



Statutory Designations
HE Listing response to INQUIRY
21st century places: values and benefits
Conservation Places and People APPG

CONTEXT: Listing is the term given to the practice of listing buildings, scheduling monuments, registering parks, gardens and battlefields, and protecting wreck sites. Listing allows us to highlight what is significant about a building or site, and helps to make sure that any future changes to it do not result in the loss of its significance.

Q1 What evidence exists of the economic, social and environmental benefits from the conservation, care and regeneration of historic buildings and areas, across the UK.

Considerable, including:

- Historic England's (HE) Heritage Counts surveys. See <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/>
- HE YouGov polling, eg <https://historicengland.org.uk/get-involved/protect/mills-of-the-north/why-re-use-mills/>
- DCMS Taking Part Surveys See <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/current/social-and-economic-research/taking-part/>
- The Power of Place, See <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/power-of-place/>
- Historic Environment Scotland SHEA See <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/?searchPubText=%22Scotland%E2%80%99s+Historic+Environment+Audit%22>
- Energy Performance reports for historic buildings, eg Jon Wallsgorve, 'Age Energy Research', eg Oriel Prizeman, 'Energy and Carnegie Libraries'.

Q2 How can the conservation and regeneration of historic areas contribute to the wider agendas of governments across the UK to equity and 'levelling up', along with their focus on high streets revival?

Heritage regeneration is proven – investment has a magnetic effect. Heritage protection and investment breathe new life into old places that are rich in heritage and full of promise - unlocking their potential and making them more attractive to residents, businesses, tourists and investors. See Derby PSICA Evaluation Report <https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/local/derby-psica-legacy-report-pdf/>

Even the Heritage Schools work in Sunderland has shown how working with primary school children can develop a sense of pride and value for their local area. See





<https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/education/heritage-schools/champion-heritage-schools/>

Q3 Is there a case for further increasing the level of investment in the heritage and infrastructure of places outside London and the south east of England to assist the 'levelling up' of lagging regional economies?

Socio-economic benefits build from employment opportunities provided by investment in the heritage and it is in the interest of England's environmental and economic health and performance to achieve a more balanced and sustainable response to demographic changes and requirements.

See growing evidence for cultural capital

<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/current/social-and-economic-research/culture-and-heritage-capital/>

Q4 How can regeneration of the historic environment contribute to and interact with efforts to revive local economies in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent recession?

Lockdown has shown the immense value of local places to people's mental health. Identity and sense of belonging, quite apart from employment are key. Heritage Counts overviews of the economics of heritage investment illustrate the substantial performance for UK GVA and GDP – this is even more acute as a result of the instability and impact of the pandemic. See Heritage Counts

<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/heritage-and-economy/>

Q5 What evidence exists that historic buildings provide flexible, low rental space for start-up businesses, social enterprises and community facilities, thereby helping to stimulate local economies, particularly in more peripheral neighbourhoods?

See such surveys as those on effect of mill conversions in the north

<https://historicengland.org.uk/get-involved/protect/mills-of-the-north/success-stories/> and HES's THI work – for example in the Merchant City, Glasgow.

Q6 How has heritage regeneration helped to boost the image and social cohesion of the areas they are located in, attracting investment and providing a catalyst for reversing economic decline?

HE's Listing teams receives many requests for protection to be afforded to community spaces – village halls, redundant schools, public houses. Uptake in Assets of Community Value and their correlation with heritage assets provides strong evidence. See again such as the Derby PSICA report above.

Q7 How can the care, repair and regeneration of the historic environment help to meet the UK's commitment to sustainable development, including cutting emissions to net zero by avoiding the use and waste of scarce resources associated with demolition and redevelopment?

Re-use and retrofitting remove need for new build. Construction accounts for 38% of carbon emissions! The environmental costs of demolition are not considered when sites are cleared and figures given for the new build. Re-use and retrofitting protect diminishing resources. While EPC tests have been based on modern construction and mis-represent the performance of traditional forms, much of which is superior. Embodied energy is now recognised. As the value of local identity becomes clearer





(assisted by lockdown experiences) the value of heritage to a sense of place, to mental health, to volunteering become more apparent – keeping ‘character’ contributes to a stable society. See also HE’s ‘There’s no Place like Old Homes’ report, at <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/2019-carbon-in-built-environment/carbon-in-built-historic-environment/> and ‘Understanding Carbon in the Historic Environment’, <https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/research/understanding-carbon-in-historic-environment/>

Q8 How can conservation-led regeneration of the historic environment help to promote sustainable patterns of development, striking the right balance between economic growth and social equity, while also curbing wasteful emissions?

The above reports provide good information here. Similarly too, HE’s work on mill conversion and re-use.

Q10 What are the implications of the government’s reforms to the English planning system, proposed in the planning white paper, for the conservation and regeneration of historic areas?

See <https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/statements/he-response-planning-future/>
We support the Government’s aims to deliver more homes and particularly welcome the commitment to creating beautiful, sustainable places. The historic environment, which is an important part of what makes places distinctive and beautiful has a strong role to play in this. The principles of good design, place-making and giving local people a greater say in how their neighbourhoods develop lie at the heart of Historic England’s work, demonstrated by our High Streets Heritage Action Zones programme. We agree with the report’s statement that our homes need to be sustainable. The recycling and reuse of historic buildings could make a significant contribution to combatting the effects of climate change and has a key role to play in meeting the government’s target to be Net Zero by 2050.

Q9 What have been the impacts of cuts in local government to the capacity of planning departments to facilitate the conservation and regeneration of sensitive historic areas?

Key. See <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/tenth-report-la-staff-resources/>. Concerns continue (and indeed accelerate considering the potential consequences of the pandemic) regarding the need for skilled and adequately resourced provision for the management of the historic environment. Work on Cultural Capital is to evidence the breadth of benefits that the heritage brings to other areas of society and therefore the dangers of not investing appropriately in this dimension.

Q11 How can post pandemic efforts to boost skills training support efforts to revive neglected crafts key to historic building conservation?

As appreciation for Intangible Cultural Heritage grows, the importance of supporting traditional skills and use of traditional materials grows too and, in a post-pandemic world, the multiple benefits of employment in this area need attention. With further emphasis on the reduction of carbon emissions comes recognition of the benefits of working with traditional fabric and therefore the value of growing the skills necessary.





Historic England

Q12 How can the conservation and restoration of historic parks and other important green spaces contribute to efforts to encourage exercise and thereby promote health and well-being?

This issue focuses on championing and protecting our public parks heritage, and the role of historic parks and green spaces in our towns and cities, and place making. Historic England recognises the benefits of public parks, and the challenges they are facing in funding and use. We want everyone in the heritage sector to help ensure parks and green spaces are protected and cherished. Huge changes are unfolding and we support efforts here, for example in the debate [#ParksMatter](#).

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