

Heritage Plan Framework 2015

DRAFT

February 2015

Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
WHAT IS THE HERITAGE PLAN AND THE HERITAGE PLAN FRAMEWORK? ..	3
THE HERITAGE OF OXFORD	3
VISION AND OBJECTIVES	5
HERITAGE PLAN VISION	5
HERITAGE PLAN OBJECTIVES	5
DEVELOPING THE HERITAGE PLAN FRAMEWORK	6
SCOPING ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	7
INTEGRATING THE POSITIVE MANAGEMENT OF HERITAGE WITH OTHER STRATEGIES (INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK).....	9
STRONG AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES	9
SAFE COMMUNITIES	11
ECONOMIC VIBRANCY	12
CREATING A LOW CARBON ENVIRONMENT	13
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY	15
DEVELOPING ENGAGEMENT IN HERITAGE MANAGEMENT	15
METHODS FOR ENABLING COMMUNITY AND DEVELOPER ENGAGEMENT IN HERITAGE MANAGEMENT	15
TOOLKITS AND OTHER SUPPORT FOR LOCAL-LEVEL PLANNING, DEVELOPERS AND DECISION MAKERS	15
SCHEMES TO FACILITATE ENGAGEMENT OF ALL HERITAGE MANAGERS..	16
PRIORITIES AND PRINCIPLES	19
ACTION PLAN.....	20
MONITORING FRAMEWORK	22
APPENDIX 1: CONSULTATION RESULTS.....	24
INVOLVEMENT OF OXFORD HERITAGE STAKEHOLDERS.....	24
OXFORD STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (OSP) CONSULTATION EVENT	25
WORKSHOP WITH OXFORD CITY COUNCIL PLANNING OFFICERS	25
PUBLIC CONSULTATION	28

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE HERITAGE PLAN AND THE HERITAGE PLAN FRAMEWORK?

1. The Heritage Plan Framework will provide an overarching strategy for the future management of the city's heritage through the Heritage Plan, with key principles established to inform decision-making. The intention of the Heritage Plan Framework is to assess what is included and what needs to be included in the Heritage Plan and to help coordinate and utilise on-going, planned and future evidence-gathering studies.
2. The Heritage Plan for Oxford is not one single, static document. It is a series of strategies and documents designed to encompass the important aspects or immediate needs of managing Oxford's heritage, produced over time and updated when necessary.
3. Oxford's Core Strategy 2026 set out the intention to draw up a Heritage Plan. This said (in paragraph 6.1.5): "*A heritage plan will be drawn up as a basis for decision-making and initiatives that will help ensure that development in Oxford sustains and enhances the archaeological, architectural and landscape resource in a manner compatible with its status as a historic city of international renown.*"
4. A Heritage Scoping Assessment and a consultation exercise to gauge current understanding of and future need in relation to heritage in the city have been undertaken. The results are summarised in this document (the consultation results and the implications for the Heritage Plan are reported in Appendix 1). The findings of these two assessments feed into the Heritage Plan Framework. Based on these assessments, the Heritage Plan Framework will set out what information, analysis, strategies and documents already exist and consider whether they are relevant, useable and up-to-date. Based on this and the priorities and principles for the Heritage Plan, recommendations for future work will be made. The Framework can be updated periodically. It will provide an overview of the complex set of documents and on-going work programme that will constitute the Heritage Plan.

THE HERITAGE OF OXFORD

5. Oxford is a world-renowned historic city with a rich and diverse built heritage. It has an enviable inheritance of historic buildings and other features of the built environment, with over 1,500 listed buildings and conservation areas that cover 17.3% of the total area of the city. It is one of the most photographed, filmed and written about cities in the world. These images are largely of historic Oxford, based around the colleges of one of the best-preserved medieval universities in the world. This historic core of Oxford, based around the university colleges, is vital to the city's tourist industry because it is this that tourists from

Appendix 1

around the world visit in their millions. It also makes Oxford an attractive and popular city in which to live and work.

6. However, Oxford's heritage is about more than the famous assets of the built environment. English Heritage (Conservation Principles, 2008) define heritage as "*all inherited resources which people value for reasons beyond mere utility.*" Heritage encompasses what is inherited from the past and how we use that today, as well as the heritage in the making of the developing city. It is about nature, people and events, local places, features and associations, viewpoints and open spaces. English Heritage describe the Historic Environment as: "*all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible or buried and deliberately planted or managed flora.*"

7. Different phases of growth have contributed to Oxford's character as a whole, and created the diversity of townscapes and landscapes that make up today's Oxford. Oxford's urban origins lie in the late Saxon period. Its original street pattern and some of these earliest buildings and monuments still survive. The foundation and growth of the University transformed Oxford into an international seat of learning. Growth of Oxford took place beyond the historic core from the mid-19th century onwards, spurred by railway and improved river transport, the growth of the University and other educational establishments and the printing and publishing industry. This growth was further accelerated in the 20th century through car manufacturing and Oxford's role as a regional hub of health services. The city retains distinctive physical characteristics that reflect these different strands of economic and social growth.

