



IfA London Group Newsletter No. 1

London Area Group

PPS 5 & Archaeology: a summary

The new PPS 5 *Planning for the Historic Environment* and its supporting *Practice Guide*, have replaced PPGs 15 and 16, that dealt with the built environment and archaeology. By combining the two the PPS recognises the entirety of the historic environment.

Whilst separating Policy from Guidance, the Government asserted its commitment to the principles established by the two PPGs. These still stand, although expressed in different terms in some cases, and the opportunity has been taken to clarify some matters. Despite the Heritage Bill not being enacted, as much as possible of its intentions are reflected in the Policy and Practice Guide.

New terminology has been introduced, based on EH's *Conservation Principles* including

Historic Environment – all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time.....those elements that hold significance are called *heritage assets*.

Significance – the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest, which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.

Heritage Asset – a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in the planning process. These can be **Designated** under the relevant legislation, eg Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, etc

Archaeological Interest is defined as an interest in carrying out an expert investigation at some point in the future into the evidence a heritage asset may hold of past human activity. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the

primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people, and cultures that made them. Distinguished from **Historic Interest** - an interest in past lives and events (*including pre-historic*). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide an emotional meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

The Policy introduces a 'values' approach, as an underlying philosophy to inform decision-making which focuses on what is significant in a heritage asset to determine the impact of a proposed development. It encourages a constructive approach to conservation and the importance of the historic environment in place-making and sustainable development.

Some key points for archaeologists

- the principles of obtaining adequate information, pre-determination, on which to assess a planning application through desk-based assessment and field evaluation are maintained.
- This is equally asserted for buildings, and other assets, with the need to understand an asset, by which to assess its significance and thus the degree of change, if any, that it can undergo.
- The recognition that *undesigned buildings* may have historic interest that might merit conservation or recording.
- There remains a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated historic assets, and those of demonstrably equivalent significance.

- There are heritage assets of archaeological interest that are not scheduled but are of equivalent significance and should thus be protected in the same way. These include ones, such as flint scatters, or cave sites, that cannot be scheduled under current legislation.
- Where loss is justified, a record should be made of the asset, *proportionate* to the nature and level of the asset's significance.
- Recording can be secured through condition or planning agreement.
- It is explicit that recording should result in publication and archive deposition.
- The advance in understanding gained from recording should be made publicly available, by local authorities, and should inform their plans and future decision-making.
- *Historic Environment Records* are identified as a source of primary advice on whether an asset has heritage interest; a minimum level of detail to submit with a planning application that affects a heritage asset; a source of public information; and to which reports of investigations should be copied.
- There is a stress on *appropriate expertise* and *expert advice*, intended to cover IfA accreditation, as well as other qualifications found across the heritage sector.
- Although the wording is not as prescriptive, the Practice Guide has equal weight to the PPS in the planning process, and particularly if decisions are tested at enquiry. A local authority may take a different approach to the Guide, but must achieve the same intended results.
- The Practice Guide itself is supported by guidance documents mentioned in the text, many from EH, on specific matters, such as recording buildings, which have lesser weight but are best practice.
- A number of important guidance papers have still to appear, notably those on *Setting*; and *Principles of Selection for Designation* (which will replace the scheduling criteria).

The IfA's response to the new PPS can be seen on the IfA website (www.archaeologists.net/modules/news/article.php?storyid=487)

Prepared by Robert Whytehead Hon. Chair LAG

Links

PPS 5 – CLG

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/pps5>

PPS 5 Practice Guide – CLG – DCMS – EH

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.21136>

PPS 5 FAQs – EH

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.21137>

The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England

http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/6763.aspx

Conservation Principles – EH

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.00100200500s>



Date for your diaries

IfA London Area Group 1st AGM

Tuesday 8th June

5.30pm Clore Learning Centre

Museum of London

&

Talk by Duncan Hawkins, MIfA

**Convoys Wharf and the Royal Deptford
Dockyard**