Buckinghamshire Local Heritage List Project

Assessment & Review Panel Protocol

Authors: Paul Rhymes & Lisa Harvey

Date: November 2021

Table of Contents

Introduction

Buckinghamshire was one of twenty-two Local Authorities to successfully secure MHCLG funding in January 2021 to identify sites for inclusion on its Local Heritage List.

The scope and aims of the Local Heritage List project are as follows:

- **Unified** – to create a single unified Local List for the new Unitary Council.
- **Responsive** – to respond to and asses the local heritage assets and places valued and nominated by the people of Buckinghamshire.
- **Geographical** – we have currently identified very few assets within the East Area (formerly Chiltern district) of the County so particular efforts will be made to address this imbalance.
- **Thematic** – This year the project team have decided to draw attention to the importance of Rothschild buildings and other estate buildings to local identity and character across the county.

This protocol sets out the assessment and decision making process underpinning the Local Heritage List Project, including the aims and scope of the Local Heritage List Project Review Panel. The protocol also includes relevant guidance and criteria used for the assessment of candidate sites. The Protocol should therefore be read in conjunction with Appendices 1-4.

Whilst the Local Heritage List will never be fully comprehensive and sites will continue to be discovered and added to the list over time; the aim is to achieve adoption of all successful 'Candidate Ready' sites entered into the Local Heritage List Platform by the summer of 2022.

Purpose

The assessment and review stage is crucial to ensure candidate sites meet the agreed criteria, reflect the Historic England Advice Note 7 and relevant Bucks local guidance. The Review Panel will therefore ensure that the assessment process has been consistently applied and will offer high level overview and draw upon the expertise of relevant professional representation on the panel.

The Local Heritage List Review Panel will take responsibility for the review and checking of candidate sites which have reached the 'Candidate for Review' stage on the Platform. All candidate sites taken to Review Panel will have been through initial assessment and enrichment. For each candidate site, the Review Panel will make one of the following recommendations:

- Recommended to Cabinet for Local Listing – meets the criteria.
- Recommended to Cabinet for rejection – does not meet the criteria.
- Recommend to Cabinet for removal – no longer meets the criteria.
- Further information required – put back to 'Candidate Work in Progress' for further enriching.

Representation

The Review Panel will comprise voting representatives from:

- Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society
- Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust
- Buckinghamshire Historic Buildings Trust
- Buckinghamshire Council Archaeology Team
- Buckinghamshire Council Heritage Team
- Buckinghamshire Council HER Team

Quorum & Procedure

The Review Panel shall meet at such times as may be necessary for the duration of the Local Heritage List Project but not less than once every other month until Summer 2022 or project extension thereafter.

- Meetings shall be held virtually on MS Teams unless otherwise agreed by the Panel.
- Meetings shall be convened by the Local Heritage List Project Officer or relevant project leads offering not less than seven days notice of a Panel meeting.
- Three voting members of the Forum shall constitute a quorum, provided one of those representatives is an external stakeholder relevant to the discipline being discussed.
- Minutes of the Review Panel shall be kept and recorded.

Review Panel Preparation

The candidate sites for consideration by the Review Panel will be circulated in advance of any meeting along with the outcome of their initial assessment and the Review Panel agenda. Only those sites which have reached 'Candidate for Review' shall be considered. They must have had their assessment completed; they should have an accompanying photo or reasonable justification for no photograph being supplied.

Assessment

To be considered for inclusion onto the Local Heritage List, assets should fall into at least one of the following general categories:

1. Assets which are visually illustrative of their period(s) or which have aesthetic value or which are innovative in their construction or design.
2. Assets which provide good insight into past human activity.
3. Assets which have historic associations, for example with notable figures (including architects, designers or people who were influential in local or national life) or events, or which are demonstrative of social history.
4. Assets which are valued by the community, relate well to local character or which include regional materials or construction methods.

Nominated assets will then be assessed in more detail against supporting evidence. The criteria are based on Historic England Advice Note 7 – Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage but additional criteria have been applied to aid assessment of particular asset types which are relevant to Buckinghamshire (see appendix 2-4 for further details). Each candidate site will have a High, Medium or Low rating against each of the criteria points (depending on the specific asset type criteria). These scores are then extrapolated into an overall High, Medium or Low rating. Where sites are scoring Low on a high number of criteria, these could be escalated to an overall Medium rating, for discussion at Panel.

