that sets out

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<sup>12</sup> NPPF, paragraphs 131-135 and 137.

<sup>13</sup> For further information on Strategic Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment, see Historic England advice on *Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal and the Historic Environment* (2013) and *Environmental Impact Assessment and the Historic Environment*, forthcoming.

‘what matters and why’ in terms of the heritage significance and setting of the assets affected, together with the effects of the development upon them.

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

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

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

- indicates whether it considers a proposed development has the potential to affect the setting of a particular heritage asset; or
- specifies an ‘area of search’ around the proposed development within which it is reasonable to consider setting effects; or
- advises the applicant to consider approaches such as a ‘Zone of Visual Influence’ (ZVI) or ‘Zone of Theoretical Visibility’ (ZTV) in relation to the proposed development in order to better identify heritage assets and settings that may be affected<sup>14</sup>.

15 For developments that are not likely to be prominent or intrusive, the assessment of effects on setting may often be limited to the immediate surroundings, while taking account of the possibility that setting may change as a result of the removal of impermanent landscape or townscape features, such as hoardings or planting.

16 The area of assessment for a large or prominent development, such as a tall building in an urban environment or a wind turbine in the countryside, can often extend for a distance of several kilometres. In these circumstances, while a proposed development may affect the setting of numerous heritage assets, it may not impact on them all equally, as some will be more sensitive to change affecting their setting than others. Local planning authorities are encouraged to work with applicants in order to minimise the need for detailed analysis of very large numbers of heritage assets. They may give advice at the pre-application stage (or the scoping stage of an Environmental Statement) on those heritage assets, or categories of heritage asset, that they consider most sensitive as well as on the level of analysis they consider proportionate for different assets or types of asset.

17 Where spatially extensive assessments relating to large numbers of heritage assets are required, Historic England recommends that Local Planning Authorities

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<sup>14</sup> A ‘Zone of Visual Influence’ defines the areas from which a development may potentially be totally or partially visible by reference to surrounding topography. The analysis does not take into account any landscape artefacts such as trees, woodland, or buildings, and for this reason is increasingly referred to as a ‘Zone of Theoretical Visibility’.



give consideration to the practicalities and reasonableness of requiring assessors to access privately owned land. In these circumstances, they should also address the extent to which assessors can reasonably be expected to gather and represent community interests and opinions on changes affecting settings.

## **Step 2: Assessing whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s)**

18 The second stage of any analysis is to assess whether the setting of a heritage asset makes a contribution to its significance and the extent and/or nature of that contribution. We recommend that this assessment should first address the key attributes of the heritage asset itself and then consider:

- the physical surroundings of the asset, including its relationship with other heritage assets;
- the way the asset is appreciated; and
- the asset's associations and patterns of use.

19 **Assessment Step 2: Assessing whether, how and to what degree settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s)** (see below) provides a (non-exhaustive) check-list of the potential attributes of a setting that it may be appropriate to consider in order to define its contribution to the asset's heritage values and significance. In many cases, only a limited selection of the attributes listed will be of particular relevance to an asset. A sound assessment process will identify these at an early stage, focus on them, and be as clear as possible what emphasis attaches to them. In doing so, it will generally be useful to consider, insofar as is possible, the way these attributes have contributed to the significance of the asset in the past (particularly when it was first built, constructed or laid out), the implications of change over time, and their contribution in the present.

20 The local authority Historic Environment Record is an important source of information to support this assessment and, in most cases, will be able to provide information on the wider landscape context of the heritage asset as well as on the asset itself. Landscape Character Assessments, Historic Landscape Character guidance and Conservation Area Appraisals are important sources in this regard.

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

## **ASSESSMENT STEP 2: ASSESSING WHETHER, HOW AND TO WHAT DEGREE SETTINGS MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TO THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HERITAGE ASSET(S)**

The starting point for this stage of the assessment is to consider the significance of the heritage asset itself and then establish the contribution made by its setting. The following is a (non-exhaustive) check-list of potential attributes of a setting that may help to elucidate its contribution to significance. Only a limited selection of the attributes listed is likely to be particularly important in terms of any single asset.

### **The asset's physical surroundings**

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

### **Experience of the asset**

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

**Step 3: Assessing the effect of the proposed development on the significance of the asset(s)**

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

23 The range of circumstances in which setting may be affected and the range of heritage assets that may be involved precludes a single approach for assessing effects. Different approaches will be required for different circumstances. In general, however, the assessment should address the key attributes of the proposed development in terms of its:

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

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

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

### **ASSESSMENT STEP 3: ASSESSING THE EFFECT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The following is a (non-exhaustive) check-list of the potential attributes of a development affecting setting that may help to elucidate its implications for the significance of the heritage asset. Only a limited selection of these is likely to be particularly important in terms of any particular development.

### **Location and siting of development**

- Proximity to asset
- Extent
- Position in relation to landform
- Degree to which location will physically or visually isolate asset
- Position in relation to key views

### **The form and appearance of the development**

- Prominence, dominance, or conspicuousness
- Competition with or distraction from the asset
- Dimensions, scale and massing
- Proportions
- Visual permeability (extent to which it can be seen through)
- Materials (texture, colour, reflectiveness, etc)
- Architectural style or design
- Introduction of movement or activity
- Diurnal or seasonal change

### **Other effects of the development**

- Change to built surroundings and spaces
- Change to skyline
- Noise, odour, vibration, dust, etc
- Lighting effects and 'light spill'
- Change to general character (e.g. suburbanising or industrialising)
- Changes to public access, use or amenity
- Changes to land use, land cover, tree cover
- Changes to archaeological context, soil chemistry, or hydrology
- Changes to communications/accessibility/permeability

### **Permanence of the development**

- Anticipated lifetime/temporariness
- Recurrence
- Reversibility

### **Longer term or consequential effects of the development**

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

## **Step 4: Maximising enhancement and minimising harm**

26 Maximum advantage can be secured if any effects on the significance of a heritage asset arising from development liable to affect its setting are considered from the project's inception. Early assessment of setting may provide a basis for

agreeing the scope and form of development, reducing the potential for disagreement and challenge later in the process.

- 27 Enhancement<sup>15</sup> may be achieved by actions including:
- removing or re-modelling an intrusive building or feature;
  - replacement of a detrimental feature by a new and more harmonious one;
  - restoring or revealing a lost historic feature or view;
  - introducing a wholly new feature that adds to the public appreciation of the asset;
  - introducing new views (including glimpses or better framed views) that add to the public experience of the asset; or
  - improving public access to, or interpretation of, the asset including its setting.

28 Options for reducing the harm arising from development may include the relocation of a development or its elements, changes to its design, the creation of effective long-term visual or acoustic screening, or management measures secured by planning conditions or legal agreements. For some developments affecting setting, the design of a development may not be capable of sufficient adjustment to avoid or significantly reduce the harm, for example where impacts are caused by fundamental issues such as the proximity, location, scale, prominence or noisiness of a development. In other cases, good design may reduce or remove the harm, or provide enhancement, and design quality may be the main consideration in determining the balance of harm and benefit.

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

## **Step 5: Making and documenting the decision and monitoring outcomes**

30 It is good practice to document each stage of the decision-making process in a non-technical way, accessible to non-specialists. This should set out clearly how the setting of each heritage asset affected contributes to its significance and what the

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<sup>15</sup> See NPPF, Paragraph 137.

anticipated effect of the development, including any mitigation proposals, will be. Despite the wide range of possible variables, normally this analysis should focus on a limited number of key attributes of the asset, its setting and the proposed development, in order to avoid undue complexity.

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

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