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**This Planning and Conservation Advice Note (PCAN) is one of a series published by The Gardens Trust's predecessor, the Garden History Society in 2005.**

The PCANs predate the National Planning Policy Framework. Any references to the planning system and planning policy (and particularly Section 8 'Planning Context' and Appendix 3) in the PCANs has been superseded and the conservation advice must be read in the context of the current National Planning Policy Framework published by the Government.

Government department names have changed since the PCAN series was published.

More information on The Gardens Trust's role in the planning system, casework, and our conservation publications and resource hub is available at:

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THE GARDEN  
HISTORY SOCIETY

## Planning Conservation Advice Note 12

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# Evaluation of new landscape features



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The Planning Conservation Advice Notes (PCANs) listed below have been devised by the Garden History Society to advise those wishing to determine the impact upon historic designed landscape of specific proposals for change. This includes local planning authorities, potential developers, owners or other interested parties. These PCANs seek to inform on necessary background information and good conservation practice while at the same time encouraging critical evaluation of the likely type and extent of potential impact. Not all impact is adverse, change is not necessarily detrimental, and opportunities do exist both for development and, where adverse impact has been identified, for appropriate mitigation. Informed evaluation is essential however, if irreversible damage is to be avoided and change is to be implemented in a way that is sympathetic to the historic and visual value of designed landscape.

### **Titles List**

*PCAN 1: Change of Use (of landscape, and of principal and/or subsidiary buildings)*

*PCAN 2: Hotel and Leisure Development*

*PCAN 3: Extension of Educational/Institutional Establishments*

*PCAN 4: Executive Housing*

*PCAN 5: Golf*

*PCAN 6: Vehicle Parking and Access*

*PCAN 7: Treatment of Boundaries and Entrances*

*PCAN 8: Telecommunications Masts*

*PCAN 9: Development of Domestic Amenities*

*PCAN 10: CCTV and Lighting*

*PCAN 11: Development in the Setting of Historic Designed Landscape*

*PCAN 12: Evaluation of New Landscape Features*

*PCAN 13: Briefs for Historic Landscape Assessments*

*PCAN 14: Management Plans (including Statements of Significance)*

*Appendix 1: Lists of subsidiary development generated by particular types of change*

*Appendix 2: General Evaluation Checklist (All types development/all types landscape)*

*Appendix 3: Planning Context*

Planning Conservation Advice Notes 1 to 12 deal with some of the most common types of change proposed in historic landscape or its setting. Notes 13 and 14 describe documentation required to evaluate and support proposals for such change. Appendices 1 to 3, which separate out specific aspects of proposals in note form for quick reference, may also be useful for evaluation of types of change not covered in PCANs 1 to 12.

### **Format**

PCANs 1 to 12 are divided into the following sections:

Section 1.0: Introduction

Section 2.0: Information Needed to Evaluate the Impact of Proposals

Section 3.0: Further Information Needed

Section 4.0: Potential for Mitigation

Section 5.0: Watchpoints

Section 6.0: Unavoidable Development/Damage

Section 7.0: Application of Advice

Section 8.0: Planning Context

Section 9.0: Evaluation

## **Evaluation**

Most sections follow a set format but Section 9.0 on evaluation differs between various PCANs.

**PCANs 3; 6; 8; 9; 10; 11** have a flow chart evaluation questionnaire. This may assist planning officers in particular, both in assessment of proposals and in preparation of recommendations for committee – the advice shown in upper case and bold type being intended to inform particularly on the following:

- level of potential impact
- further input which may be needed from other professionals
- further information which may be required
- where condition or legal agreement would be required to avoid adverse impact

**PCANs 1; 2; 7** have checklists of questions intended to:

- highlight other relevant evaluation tools
- highlight potential implications of proposals
- list questions relevant to evaluation of impact

**PCANs 4; 5** have short checklists of questions intended to:

- direct evaluation to specific conservation advice in the relevant PCAN
- assist evaluation by highlighting potential implications of proposals

**PCAN 12** seeks to assist evaluators by offering conservation advice for particular situations.

## **Current status of advice notes**

These planning conservation advice notes may be amended following trialling or with the introduction of new legislation. Any comments, and suggestions for improvement would be welcomed by the Society and feedback on content, usefulness, layout etc. of the sections on evaluation (including flow-charts) would be particularly appreciated.