High

All candidate sites reaching an overall 'High' rating will be listed for the Review Panel to check but will not be voted upon at the Review Panel meeting unless requested. These sites will be put forward with a recommendation to Cabinet for Local Listing and will move from 'Candidate for Review' to 'Candidate Ready'.

Medium

All candidate sites reaching an overall 'Medium' rating will be presented to Panel with any relevant photos/material and then taken to a vote. For each candidate site, the Review Panel will make one of the following recommendations:

- Recommended to Cabinet for Local Listing – meets the criteria.
- Recommended to Cabinet for rejection – does not meet the criteria.
- Further information required – put back to 'Candidate Work in Progress' for further enriching.

Low

All candidate sites reaching an overall 'Low' rating will be listed for the Review Panel to check but will not be voted upon at the Review Panel meeting unless requested. These sites will be put forward with a recommendation to Cabinet for rejection and will move from 'Candidate for Review' to 'Rejected'.

It should be noted that candidate sites recommended for local listing will be included on a comprehensive report to Members of Buckinghamshire Councils Cabinet for final adoption.

Appendix 1 – Workflow Process

Work Flow Status	What happens at each stage?	Proposed changes to Editing rights
In preparation	Only the registered nominee can see and edit	When the nominee selects submit the status moves to Pre-candidate. After this **registered users / Contributors** are only able to comment on entries (i.e. they cannot edit their own or other entries)
Pre-Candidate	This is our opportunity to filter out any innappropriate submissions.	Pre-candidate status is the first time we get to see these entries, and they are still not visible to the general public. LHLPO will need to check and **change status to:** Candidate (work in progress)
Candidate (work in progress)	This becomes the **enrichment** stage. Entries can be worked on by 'willing' and 'skilled' volunteers and/or staff	**Editor** - can edit text and can **change status to**: Candidate (for review) only [All volunteers could be Editors]
Candidate (for review)	This becomes the **assessment** stage by skilled volunteers / staff	**Publishers** – can edit text and **change status to:** Candidate (ready) Rejected Removed Deleted or Locally Listed [Only Skilled volunteers / staff should be Publishers]
Candidate (ready)	This means 'ready to go to Review Panel' for final approval	**All Publishers** - can change status to Locally Listed but only EA/ PR/ JH/ JW & LH should do this – can be monitored through action logs to avoid accidental misuse.
Locally Listed	Formally adopted by Cabinet	
Rejected	Once assessed as not suitable for local listing, an explanation as to why should be added to the entry.	
Removed	Assets previously on the list can be assessed and removed if they no longer satisfy the criteria.	
Deleted	For duplicate, incorrect or offensive entries.	

Appendix 2 - Building Assessment Criteria

1. Age

Generally, the older the asset is the rarer it is likely to be. Normally buildings dated after 1948 will not qualify unless they are particularly good examples of outstanding design or have strong historical, cultural or communal value. E.g. links to the Paralympics.

- If modern does it demonstrate outstanding or innovative design?
- A good example of a particular period, or multiple phases of historic development?
- Does it tell us about the people who constructed it, how they used it and the materials that they had available to them?

2. Rarity

This will be assessed against local characteristics and the wider context.

- A rare surviving or relatively unaltered example of its type?
- An unusual and important, locally, nationally or internationally?
- Does it contribute to a strong sense of local character and place?

3. Architectural or Artistic Interest

The style or design and aesthetic appearance of the asset, including how it was constructed and important features.

- Consider overall form including roof form, materials/construction, decorative or unusual features
- Offer a visually pleasing contribution to the locality, if so how?
- Sufficient physical historic evidence for the asset's interest/value to be understood?
- How does the asset relate to other buildings or structures nearby?
- Does the layout of the site contribute to its aesthetic interest?

4. Group value

Where assets which meet the criteria and have a clear visual, design or historic association with one another the whole group will be included.

- A clear relationship in terms of association, style, form or function with other nearby assets?
- Constructed as part of a group of similar structures?
- Contribute to a wider local, national, or international narrative?

5. Archaeological Interest

Evidence of past human activity, including the substance and evolution of places, people and cultures which made them. Where archaeology is buried and extent of survival unknown, site preservation is key.

- What is known about the asset from previous excavation or archival records?
- How well preserved is the asset likely to be?