VISION AND OBJECTIVES

HERITAGE PLAN VISION

8. The Heritage Plan for Oxford will follow an approach to heritage management that is strategic and informed by a robust evidence base, and that does more to engage with our local communities.

9. The three main elements of the approach to heritage management that the Heritage Plan is intended to embrace and promote are:

- (1) providing a strategic and evidence-based approach to managing the historic environment and guiding change;
- (2) facilitating an integrated approach for the positive application of heritage to other areas of strategic planning;
- (3) encouraging community (business, visitor and residential) ownership, responsibility for and engagement with the historic environment.

10. The Heritage Plan for Oxford is intended to ensure people are aware of the city's heritage as a world class resource that is a positive asset. This understanding will guide decision-makers, strategy planners and property owners to act as its guardians, getting the greatest sustainable benefit from the city's heritage for its citizens and the wider community. It will involve local communities in identifying the value of their heritage and provide clear channels of communication for them to both engage in decision-making and to appreciate how their views have influenced the decisions that are made.

HERITAGE PLAN OBJECTIVES

11. This Heritage Plan Framework will set out how the Heritage Plan will be delivered and what it will include, based on the objectives of the Heritage Plan. Derived from the Vision, the specific objectives for the Heritage Plan are to:

- Objective 1. Identify Oxford's heritage assets and assess the significance of them, their potential to contribute to the delivery of the key priorities for the city, their vulnerability to change and opportunities for their enhancement, using this understanding to establish key principles to inform decision-making;
- Objective 2. Facilitate greater integration between the management of the historic environment and strategies and policies from other sectors, with the intention of improving the quality of life and prosperity of the city's population;
- Objective 3. Enable the involvement of the community in identifying, caring for and benefiting from our heritage;
- Objective 4. Ensure effective management of our heritage assets;
- Objective 5. Provide a framework for monitoring the heritage resource.

Appendix 1

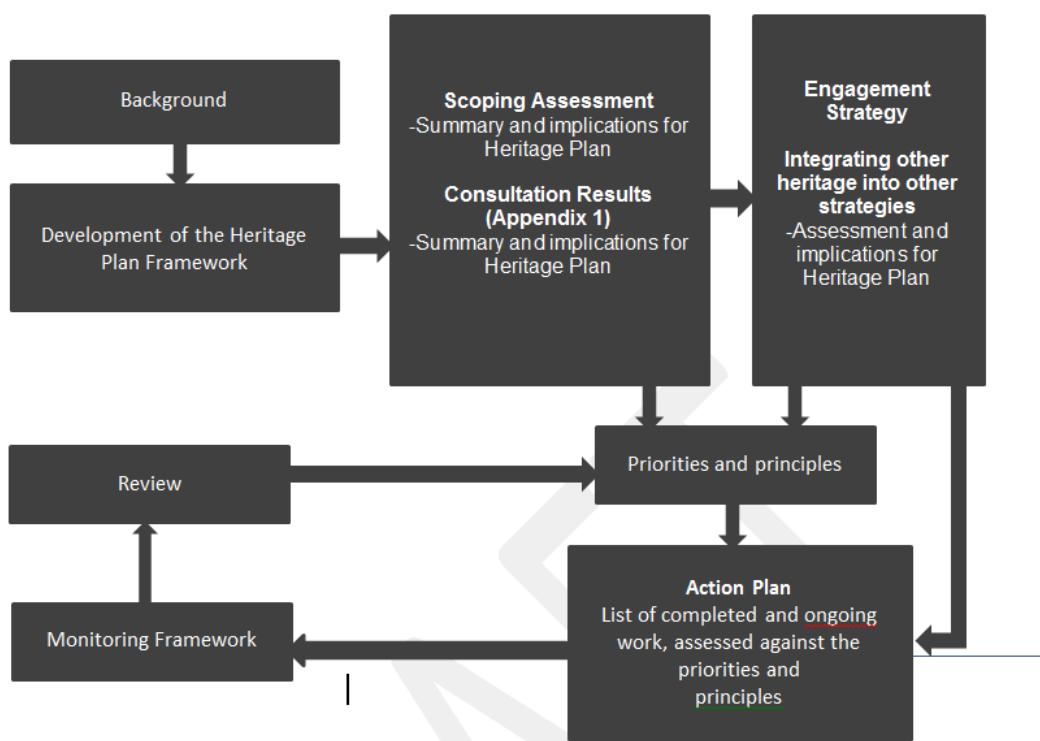
DEVELOPING THE HERITAGE PLAN FRAMEWORK

12. The Heritage Plan Framework brings together several strands of work to provide an overarching strategy for the future management of the city's heritage through the Heritage Plan. The Framework provides an overview of the complex set of documents and on-going work programme that constitutes the Heritage Plan, set out in the Action Plan. k.

