



Parkland at Langar Hall, Notts. Image: Tamsin McMillan

Green Futures *Understanding* *Significance*



Historic England



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Today's session

- What is significance?
- Using significance
- Assessing significance
- Writing statements of significance

Conservation & Significance

NPPF Glossary:

“Conservation is the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance”

What is significance?

- What is special about the site
- Difference between the history and what is special
- Requires a judgement call



Image: Microsoft Copilot

What is significance?

NPPF Glossary:

- Significance is 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**.

Why does significance matter?

Image: Queen Pool, Blenheim, by Des Blenkinstop,
www.geograph.org.uk/photo/6130910



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Using Significance



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Accessible Interpretation

Explaining sites pithily and accessibly for garden visits, lectures and publications will help grab people's attention



National Planning Policy Framework

202. Heritage assets... are an irreplaceable resource, and should be **conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance**, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

207. In determining applications, local planning authorities should **require an applicant to describe the significance** of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to **understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance**. As a minimum the relevant **historic environment record should have been consulted** and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.

National Planning Policy Framework

208. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset)... They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal... **to avoid or minimise any conflict** between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.



Images: Brockhole,
Cumbria. Linden Groves



National Planning Policy Framework

214. Where a proposed development will lead to **substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of)** a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should **refuse consent...**



Image: Warwick Castle, Knight's Village,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQTsXGo0kgk>

National Planning Policy Framework



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

Image: Barn Hill, Wembley. Linden Groves

Key publication



Historic England

Statements of Heritage Significance:

Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets

Historic England Advice Note 12



Historic Environment Records: Informing Planners & Developers

Nottinghamshire County Council

Nottinghamshire Historic Environment Record

Nottinghamshire Historic Environment Record What's New How To? Search Map Projects Policy & Info

Park/Garden record MNT26800 - Park at Langar Hall

Summary

LANDSCAPE PARK (Post Medieval to Late 20th Century); WATER GARDEN (Post Medieval to Late 20th Century)


Location

Grid reference	Centred SK 71825 35035 (1259m by 1331m)
Map sheet	SK73NW
District	Rushcliffe
Civil Parish	Langar cum Barnstone, Rushcliffe

Images (0)

Documents (0)

Map



Type and Period (1)

LANDSCAPE PARK (C18?, Post Medieval to Late 20th Century - 1547 AD to 2000 AD)

Full Description

The original manor house was one mile north of Langar Church on the side of the River Smita. It was not until the fourteenth century that the Scrope family succeeded the Tiptofts as Lords of the Manor and went on to build the first great mansion at Langar. According to Leland it was 'embattled like a castle' and had 'a fine park stoked with deer'. The existing moats and earthworks are thought to have originated at this time. The Crown's interest in the site was first recorded in 1547 when the house of Scrope was destroyed by the soldiers of the Duke of Northumberland.

Images from Notts
HER:
<https://her.nottinghamshire.gov.uk>



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Local Listing

- Non-designated local sites identified with local community against agreed criteria
- Local lists can be attached to the Local Plan
- Non-statutory
- Good way of achieving greater recognition for local heritage assets, albeit with potentially limited protection

Understanding Historic Parks and Gardens in Buckinghamshire

The Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust Research & Recording Project



CAMPBELL PARK, MILTON KEYNES

AMENDED August 2018



Bucks Gardens Trust



The Stanley Smith
(UK) Horticultural
Trust



Planning Application Comment Letters



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Nationally designated planning application template response

You may wish to use this template letter when commenting on a planning application that affects a historic park or garden that is nationally designated on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England (Register entries can be viewed on National Heritage List for England).

Items requiring amendment by the writer are presented in italics, with notes for your guidance in [], which will need deleting before completion. We have highlighted key words as a reminder that the ideal structure for a letter is SSIPP (Summary, Significance, Impact, Policy, Position).

Date
Head of Development Management
Address
[mark for the attention of the case officer if you have the name]

Dear Sir, Madam [or address to named contact]

24/xxx (application number)

We are grateful for the opportunity to comment on this application, which has a material impact on the significance of [give name of the park or garden], a historic designed landscape which is Registered by Historic England at Grade [give grade – I, II*, II]. The inclusion of this site on this statutory register requires great weight to be given to its conservation.