## **Acknowledgements**

Individuals and organisations too numerous to mention have been involved in various stages of preparation of these PCANs and the Society would like to acknowledge this invaluable assistance and to offer its thanks to them all.

The Society would also like to highlight the input of the Society's conservation team in place at the time the original concept was devised (David Lambert, Anthea Taigel, Kath Gibson, Sarah Couch and Linden Groves), with particular thanks to David Lambert for identification of subjects, Sarah Couch for invaluable advice and for her work on PCAN 14 and advice flow charts, Kath Gibson for invaluable advice, particularly on PCANs 1 and 7, and Linden Groves for her support and enthusiasm. The Society is also indebted to the Jubilee Fund Trustees who provided initial funding for 'pilot' PCANs, and to the GHS Conservation Committee, which has supported this initiative throughout, with particular thanks to John Sales who has provided the text for Statements of Significance (included in PCAN 14). Format and text of PCANs and Appendices were otherwise devised by Anthea Taigel (former principal conservation officer of the GHS), with the advice and guidance of Elisabeth Whittle, (Chairman of the GHS Conservation Committee).

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*A historic designed landscape is an existing entity and 'new', by definition, represents change.*

*This Planning Conservation Advice Note seeks to establish an appropriate context for evaluation of such change, explains some relevant concepts and gives general advice and guidance on whether proposed new works are likely to fulfil the conservation aims of a particular landscape. It does not seek to evaluate intrinsic artistic merit of new design.*

## **1.0 Introduction: Change and Continuity**

Continuity is implicit in the term 'historic' and a wide range of structures, features, hard landscaping, planting etc. in today's historic landscapes amply demonstrate links with the past. These are integral to designs which varied according to topography, fashion, resource, and whim and which are themselves an important part of historic landscape continuity. However, it is rare to find a designed landscape with all areas designed at the same time; rarer still for all features and planting in such a layout to be of a single date, or even of the same broad period.

Designers of landscape in the past rarely swept the canvas bare. Even where there was no ornamental landscape to be reshaped or to be absorbed in more extensive reorganisation, there would be trees, hedges, tracks, streams etc., which might all be utilised in a new design and which were often easier to modify and accommodate, than to remove (e.g. tracks used as new carriage drives, streams remargined as canals etc.). Where the previous layout was ornamental, potential for reuse of existing features in new design might be even greater.

For, as fashions and fortunes changed, so a new design 'layer' might be commissioned – sometimes for part, and sometimes for all of a landscape. In between more extensive works, owners would almost certainly 'tweak' design; adding or removing features and elements, introducing new plants and planting, and managing natural changes.

These twin elements of change and continuity have shaped each of the historic landscapes which survive today, in an individual and often highly complex process\*. In each history, some threads of continuity will inevitably have been totally severed (irreversible loss of feature, element etc.), while others may have merely faded (e.g. a ha-ha filled in and later dug out again, or a felled avenue subsequently replanted). Some threads will have run between one period (e.g. 1650–1750); some threads between another (e.g. 1750–1850) and yet others will have interconnected with both (e.g. 1700–1800).

The present condition of these interwoven threads forms today's historic landscape 'canvas'. Where many 'threads' run close together, survival and historic character are strongest. Areas and features in need of repair may be compared to thinning or faded patches, and opportunity for new work will be offered where irreparable gaps have appeared.

\*For each site this process constitutes its development history.

## **2.0 Information required for evaluation of proposals**

### **2.1 Information on the Landscape**

The above introduction explains why it is critical to understand the landscape in which new work is to be sited, before proposals are formulated. For the same reasons, proposals cannot be properly evaluated unless sufficient information on the landscape is available. Section 3.0 explains in detail what information should be used to support proposals for new works, and how that information may be acquired and put together.