13. The following work has been undertaken:

- **A Scoping Assessment and consultation** has been carried out to assess existing work and evidence base studies. It brings together the existing information on Oxford's heritage and assesses how heritage assets are valued at present. A number of consultation exercises have been carried out to enable an assessment of whether existing work and evidence base studies provide enough information about the value of heritage, risks to heritage and opportunities to utilise it for general benefit. This work has fed into the integration framework and engagement strategy;
- **An Integration Framework** sets out how heritage is interlinked with other strategies, and assesses what is needed to achieve better consideration of heritage issues in other strategies;
- **An Engagement Strategy** sets out toolkits that have been developed to enable wide engagement with heritage issues and also suggests other strategies for engaging a wide range of stakeholders with heritage issues.

14. The following diagram summarises how the strands of work in this Heritage Plan Framework fit together.



SCOPING ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

15. Oxford City Council and Oxford Preservation Trust prepared a Scoping Assessment as a starting point for preparing the Heritage Plan. The Scoping Assessment includes an overview of Oxford's heritage. It brings together the existing information on Oxford's heritage and assesses how heritage assets are valued at present. It also assesses the existing evidence base and explains the policy context in which the management of Oxford's historic environment relates to other sectors and strategies.

Review of the Evidence Base

16. The Scoping Assessment includes a review of the evidence base. To manage Oxford's heritage successfully we need to maintain a data-set of evidence, which can be used by everyone with a responsibility for managing Oxford's heritage to improve understanding of the value of Oxford's heritage and to inform decisions when planning future initiatives. To be complete, this evidence base needs to cover many aspects of the heritage resource. The evidence base should provide clarity to existing policy but should also be broad enough in scope to help in the development of policy in future. It should be readily available and accessible to a wide range of users so that it can be used to guide decision making and planning in a timely fashion by all relevant stakeholders.

17. While a part of this evidence base is managed by the City Council, other parts are held in the libraries and archives of other institutions. For example, Oxfordshire County Council has maintained the county's Historic Environment Record (a database of archaeological information), in addition to the County Records Office and the County Local Studies Library Collection now held at the Oxfordshire History Centre. Oxford University and each of the colleges have maintained archives relating to their estates, which provide invaluable documentation of the development of the city from medieval times to the present, while the colleges' libraries contain a resource of literature that is probably unmatched in any other city in Britain. Museums and Art galleries, and specifically the Ashmolean, provide collections that include paintings documenting the development of the city, while the city's amenity, conservation and civic societies such as the Oxford Civic Society and the Oxford Preservation Trust have also amassed an array of information and documentation concerning the city's heritage.

Assessment of existing policies

18. The Scoping Assessment reviews the existing suite of heritage policies contained in the Core Strategy and Local Plan. This concludes that the policies are traditional in their approach, based on the government's stated objectives and broadly seek to preserve or enhance those aspects of the historic environment that have been identified as holding significance. The Scoping Assessment suggests that policies do not explain how

Appendix 1

decisions should be made and can lead to conflict where there are competing views. The Scoping Assessment also finds that policies do not easily cater for instances where the significance of a place is not understood or not known. The focus on designated assets makes it more difficult to manage effectively other aspects of the historic environment that are valued but for which there is an inadequate mechanism for sustaining that significance through change.

DRAFT

INTEGRATING THE POSITIVE MANAGEMENT OF HERITAGE WITH OTHER STATEGIES (INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK)

19. Consultation with stakeholders to inform development of the Heritage Plan helped to show how difficult it can be for heritage stakeholders to consider external sectors and their influence on heritage. The same difficulties are likely to be encountered when attempting to encourage external sectors to consider how heritage can reap potentially positive benefits in their areas of work. An important role of the Heritage Plan will be to make the world of heritage assets and themes accessible to those who have little knowledge or interest in them to date. Consultation with key sector champions from the Oxford Strategic Partnership has provided a clearer understanding of the range of strategies and projects that the Heritage Plan needs to engage with. The aim of this section is to discuss the links between heritage and important themes for the city, focusing on how the Heritage Plan can reinforce these links.

