

A Statement of Significance (SoS) outlines the heritage value (the associations with historical events, people and developments which give it value to us and future generations) of your building and its setting, and which of their particular features these are represented by. Once you have a clear idea of your proposals, you may need to revisit this to do a more detailed evaluation of the particular features of the building which the changes will specifically affect.

Some general points:

- **A SoS need not be more than 1 side of A4** (max. 2 sides with illustrations) for the purposes of applying for Authorisation for works; use bullet points / tables for concision where possible
- **Heritage value is measured according to a sliding scale** – a SoS should indicate where on this scale specific features, spaces or aspects of the site fall (e.g. Low value - *of little to no significance / detracts from significance*; High value - *of national or international importance*)
- **Heritage value is OBJECTIVE** – a SoS is not an opportunity to ‘down-play’ the significance of your building/site in heritage terms, change should be justified by demonstrating Need
- **Any sources of information used to produce an SoS should be referenced** in order to enable both an assessment of reliability and further research in the future (see below)

Understanding the heritage value of your building and its setting from the outset will enable you to develop proposals sympathetically to its significant elements, avoiding solutions with negative high impact on heritage value, which will require a great deal of justification (see Heritage Statement).

A SoS should present an evaluation of the following factors across your site ([UK Gov](#)):

- **“archaeological interest:** [...] there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation
- **architectural and artistic interest:** These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.
- **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 meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.”

More information on defining significance: [England](#) / [Wales](#).

****Example approach for assessing significance: [HE Framework for Non-conformist Chapels](#)****

Sources of information about your building / referencing:

- There are various formats for references however they should always include:

Title of work (Book / Article); **Title of larger publication** (if applicable); **Author**; **Editor**; **Year published**; **URL** (if a web-page); **Year accessed** (if an internet source); **Pages** (if applicable)

- Useful sources of information about your buildings’ heritage may include:

Inventory of Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting Houses series, C Wakeling - *Chapels of England*, Owen - *Chapels of Wales*, Hayden - *Baptist History and Heritage*, Pevsner series: [[email](#) to request excerpts]; Historic Environment Records (HER) ([more info](#)); County Archaeology Services; Church Records (marriage / baptism / funeral registers); Local History / tourist information publications

Note:- Whilst listing descriptions should always be consulted and a copy of them included with the SoS, it is only in recent years that these have included an indication of entries’ significance i.e. what makes them special. Prior to this they were used for identification purposes only and therefore would frequently contain information pertaining only to a buildings’ external appearance / façade.

Recommended Content

The logical sequence in which the following information is presented may vary from site to site (e.g. presented by heritage value, room or date), however, a robust Statement of Significance will detail:

- **Key points regarding the historic interest of the site; this may include:**
 - o Details of the length and nature of worship / missional / community **activities** on the site and perhaps how this relates to trends in the local, regional or national area;
 - o Details of notable **persons / groups** associated with the site and their relationship with it – this may include ministers, members, patrons, architects / engineers, designers / craftspeople (e.g. organ makers), contractors / builders; a brief indication of why they are considered to be significant in general and/or to this site in particular
 - o Detail of **events** of significance which took place at or in association with the site; this may include planned, unplanned, one-off or regular events and be regarded as positive or negative in nature

 - o Sources: local histories; local archives; monuments / memorials / markers; registers; communal memory; Baptist Historical Society

 - o Importantly, all of these facts should be correlated with any physical features which embody them, as well as being evaluated in terms of the level of interest, and therefore **historic value** they represent.
 - o Where contributing to the communal or spiritual identity of a place or people, these factors may also represent **communal / spiritual value**.

- **Key points regarding the architectural, design and artistic interest of the site; this may include:**
 - o Details of the architectural style used, which of its key features are present and an assessment of the building as an example of chapels or other buildings of that style, set in the context of its age, local area / setting, and key moments in Baptist history
 - o Details of how the building fits within the development of architectural and functional (i.e. missional / worship) fashions and building technology, both chronologically and geographically – this should discuss setting, including predominant materials / age
 - o A comparison amongst other works of the designers / craftspeople associated with it
 - o Further details of features which make notable contributions to the whole, including brief discussion of how / why and in particular

 - o Sources: Listing description; Pevsner; Books, journals, articles (incl. online) about specific building styles, professionals, histories

- **Key points of archaeological interest; this may include:**
 - o The potential presence of burials of any kind, marked or unmarked
 - o The potential presence of evidence of use of the site during Medieval, Roman, Pre-historic or any other period in history
 - o Physical aspects of the building which might undergo scientific analysis to establish facts about its construction / evolve understanding about historic building techniques e.g. mortars, paints, glass, joinery etc.

 - o Sources: County Archaeology; books, journals, articles; local consultants

- **Conclusion**
 - o **Draw together key conclusions, identifying what is special / most important about the building; where there is most scope for change and which features would require further research**