### **2.2 Information on Subsidiary Development**

For comprehensive evaluation of potential impact, subsidiary development which would arise from new works should be clearly identified at the outset (e.g. new or altered circulation routes, increased illumination, requirements for added security etc.).

Where new works are extensive and new or significantly increased public access is anticipated, information on all aspects of site management for the public should be available.

See *GHS PCAN 1: Change of Use (of landscape, and of principal and/or subsidiary buildings)*

*PCAN 2: Hotel and Leisure Development*

*PCAN 6: Vehicle Parking and Access*

*PCAN 7: Treatment of Boundaries & Entrances*

*PCAN 10: CCTV and Lighting*

*PCAN 11: Development in the Setting of Historic Designed Landscape*

*Appendix 1: Lists of subsidiary development generated by particular types of change*

### **3.0 Additional information required**

#### **3.1 Conservation Management Plan (CMP)**

Detailed archive study is required to understand the development history of a landscape. A site survey conducted with the benefit of this knowledge will then give the necessary three-dimensional picture of the landscape today; locating historically significant surviving features, elements and framework in both space and time\*.

\*The two parts of this work (study and survey) make up a **Historic Landscape Assessment (HLA)**.

(See *GHS PCAN 13: Briefs for Historic Landscape Assessments*)

An HLA is the essential base from which an appropriate 'blueprint' for the future of a landscape is formed\*. Such blueprint usually considers the landscape on an area by area basis; explaining significance, identifying what has been lost and indicating potential for repair. It will examine how various areas do or could 'fit together' to form a cohesive whole, formulate conservation aims for the individual landscape and provide a phased programme of necessary works to meet such aims (such programme being long term and covering such works as phased replacement of planting). It will also highlight constraints and opportunities for further change.

\*Such blueprint is termed a **Historic Landscape Conservation Management Plan (CMP)**.

(See *GHS PCAN 14: Management Plans*)

A historic landscape conservation management plan is both an essential precursor to proposals for change and an invaluable tool in its evaluation.

**Advisory Note:**

**Good conservation practice indicates that proposals for change on historic landscape should flow clearly from a full historic landscape assessment and be supported by comprehensive historic landscape conservation management plan.**

3.1.1 Where proposals are for a single, small scale, new feature or element (e.g. ornamental water spouts, path, sundial etc.), or where only a very small minority of a historic landscape is within the ownership of a proposer, it may seem unreasonable to require a comprehensive (and costly) CMP to inform and support proposals. In the past, when resources have been available, consultees have occasionally been able to direct proposers to appropriate 'raw' archive material (usually archive maps) and then with this and the benefit of an existing Register (or inventory) entry and map\*, and site photographs, to offer a 'best guess' opinion on whether proposals would be likely to adversely affect the historic landscape. This is clearly not wholly satisfactory, and even such limited evaluation requires a measure of professional expertise.

Such proposals really have to be treated on individual merit. Where there is doubt over potential impact, planning authorities may wish to consult the GHS (See 7.0 below). Alternatively, provided that no existing features or elements are to be removed, authorities may wish to consider granting temporary consent and requiring the proposer to undertake sufficient research\*\* to provide a supporting justification statement on application for renewal.

\*The *English Heritage Register [or Cadw, in Wales] of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest*. Where a site is unregistered but designated of local or regional historic significance, local inventories (as produced by local authorities, county gardens trusts or other interested organisations) may provide a similar level of information to the Register.

\*\*Proposers may be assisted by reference to:

*GHS PCAN 12: Evaluation of New Landscape Features*

*PCAN 13: Briefs for Historic Landscape Assessments*

*PCAN 14: Management Plans*

*Appendix 2: Determination of significance (checklist for initial evaluation)*

*Appendix 3: General Evaluation Checklist (All types development/all types landscape)*

### 3.2 Identification of Constraints and Opportunities

This aspect of a CMP is one of the most useful to the evaluator of proposed change, since identification of constraints will highlight potential for landscape repair\*. This information is otherwise very difficult to acquire and cannot usually be deduced from site observation alone. Without it, there is a danger that future repair could be compromised (by siting of new works) and that potentially significant features and areas will be lost or degraded in consequence.