- Is the site under threat, or has it been disturbed through development or land use?

6. Historic Interest

Assets with significant local or national historical association, including links with significant people or events. Social history and communal interest should also be considered, as well as influence on taste through literary references. Historic interest can be illustrative, eg. through settlement patterns, archival or architectural interest.

- Historical links to either local, national or international people, groups, events or social history?
- Demonstrate important transitions or historical development patterns?
- Supporting archival information available?
- Influential in the development of taste through reputation or references in literature?

7. Landmark Status

Structures and sites with strong visual prominence, aesthetic appearance, communal value or historic associations which therefore have a landmark, iconic or focal point status e.g. a significant focal point in a town, such as a clock tower; or an important gathering place or site of worship, such as a mosque or church. Landmark status alone is unlikely to achieve local listing designation without additional compelling evidence in support of other criteria

- How prominent is the asset in the townscape or landscape?
- Is the site well known and well loved by local people?
- Can the asset demonstrate strong historical, architectural or aesthetic qualities beyond being well known?
- Does the asset have communal or spiritual value, or does it illustrate diversity within Buckinghamshire?

Appendix 3 – Archaeology Assessment Criteria

Archaeological sites have been assessed using the 1989 English Heritage (now Historic England) Monument Protection Programme (MPP) scoring. A number of the sites put forward for nomination will already have been scored under MPP as part of the process undertaken for creating Archaeological Notification Areas. This scoring system allocates a high, medium or low scoring to the following categories;

- Survival
- Group value
- Archaeological Documentation
- Historical Documentation
- Potential
- Diversity
- Amenity Value

The scores assigned to each of these categories has been carried over to the appropriate corresponding HEAN value (as explained below). Where this assessment has already taken place it will not be revisited unless warranted.

For those archaeological nominations not previously assessed, the HEAN criteria will be addressed by using the MPP guidance and the following assessment criteria will be followed.

1. **Age**

   Archaeological sites can be deemed significant regardless of their period. *Age is therefore not considered a criteria for archaeological assets.*

2. **Rarity**

   Whilst rarity was considered under MPP, scoring for this criteria was not undertaken and as such will be determined by the panel for each asset, regardless of whether it was scored under MPP or not. National and county rarity will be considered, with statistics gathered from the Bucks HER to determine county numbers. National rarity will be determined through MPP summaries.

3. **Architectural or Artistic Interest**

   Archaeological sites are unlikely to have architectural or artistic interest and this category was not scored under MPP. However, where they do meet this criteria, such as upstanding building remains, or artistic interest through association (for example medieval tile industry) this will be noted.

4. **Group value**

   Archaeological sites can be assessed for Group value in two ways;
   - Clustering – where the site is part of a collection of similar sites, for example a Barrow cemetery;
   - Association – where an asset is located within a landscape with different but associated remains. For example a Roman farmstead may be associated with a nearby Roman road.

   Scoring for Clustering and Association have been taken from the MPP scores and rationale for Group Value. Unlike for MPP, the two scores will be taken separately, and therefore there are two possible scores for archaeological sites under this criteria.

5. **Archaeological Interest**

   This is the main criteria for archaeological sites. To fully understand the significance of an archaeological site, each nominated asset will be assessed against the four archaeological criteria defined by the MPP (1989) scoring system, Survival, Documentation, Potential and Diversity. There are therefore four possible scores for archaeological sites under this criteria.
   - Survival – the survival of the monument's archaeological potential both above and below ground is a crucial consideration and needs to be assessed in relation to its present condition and surviving features;
   - Documentation – The significance of a monument may be given great weight by the existence of records of previous investigation or, in the case of more recent monuments, by the support of contemporary written records;
   - Potential – On occasion the nature of the evidence cannot be precisely specified but it is possible to document reasons for anticipating its probable existence and importance and so demonstrate the justification for scheduling [*or for this purpose, local listing*]. This is usually confined to sites rather than upstanding monuments;
   - Diversity – Some monuments have a combination of high quality features – others are chosen for a single important attribute.

6. **Historic Interest**

   Historic interest scoring is taken from the MPP Historical Documentation category.
   - Prehistoric and early Saxon archaeological sites will obviously have no contemporary historical documentation, although they may be mentioned in antiquarian sources;
   - Roman sites are unlikely to be recorded in contemporary historical documentation, although they may be mentioned in antiquarian sources;
   - Medieval sites onwards may have historical interest through record in documentary or cartographic sources.