20. The aims of the OSP and the City Council's corporate priorities cover similar themes. These common themes and the implications for heritage in relation to these overarching strategies are considered below. A box under each theme shows the implications for the Heritage Plan.

STRONG AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

21. Eighteen of 85 areas in Oxford are among the most deprived in England. These areas have multiple levels of deprivation, with low skills, low incomes and high levels of crime. The Oxford Strategic Partnership's Health and Social Inclusion Partnership Group work on addressing these issues and have adopted the principle that building capacity and self-esteem in the community will enable people to enjoy better outcomes.

22. The OSP objectives suggest that communities should be developed so that they can organise themselves in ways that respond to their needs, improve the quality of life locally and develop the potential of local people. The act of coming together to help identify important elements of their heritage could help to strengthen the local community in this way.

23. Good management of important elements of our heritage can enhance their significance for the local communities and help ensure a sense of continuity and belonging. An understanding of historic buildings, sites and landscapes are of fundamental importance to telling our story, establishing community identities and creating a sense of place, helping ensure an attractive place to live and work, and adding to community wellbeing.

Appendix 1

24. Identifying the heritage of an area is likely to lead to greater understanding of its significance and more motivation to protect it. Thus, facilitating community involvement is a vital part of good heritage management; it also brings benefits in return to the local community.

25. There is a strong link between heritage and health and wellbeing of communities and also of individuals. Remembering that heritage is the result of interaction between people and their environment and that heritage is as much about people as it is about places makes it easier to understand the relationship between heritage and health. The determinants of health suggest surroundings and lifestyle have a direct impact on health and wellbeing. Heritage and the historic environment can be seen to be beneficial to our health under a number of categories - lifestyle, community, local economy, activities and built and natural environment. Having places to exercise, socialise, communicate and share experiences helps people to have a positive approach to life and to enjoy their surroundings.

26. Consultation has suggested that a number of key cultural, educational and socially important heritage assets are not being utilised by the health sector. Heritage assets such as museums and archives, literature and the arts and libraries and Oxford's natural environment and green spaces have a role in creating a sense of place, increasing social cohesion of Oxford's communities and providing areas to exercise and places to be proud of.

27. How consideration of heritage can help deliver strong and healthy communities:

How heritage is linked to the strategic objective:

The act of coming together to help identify important elements of their heritage could help to strengthen the local community to improve community engagement in regeneration and increase the number of people who are satisfied with their local area and Oxford as a whole and are able/willing to participate in local planning and projects.

An understanding of historic buildings, sites and landscapes is of fundamental importance to telling our story, establishing community identities and creating a sense of place.

The determinants of health suggest surroundings and lifestyle have a direct impact on health and wellbeing. Heritage and the historic environment can be seen to be beneficial to our health under a number of categories - lifestyle, community, local economy, activities and built and natural environment.

To help realise full potential of integration the Heritage Plan should:

Facilitate community involvement and ownership in identifying and caring for significant aspects of their heritage. Heritage strategies and documents that are closely linked to strong, active and safe communities should be clearly identifiable. Relevant information about the significance of heritage assets should be accessible. This may include continuing

Appendix 1

work through case study projects that demonstrate how heritage is a resource that can help strengthen communities.

Existing relevant elements of the Heritage Plan/other information sources:

Heritage Portal- especially information on link between health and heritage.

Oxford Open Doors, organised by the Oxford Preservation Trust, is an annual event that has been successful in helping local people to enjoy and celebrate everything that makes the city special. Everyone can share in the heritage of the city, in particular many of the University-owned buildings in the centre of Oxford that may otherwise seem to some as being ‘gown’ rather than ‘town’ and not part of their Oxford.

Historic Environment Record (HER) is available to the public by appointment (although its use may require some expert knowledge). The City Council’s Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) contains records of archaeological remains in the city centre as well as reports of archaeological research and investigations from across the city.

SAFE COMMUNITIES

28. Consultation to inform development of the Heritage Plan identified that those responsible for safer communities can feel there is a conflict between heritage and achieving their goals because the high heritage value of the environment and local or national designations can make it difficult to follow ‘safer by design’ guidance. However, the history of the city and its communities is used regularly by those responsible for a safer, stronger and more cohesive city to better understand the changing dynamics of the city and to improve communication, community interaction and to decrease anti-social behaviour. In order to provide a safer, stronger community it is important to understand the difficulties that some individuals or groups may experience, due to language barriers, cultural differences, employment issues or financial concerns and to minimise the way the environment aggravates these.