\*Including evaluation of the significance of already developed areas. While such areas have lost historic landscape definition, there are instances when these are key to the cohesion of the surrounding landscape, and reinstatement would be both desirable and appropriate (e.g. a tarmacaded vehicle park laid out over the rond point of a series of surviving allees).

Identification by a CMP of opportunities for new works is important to both proposer and evaluator alike. Although the CMP may not phrase its evaluation in this specific context, findings may be used to support and confirm that a chosen location is appropriate.

### 3.3 Statement of Justification

Justification statements take many forms and may include, for example, appraisal of commercial requirements, information on the demands of landscape maintenance, and traffic and public access surveys. However, for justification statements to succeed in supporting proposals for new works in historic landscape, they should also include an explanation of why the change proposed is appropriate for that specific landscape, in that specific position (i.e. how proposals will meet conservation aims).

It is useful for evaluators to understand the motives behind any proposals for change, since subsequent advice and suggestions may then be better informed and focussed. However, evaluation of the potential impact of new works, and of their suitability for the historic landscape in question, should rest on appropriate **justification in the context of that landscape** (i.e. proposals should arise from identified constraints and opportunities – see 3.1 and 3.2 above – and/or the requirements of the landscape, rather than those of the present landowner or landholder – even though these might also be furthered by proposed new works).

*Advisory Note:*

**Historic landscape is a unique and irreplaceable heritage asset and new works should be justified in the context of the constraints and opportunities of the individual landscape.**

#### 3.3.1 Assessment of Loss and Gain

While new works are invariably put forward in the context of gain, assessment of loss is also needed. A CMP will assist in this aspect of evaluation but it is recommended that the justification statement also includes a relevant section.

##### **Assessment of Loss**

Assessment of what would be lost is not a simple measure of ground area, or of what presently stands or grows upon a proposal site. Instead, it involves a thorough evaluation of the character and appearance of an area and sometimes of a whole landscape. A prominent visual focus in an area intended to be viewed as a panorama; a formal feature in an otherwise totally informal ('natural') composition; a new element standing to one side of a rigidly symmetrical layout or the introduction of a new feature of inappropriate scale and character, are examples of changes which would result in degradation of appearance and loss of essential character. Loss of potential for landscape repair is also an important part of this assessment.

##### **Assessment of Gain**

Gain may similarly affect a wide area and assessment of gain may identify restoration of design cohesion to an area; provision of required focus; or may advance a legitimate new design layer for an area in the context of innovation and design excellence\*.

*Advisory Note:*

**New works, either of landscape design or of individual features and elements, should be assessed in the context of loss and gain to the historic landscape. For proposals to be acceptable, identified gain should clearly outweigh any identified loss.**

\*Design excellence is a difficult and sometimes contentious concept. Opinions on a new piece or structure, from experts in an appropriate field (sculpture, architecture etc.) will no doubt be valuable but the issue of design excellence of the ensemble (i.e. the piece in its setting) may need to be independently assessed by landscape conservation experts.

## **4.0 Potential for Mitigation**

- 4.1 If adverse impact upon a historic landscape has been identified as potentially arising from new works, the unavoidable conclusion must be either that the work is inappropriate for the individual landscape, or that it is in the wrong position. In either case, amendments to design or location would be the recommended course of action.
- 4.2 Necessary integration of new works to maintain historic landscape cohesion should be considered at a preliminary design stage, and information on this aspect should be included within a justification statement.
- 4.3 If proposals would result in subsidiary development which has potential adverse impact (e.g. new boundary definition, vehicle parking, lighting etc.), please consult the relevant PCAN for potential for mitigation (see 2.2 above).