7. **Landmark Status**

   Landmark Status scoring is taken from the MPP Amenity Value category, which has been used for this process. This fits in well with the overview of archaeological sites with strong visual prominence, aesthetic appearance, communal value or historic associations.

There are therefore 10 possible scoring categories for archaeological sites;

- If an asset scores medium or high on 6 or more categories it will be considered an overall high and recommended for inclusion on the Local List;
- If an asset scores medium or high on 5 categories it will be considered an overall medium and will be put to panel for discussion;
- If an asset scores medium or high on 4 categories or fewer it will not be recommended for inclusion.

Appendix 4 – Parks & Gardens Assessment Criteria

Sites that may be considered for inclusion on the list may fit one or more of the following categories:

- Gardens of Arts and Craft Houses
- Town house gardens
- Public parks
- Other designed open spaces
- Arboretum
- Gardens attached to workplaces

1 Age

Generally, the older a designed landscape is, the rarer it is likely to be. Normally parks and gardens dated after 1990 will not qualify unless they are particularly good examples of outstanding design or have strong historical, cultural or communal value. The more recent the asset the greater the level of completeness that will probably be required. Multiphased assets can be of great value: the value can rest in the fact that its present form is the outcome of a series of phases of development or of a continuous sequence of change. Poor condition, such as decay may not render an asset unlistable if its structure remains sufficiently intact.

- If modern does it demonstrate outstanding or innovative design?
- A good example of a particular period, or multiple phases of historic development?

- Does it tell us about the people who commissioned, designed or constructed it and how they used it?

2 Rarity

This will be assessed against local characteristics and the wider historical context to make comparisons to understand the wider significance. Historic assets may be of national significance but have not yet been recognized as such and nationally designated.

- A rare surviving, very good or relatively unaltered example of its type?
- An unusual and important site, locally, nationally or internationally?
- Does it contribute to a strong sense of local character and place?

3 Architectural or Artistic Interest

The style or design and aesthetic appearance of the asset, including how it was constructed and important features. This includes the key defining aspects of designed landscapes particularly the style, ornamental layout and planting. Historic assets which are early or representative examples of a style, type of site or work of a designer of local or greater significance.

- Consider overall form including decorative or unusual features
- Offer a visually pleasing contribution to the locality, if so how?
- Sufficient physical historic evidence for the asset's interest/value to be understood?
- How does the asset relate to other designed landscapes, buildings or structures nearby?
- Does the layout of the site contribute to its aesthetic interest?

4 Group value

Where assets which meet the criteria and have a clear visual, design or historic association with one another the whole group will be included.

- A clear relationship in terms of association, style, form or function with other nearby assets?
- Constructed as part of a group of similar structures?
- Contribute to a wider local, national, or international narrative?

5 Archaeological Interest

Evidence of past human activity, including the substance and evolution of places, people and cultures which made them. Where archaeology is buried and extent of survival unknown, site preservation is key.

- What is known about the asset from previous excavation or archival records?
- How well preserved is the asset likely to be?
- Is the site under threat, or has it been disturbed through development or land use?

6 Historic Interest

Assets with significant local or national historical association, including links with significant people or events. Social history and communal interest should also be considered, as well as influence on

taste through literary or artistic references. Historic interest can be illustrative, eg. through archival or architectural interest.

- Historical links to either local, national or international people, groups, events or social history?
- Demonstrate important transitions or historical development patterns?
- Supporting archival information available?
- Influential in the development of taste through reputation or references in literature or art?

7 Landmark Status

Sites with strong visual prominence, aesthetic appearance, communal value or historic associations which therefore have a landmark, iconic or focal point status e.g. a significant focal point. Landmark status alone is unlikely to achieve local listing designation without additional compelling evidence in support of other criteria

- How prominent is the asset in the townscape or landscape?
- Is the site well known and well loved by local people?
- Can the asset demonstrate strong historical, architectural or aesthetic qualities beyond being well known?
- Does the asset have communal or spiritual value, or does it illustrate diversity within Buckinghamshire?

If an asset scores high on 2 categories it will be recommended for inclusion on the local heritage list; modern designed landscapes which are of exceptional interest on 1 category only may also be recommended for inclusion, on the basis of professional judgement.