We write to advise you of our objection/support/other stance this application, which will [summarise impact in one sentence].

Thank you for consulting the Gardens Trust (GT) in its role as Statutory Consultee with regard to proposed development affecting a site included by Historic England (HE) on their Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England, as per the above application. The xxxx Gardens Trust (CGT) is a member organisation of the GT and works in partnership with it in respect of the protection and conservation of registered sites, and is authorised by the GT to respond on its behalf in respect of such consultations.

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We have made a site visit [if you have] and undertaken further research [say what, if relevant]. The **significance** of [site name] is [include a brief description of what is important about the site, with reference to its historic, architectural, artistic or archaeological interest. Your CGT's researchers may already have defined the site's significance. If not, you should try to write a simple statement of significance from your existing knowledge, using the information in the Register entry, HER entry, and other sources as needed. Guidance on Significance can be found on the GT Resource Hub at www.thegardenstrust.org.]

[Use the following paragraphs to state the proposal's **impact** on the site's significance – this will form the bulk of your letter. If you are struggling to determine this, it might be because the applicant has inadequately addressed the requirement in paragraph 200 of the NPPF to provide an analysis of the site's significance, eg in a heritage or design and access statement? If this is the case, you can say so and request that the applicant provides this information before the application is considered.]

There is national **policy** of relevance to this application. At a national level, we refer you to National Planning Policy Framework paragraph [insert paragraph number(s) here. Relevant extracts from the NPPF are given in the Appendix] [Explain how the proposal does or does not comply with the NPPF paragraphs referred to. If the proposal harms the significance of the registered park or garden, it is essential to outline whether this is 'substantial' or 'less than substantial' harm, in order to identify which policies in the National Planning Policy Framework apply, and, within each category of harm, to articulate clearly the extent of the harm, e.g., 'upper end of less than substantial harm')] [D]

Locally, Local Plan policy/[is] [say what the policy is, and from which version of which document it comes] is relevant to this proposal. [Explain how the proposal does or does not comply with the Local Plan policy.] [This is an optional paragraph depending on resources, which can probably be applied by CGTs but not in GT responses.]

[Having previously stated the impact of the proposal, you now need to state your **position**. Clearly state whether you are advising of an objection, support or taking another stance, and **summarise** why, without repeating the impact paragraphs.]

We would be grateful to be advised of your decision, or if further information is submitted. Please note that we would like to speak at planning committee [delete if you would not be willing].

For further information, we refer you to the Gardens Trust publication *The Planning System in England and the Protection of Historic Parks and Gardens* (2024), which is available online at <https://thegardenstrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Planning-System-in-England-and-Protection-of-Historic-Parks-and-Gardens-2016-v1.pdf>

Yours faithfully

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*How do you assess
significance?*



Heritage Interest

- **Archaeological Interest** – evidence of past human activity
- **Architectural and artistic interest** – design and aesthetics
- **Historic interest** – past lives and events



Blend any of
these



Significance

Archaeological Interest

Potential to hold **evidence about past human activity**



Image: Hampton Court from
the Great Fountain Garden.
Gardens Trust image

Architectural and Artistic Interest

Interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place... in the art or science of the **design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration** of buildings and structures of all types.



Image: Langar Hall
parkland, Notts,
Tamsin McMillan

Architectural and Artistic Interest

Interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place... Artistic interest is an interest in **other human creative skill**, like sculpture.



Image: Highfield Park,
Nottingham University.
Tamsin McMillan

Historic Interest



Heritage assets with historic interest can also provide **meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place** and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

Image: Calverley Grounds, Kent. GT image.

An interest in **past lives and events** ... Heritage assets can **illustrate or be associated** with them.