## **5.0 Watchpoints**

- 5.1 New works may result in need for additional site security measures.
- 5.2 New works may result in other associated subsidiary development (See 2.2 and 4.3 above).
- 5.3 Consider potential for proposals to generate new or significantly increased public access, and whether the landscape would be able support such increase without adverse impact.
- 5.4 Proposals for replication and 'removal to safe storage' (see 9.1.1–3) require very careful consideration, and examination of all practical alternatives (e.g. security measures).
- 5.5 Where new works have been designed independently of the landscape (e.g. purchased artworks), evaluation of the benefit to a landscape will require particular care (see 9.2.1. below).
- 5.6 For memorials and commemorative works, consider implications for future conservation management (see 9.2.2 below).
- 5.7 Views within and across historic landscape may change markedly in different seasons. Any evaluation of potential impact should take this into account.

## **6.0 Unavoidable Development**

- 6.1 If new landscape design and/or features are considered by landscape conservation experts to be of outstanding importance to the development of the individual designed landscape, but would result in a recognised but accepted loss of existing historic layout or features, proper recording (including necessary archaeological works) and deposit of information in the public domain should be a condition of any consent which an authority may be minded to grant.
- 6.2 If subsidiary development arising from such new landscape design and/or features (as identified in 6.1) would result in adverse impact upon the historic landscape or its setting, every attempt should be made to mitigate against such impact, and corresponding gain for the affected historic landscape should be secured as part of any consent which an authority may be minded to grant.  
Since it is unlikely that any expert opinion upon the above works would be advanced without a comprehensive conservation management plan in place, gain may be in the context of funding for specific repair projects, planting etc.

## **7.0 Application of Advice**

- 7.1 Where proposed new works would result in adverse impact on a historic landscape or its setting and are not considered to be of outstanding importance to the development of an individual designed landscape (see 6.0 above), OR where potential for mitigation of adverse impact arising from subsidiary development has not been identified, or cannot be secured as part of any consent which the authority may be minded to grant, the Society would anticipate that the authority would refuse consent to the application.

- 7.2 If an application for new works is considered to be of outstanding importance to the development of an individual designed landscape (see 6.0 above) OR is properly and fully supported in the context of the historic landscape (see 2.0 and 3.0 above) AND if appropriate mitigation of any potential adverse impact, identified as arising from associated subsidiary development, can and will be secured as part of any consent which the authority may be minded to grant, the Society would be unlikely to object to such an application and would not anticipate consultation.
- 7.3 Should there be doubt over the extent of impact on the historic landscape or its setting of an application for new works, we advise that a request be made via our London office\* for the Society's regional conservation officer to discuss the case with the local authority.  
\*Such a request should be made to the Society's Conservation Casework Manager, at The Garden History Society, 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ. Email [conservation@gardenhistorysociety.org](mailto:conservation@gardenhistorysociety.org) or telephone 020 7608 2409.

## 8.0 Planning Context

*This section highlights some parts of government Planning Policy Guidance notes (general guidance on specific topics), which may be particularly relevant to applications for change on historic landscape. Further information may be accessed via the planning website (see 8.11 below).*

### PPG 8 Telecommunications

- 8.1 Under the **General Policy** section of this PPG, it is noted that, 'The government places great emphasis on its well established national policies for the protection of the countryside and urban areas – in particular .... The Heritage Coast and areas and buildings of architectural or historic importance'.
- 8.2 Paras 14 and 15: **Environmental consideration** refer to 'protection from visual intrusion ... as an important consideration in determining applications.'
- 8.3 Para 24: **Design** notes, 'In seeking to arrive at the best solution for an individual site, authorities and operators should use sympathetic design and camouflage to minimise the impact of the development on the environment. Particularly in designated areas, the aim should be for the apparatus to blend into the landscape'. And para 25 encourages continuation of development of innovative design, '... in terms not only of the structure of masts and antennae but also of materials and colouring'. Para 28 refers to careful consideration regarding screening and planting.

### PPG15: Planning & the Historic Environment

- 8.4 Para 2.24 instructs that 'planning authorities should protect registered parks and gardens in preparing development plans and in determining planning applications'.  
Para 2.24 also confirms that the effect on a registered park or garden or its setting is a material consideration in assessing an application.
- 8.5 Para 2.16 notes that when authorities consider applications for planning permission or listed building consent for works which potentially affect a listed structure they should pay special regard to certain matters including the desirability of preservation of the setting of a listed building.  
Para 2.16 also notes that, 'The setting is often an essential part of the building's character, especially if a garden or grounds have been laid out to complement its design or function and para 2.17 continues, 'In some cases **setting** can only be defined by a historical assessment of a building's surroundings'.

### PPG16: Archaeology and Planning

*A significant number of historic parks and gardens (registered and unregistered) are included on county sites and monuments records (SMRs) either in their own right or as part of the setting of other monuments.*

#### 8.6 Section A: The Importance of Archaeology

A.3 instructs that, 'Archaeological remains should be seen as a finite and non-renewable resource .... Appropriate management is therefore essential to ensure they survive in good condition .... They are part of our sense of national identity and are valuable both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and tourism.'

8.7 Section B: Advice on the Handling of Archaeological Matters in the Planning Process

**B16: Development Plans** ‘... Authorities should bear in mind that not all nationally important remains meriting preservation will necessarily be scheduled; such remains and, in appropriate circumstances, other unscheduled archaeological remains of more local importance may also be identified in development plans as particularly worthy of preservation.’

**B18: Planning applications** ‘The desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting is a material consideration in determining planning applications whether the monument is scheduled or unscheduled.’

PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport & Recreation

8.8 Para 17: **Developments within Open Space** ‘Local authorities should (i) avoid any erosion of recreational function and maintain or enhance the character of open spaces ...’

8.9 Para 31: **Sports and Recreation requiring Natural Features and Water** ‘... the visual amenity, heritage and nature conservation value of water resources should also be protected’.

8.10 **Annex: Definitions**

2: ‘The following typology illustrates the broad range of open space that may be of public value

- i. parks and gardens – including urban parks, country parks and formal gardens ....
- v. amenity green space ... including ... domestic gardens
- vii. allotments, community gardens....
- viii. cemeteries and churchyards’

Planning Website

8.11 The website of the office of the deputy prime minister ([www.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.odpm.gov.uk)) may be accessed for full information on the above PPGs and other relevant planning guidance e.g.

*PPG13: Transport*

*Planning and Access for Disabled People: A Good Practice Guide*

See also *GHS Appendix 3* for further parts of

*PPG8: Telecommunications*

*PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment*

*PPG16: Archaeology and Planning*

*PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport & Recreation*

AND *Planning Policy Wales*

## 9.0 Guidelines for Evaluation:

*The following guidelines are offered in place of Assessment of Impact flow charts/checklist of questions, contained in other PCANs.*

### 9.1 New Features and Elements

In evaluating proposals, it is important to distinguish between new features and elements which have some precedence, and those which have not, and to ensure that the type of new works proposed is the most appropriate.

#### 9.1.1 With Established Precedence

Where a feature or element has been lost from a landscape but the framework of the design remains, there may be opportunity for replacement where such would benefit the landscape and appreciation of it (e.g. a tree-lined vista with the obelisk it focussed upon lost, or a set landscape composition such as a picturesque quarry garden with garden ornaments such as statuary removed and rustic structures completely decayed).

Every case has to be considered on its own merits and different situations may demand different approaches.

#### Reinstatement/Replication

1. It is usually appropriate to replace very ephemeral structures (such as a rustic summerhouse, wooden bridge etc.) on a like-for-like basis, where such elements would restore cohesion to a decayed but substantially intact framework. This is similar to the phased replacement of planting, and applies also to hard landscaping (walls, paths etc.).

The above work is an accepted part of good conservation management of historic landscape and usually comes under the heading of **Designed Landscape Repair**.

2. Where more permanent and individually designed garden ornaments and features such as statuary and fountains have been lost, like-for-like replacement may also be considered but the potential for degrading the quality of a historic environment, by replacement with features of the same form but inferior craftsmanship or materials, should be recognised.

As a very broad 'rule of thumb', the larger the feature which has been lost and the longer the interval since it stood in the landscape, the less likely is its permanent\* reinstatement to be appropriate (framework is less likely to be intact and the greater visual prominence of larger structures is likely to have more significant impact on an existing layout).