Historic Interest - Illustrative



Orangery at Mount
Edgcumbe, Cornwall.
Tamsin McMillan

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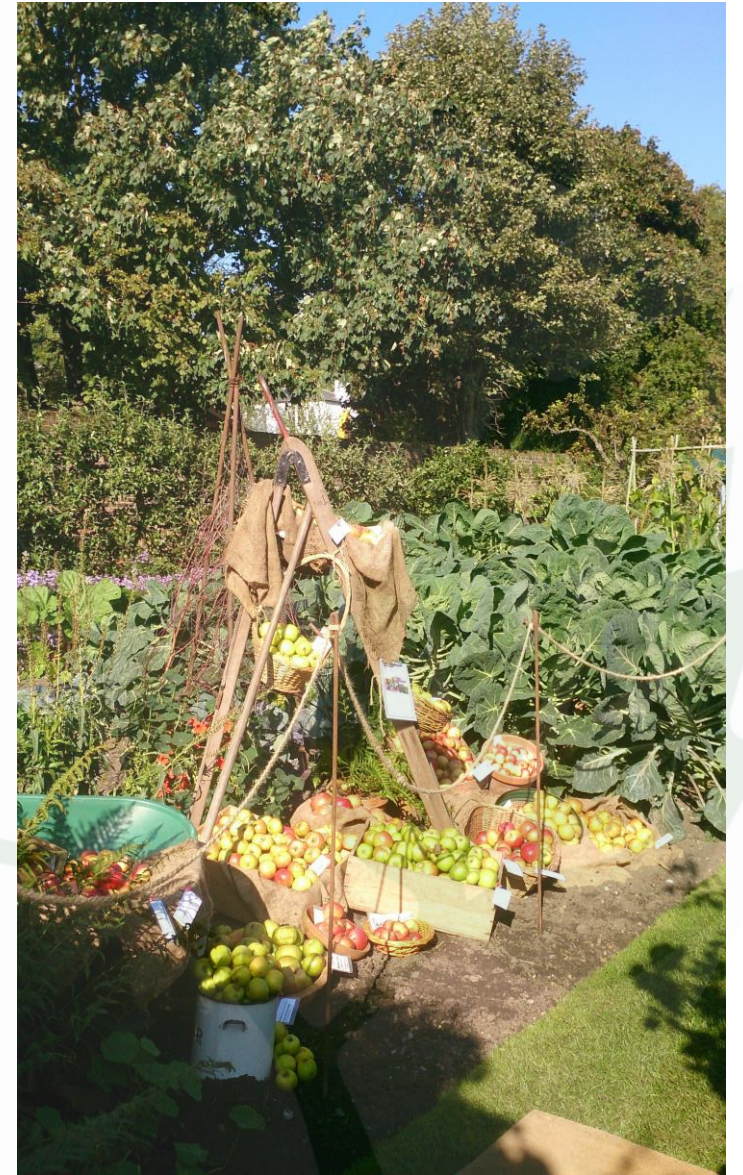
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Historic Interest – Illustrative with Community Meaning



Images: St. Ann's Allotments,
Nottingham.
Gardens Trust





Right: The Brighton Pavilion, GT image
Above: William Beechey, George IV,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki>

Historic Interest - Associative



Historic Interest – Associative with Community Meaning



Image: Chequers, Bucks.
Gardens Trust image

How do you write a Statement of Significance?

How do you assess significance?

A tool to help

Feature	Archaeological	Architectural and Artistic		Historic	
		Architectural	Artistic	Illustrative	Associative
Northern Park					
Lake					
Temple					
Kitchen Garden					
View to tower					

Blend of any of these = Significance

Another tool to help

The archaeological interest of ... lies chiefly in...

The architectural interest of ... lies chiefly in...

The artistic interest of ... lies chiefly in...

The illustrative historic interest of ... lies chiefly in...

The associative historic interest of ... lies chiefly in...

The significance of ... lies chiefly in ...

Heritage List Summary



Reasons for Designation

The historic park and garden at Temple Newsam is registered at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

- * **Historic interest:** it reflects changing tastes and fashions in garden design during the C18, blending formal and informal, and redesigning and remodelling earlier gardens;
- * **Type:** it is a good example of an C18 landscape park and pleasure grounds, a landscape type that was hugely influential across Europe and North America and is considered to be one of England's most significant contributions to art and design;
- * **Designers:** it is largely the work of William Etty, a notable architect and designer, and Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, England's most influential designer of informal landscapes, who both worked on the landscape in separate phases during the C18;
- * **Design interest:** its informal parkland landscaping retains key signatures of Brown's work and highlights the influence of Claude Lorrain's C17 paintings of 'ideal landscapes' on his designs, whilst Elm Walk, Sycamore Walk and Etty's The Avenue remain as important survivors of the estate's earlier more formal schemes;
- * **Group value:** it has strong group value with the main house of Temple Newsam (Grade I), as well as the neo-classical stable block (Grade II*), numerous Grade II buildings at Home Farm, north lodges (Grade II), and listed garden structures, including the Little Temple (Grade II*), the Sphinx Gates (Grade II), walled garden (Grade II), cast-iron fountain (Grade II), and stone bridge (Grade II).