\*however, temporary reinstatement for exhibition purposes may be appropriate (and instructive).

3. It is rarely acceptable to replace on a like-for-like basis where individually designed garden ornaments or structures have been relocated, either within the same site or to a different designed landscape.

N.B. Proposals which seek to relocate and replicate features/ornaments in situ, on the basis of security and 'removal to safe storage', should be treated with extreme caution. Such a precedent, if taken to its logical conclusion, could result in historic landscape becoming a 'virtual reality' display. And, since removed elements no longer serve their intended purpose, motivation to keep in good repair may be reduced and potential over time for loss or damage is high.

#### Replacement

Where the framework of a historic landscape remains reasonably intact, but loss of a feature or focal point\* detracts from overall cohesion and integrity, and where reinstatement/replication is not appropriate (see 9.1 above), a replacement feature or focal point of new design may be considered.

\*Buildings which (also) served a specific function which is still, or has again become, relevant to the landscape may be included in this category.

Unless otherwise justified in the relevant context such feature:

Should be of a similar scale to that which it replaces.

Should be of similar visual prominence to that which it replaces.

Should be relevant to the site and situation.

Should be of high quality design, materials and craftsmanship.

### 9.2 New Features and Elements: Without Precedence

New features and elements in this category will be innovative and it is difficult therefore to offer definitive guidelines. Explanation in the form of the justification statement will be critical to establishing relevance to

the particular historic landscape, and the CMP should be examined for support for the chosen location. (See also 3.1.1 above)

As a general rule, and unless otherwise justified in the relevant context, such feature or element:

Should be of high quality design, materials and craftsmanship.

Should not detract from or conflict with significance of an existing layout, compromise views/vistas etc.

Should enhance the area in which it is sited and be a positive attribute to the historic landscape as a whole.

Should be relevant to the site and situation.

Should be of appropriate character and scale.

**For Artworks and Commemorative Works see 9.2.1 and 9.2.2 below**

### 9.2.1 Artworks

The Guidelines for New Features and Elements (see 9.2 above) should also be followed for Artworks, but artworks often require special evaluation, particularly where their design is completely independent of the historic landscape.

It is sometimes assumed that because such works fulfil the criteria of design excellence in their own field, this assures their suitability within the work of art which is the historic landscape. However, the fusion of two very different art forms can be unsatisfactory.

An artwork, such as a statue or sculpture, (particularly if the design is new and innovative) will be an inevitable focus of attention; drawing the eye like a magnet to its location within the landscape. Where the landscape design would otherwise offer less prominent foci, or where the design intention was for an uninterrupted landscape panorama, such visual distraction may be inappropriate and can compromise a wide area. The formality of artwork within a 'natural' landscape setting can also prove to be visually very incongruous; jarring on the quiet enjoyment of such compositions.

Much of our historic landscape comprises well-designed wide open spaces, with alluring views, vistas and panoramas, as well as intricately detailed 'set' compositions and intimate gardens. Such a setting may be of appreciable benefit to an artwork, but the gain to the landscape should be clearly demonstrated before such proposals are accepted.

### 9.2.2 Memorials and Commemorative Works

This is essentially a sub-section of artworks, but requires separate mention; not least because of the emotive issues which surround many such proposals, and the difficulties which may arise therefore in making an objective evaluation.

The beneficent aspect of many such works can result in particular problems (especially where a design has been commissioned before a site is agreed), since suggestions for alternative materials, methods of execution of the work etc. may not be welcomed.

Apart from ornamental cemeteries and decorated churchyards which were designed for the purpose, there is considerable precedent for siting memorials and commemorative works in historic landscape. Statues and plaques for patrons and benefactors add interest to many public landscapes, as do family mausolea and statues (and even headstones to pets) in private ones. Standing stones and plaques mark historic events in both public and private grounds, and countless commemorative seats, gates, fountains, buildings, shelters etc. adorn our public parks. Memorial planting too should not be forgotten since this was, and continues to be, a very popular medium for commemoration.

However, in spite of this recognised precedent, there are two fundamental issues which should be addressed before any such proposals are agreed:

1. The relevance of any memorial/commemorative work to the specific historic landscape should be properly justified to ensure continuity of development history
2. The ability of the specific historic landscape to absorb the memorial/commemorative work without change to its character also needs careful examination (where such works already exist in a landscape, there is potential for over-emphasis and domination).

The potential conflicts surrounding future maintenance/replacement should also be recognised, as should the constraints which commemorative works, and planting in particular, may impose upon proper future conservation management.

Where such works are proposed in public landscapes, it is advised that responsibility for future repair and maintenance is clearly identified at the outset.

### **Commemorative structures**

As with other new features and elements, commemorative structures:

Should be relevant to the site and situation.

Should be of high quality design, materials and craftsmanship.

Should not detract from or conflict with significance of an existing layout, compromise views/vistas etc.

Should enhance the area in which it is sited and be a positive attribute to the historic landscape as a whole.

AND Should respect the surrounding existing landscape design (i.e. should be well integrated).

Should not result in loss of significant historic areas, features or elements.

### **Commemorative planting**

There is no doubt that a tree planted by Her Majesty in the coronation year, or by Sir Winston Churchill at the end of World War II, or even one planted by the superintendent of a public park at an inaugural ceremony, are significant elements of today's historic landscapes, and of great interest to the public; marking important visits and occasions. However, some types of commemorative planting are more problematic.

General Guidelines for New Features and Elements (see 9.2 above) should also be observed for commemorative planting, but the following additional guidelines are offered from observation of contemporary problems arising from mature or maturing commemorative planting.

1. Avoid successive individual commemorative planting intended to develop into a regular feature (e.g. avenues, formal groves etc.).

Even if all specimens are planted within a limited time-span, there will be inevitable percentage loss; increasing as specimens age. Future decisions on necessary management and replacement may be constrained by the original individual associations.

2. In selecting a position for an individual, commemorative specimen, allow for maximum growth of root and branch and pay particular attention to the distance from significant historic structures, planting and hard landscaping.

3. Avoid personal commemorative specimen planting in public landscapes.

Where resources are limited, local authorities may be tempted to offset the cost of replanting through public subscription. Public preference invariably veers towards 'personal' allocation of an individual tree, and if allowed this can lead to serious future contention over maintenance, management and replacement. Planting offered to parks departments to commemorate a deceased friend or relative should also usually be avoided for similar reasons. Unless the person to be commemorated was a noted local figure with established connections with the grounds, such commemoration usually has little meaning for the general visitor, and future maintenance, management and replacement may be particularly sensitive.

## **9.3 Guidelines for Evaluation: Landscape Design**

### **9.3.1 Reinstatement/Replication**

It is usually considered highly inappropriate and at direct odds with conservation aims to remove landscape design layers and reinstate an earlier layout.\*

\*Such restoration can only ever be considered legitimate where there is compelling justification. In the very rare instances where this has been the case (e.g. Hampton Court Privy Garden), extensive historical research, archaeological excavation, and specialist evaluation and interpretation has been required; with proposals and progress rigorously scrutinised and detailed recording undertaken throughout.

### **9.3.2 New Design**

With the exception of historic landscapes where survival of a design phase is complete, unique and comprehensive, (most of which are accounted of exceptional national or even international importance and are Graded 1 on the *English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest*), conservation aims usually encompass continuance of a sites development history.

Where a new design of part of the historic landscape has been properly justified (see Sections 2.0 and 3.0 above), such design:

Should be relevant to the site and situation

Should not result in loss of significant historic design, features or elements

Should be of high quality, innovative, exciting and inspirational

- AND for discrete areas within an existing framework, design:
- Should respect the surrounding existing landscape design (i.e. should be well integrated).
  - Should not detract from or conflict with significance of an existing layout, compromise views/vistas etc.
  - Should enhance the area in which it is sited/over which it is laid out and be a positive attribute to the historic landscape as a whole.