Image: Temple Newsam,
Yorkshire. Stephen Craven,
Geograph

For Planning Application Comments

The significance of the landscape of Temple Newsam lies chiefly in the way it sheds light on the design approach of the foremost landscape designer Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, in spite of his design not having been fully implemented. His rides, planting and management of views show him working with, and adjusting, the natural topography to aesthetic and dramatic effect.

Whilst no longer intact, the landscape design incorporates features characteristic of Brown's work, with sweeping lawns, varied woodland, scenic drives, and classical temple eyecatcher, in places adapting Etty's earlier work.

The integrity of the Brownian landscape is particularly compromised by the loss of a large area to the west which was given over to open cast mining from the C19 up to the 1960s and subsequently poorly restored. However, that open-cast mining of a Brownian landscape was conceivable demonstrates the comparatively low value then attached to association with Brown, who is today recognised to be amongst the great names of landscape architecture world-wide. Even in this area, pockets of evidence of Brown's planting scheme might still be found.





The significance of the landscape of Temple Newsam lies chiefly in the way it sheds light on the design approach of the foremost landscape designer Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, in spite of his design not having been fully implemented. His rides, planting and management of views show him working with, and adjusting, the natural topography to aesthetic and dramatic effect. Sweeping lawns accentuate the main house in the former views towards the house. From the house, a temple provides an eye-catcher within a small clearing in a varied wooded area, characteristic of Brown's placing of such classical buildings within the landscape to provide interest and scale. The woodland planting, although now too dense in places, reveals traces of Brown's use of varied and harmonious texture and colour in the views.

Brown's designs incorporate William Etty's earlier eastern avenue approach to provide the visitor with long views to the house with characteristic incident through breaks in planting. Brown's use and adaptation of elements of Etty's design demonstrates his approach to assessing and working with earlier designs where these fitted his, and the owner's, objectives rather than sweeping all away on principle. Etty's treatment of the bridge and Avenue Ponds bears witness to the contemporary engineering limitations to hydrological works and bridge design.

Archives indicate that Brown's designs for the Menagerie Lakes were probably never implemented. These relatively small water bodies attest to the common practice of commissioning plans for elaborate schemes that were then only partially implemented, or not at all, for whatever reason.

The floriferous walled kitchen garden with extensive glasshouses continues to illustrate the long history of horticultural practice. National plant collections conserving the genetic diversity of the particular species have been maintained here since xxxx.

Within the parkland lie the earthworks of a shrunken mediaeval village, a Scheduled Monument because of the quality of the evidence expected to survive there, which stand as a visible testament to the decline in the population of the village of Carlton as in so many other settlements in the late Middle Ages.

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Quick Recap

- Significance is key to the protection of historic designed landscapes in the planning system.
- Developers must describe it, and planners must understand it.
- Conservation is about managing change to a site's significance – change can be beneficial.
- Significance is the difference between the history of a site and what is important.
- It describes the value of a heritage asset, because of its heritage interest, which can be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.
- It also derives from setting, and changes in the setting can affect significance positively or negatively.
- Statements of significance are brief texts which quickly summarise the heritage interests.
- Understanding what is significant about a landscape can help us to assess the impact of potential development and make pragmatic decisions.
- Sharing statements of significance, via HER etc, is crucial to conservation through planning, designation and local listing.

It's about editing out the clutter, so you can see the good stuff



Image: Holme Pierrepont Hall, Notts. Tamsin McMillan

*Green Futures
Next: Research and
Recording Training,
7th and 21st August*



Image: Ralph Treswell's
Survey of Holdenby, 1587