29. Increased knowledge of what heritage assets are and their individual values is helpful in planning for a safer community. An understanding of the heritage values of specific buildings and areas is essential in order to provide a secure environment that does not damage the value of the place. An understanding of a community’s histories and university histories also improves communication and relationships between the policy and various groups, making it easier to achieve strategic aims.

30. How consideration of heritage can help deliver safe communities:

How heritage is linked to the strategic objective:

‘Safer by design’ initiatives could have an impact on heritage. It is important that this is understood. Building understanding of the heritage values of buildings and areas is essential

Appendix 1

in order to provide a secure environment that does not damage the value of the place. The act of coming together to help identify important elements of their heritage could help to improve communication and community interaction, which may decrease anti-social behaviour.

To help realise full potential of integration the Heritage Plan should:

Heritage strategies and documents that are closely linked to safe communities should be clearly identifiable. Relevant information about the significance of heritage assets should be accessible.

Existing relevant elements of the Heritage Plan/other information sources:

Heritage Portal

ECONOMIC VIBRANCY

31. Oxford is an economic hub with a world class knowledge economy, a major tourist destination with a significant manufacturing sector, as well as a regional centre for shopping and culture. It was the sixth fastest growing city in the country by population in 2013 (Centre for Cities Report, Cities Outlook, 2013). The historic environment has an important role in ensuring a strong economy. Its historic environment creates an attractive place for people to live and work in. The Universities contribute to the world-class knowledge economy. Heritage assets provide buildings to be reused, create a quality environment and boost business confidence, creating jobs and providing places where people live and work. People want to live here because of its heritage.

32. Effective management of Oxford's heritage will be important for the successful delivery of the Oxford Economic Growth Strategy 2012 to 2022, which contains the economic vision for Oxford. Included in this vision is that Oxford should remain a strong international tourist destination. Careful management of the heritage will be key to the ongoing success of the tourism sector. The economic vision for the city also recognises that Oxford should demonstrate how to promote economic growth while being a truly sustainable city. Conservation of heritage is a core part of achieving sustainable development.

33. How consideration of heritage can help deliver economic vibrancy:

How heritage is linked to the strategic objective:

The historic environment has an important role in ensuring a strong economy by contributing so strongly to the tourist industry, providing buildings to be reused, creating a quality environment and boosting business confidence .

To help realise full potential of integration the Heritage Plan should:

Ensure that background information relating to heritage is clear and accessible, improving knowledge of the significance of heritage assets and the value they hold. This will include continuing work through case study projects that demonstrate how heritage is a resource that can help achieve economic aims, rather than an issue that can be sacrificed for ‘the greater good’.

Provide the means for sufficient thought to be given to how the historic environment and heritage assets can provide evidence and understanding to inform new development that draws from the resource and enhances it, in particular regeneration projects.

An SPD to support development and manage change could be beneficial.

Existing relevant elements of the Heritage Plan/ other information sources:

Heritage Portal.

The West Oxford Historical Context Study provides an evidence base to inform the design of new development that will be delivered as part of the West End regeneration.

CREATING A LOW CARBON ENVIRONMENT

34. The historic environment has a significant role to play in maximising energy efficiency. *“It must always be remembered that any historic building represents a significant past investment of energy and materials. Demolition and replacement means not only losing all of the resources embodied in the original buildings, but also the investment of more energy for demolition, the creation and delivery of new construction materials, the building process itself, and the disposal of the resulting waste.”* (Climate Change and the Historic Environment, English Heritage). Furthermore, many historic buildings can perform well in terms of energy efficiency. The green spaces that we inherit will also have an important role in helping us adapt to climate change. It is important that guidance highlights these important elements of our heritage, so that it is understood that these existing buildings and spaces can be efficient in terms of carbon consumption, not least because of their embodied energy.

35. The Oxford Strategic Partnership have launched Low Carbon Oxford, which is a city-wide programme of collaboration between private, public and non-profit organisations with the aim of ensuring Oxford’s future as a sustainable and low carbon city. This aims to reduce overall carbon emissions by 3% year on year. Success can only be achieved by working together and drawing on the strengths of different sector organisations. In terms of heritage, the focus should be on enabling people to better understand the benefits of heritage in creating a low carbon environment, so that it is not automatically assumed that the historic environment and heritage assets are less energy efficient than a modern building would be.

Appendix 1

36. The early stakeholder engagement on the Heritage Plan lead to an understanding of the need for tools to enable people to identify how they could improve the energy efficiency of their building without damaging its features of heritage significance without causing long-term damage to the fabric of the building. Older buildings may have different requirements in terms of insulation, for example, than a more modern building. There needs to be an improved awareness of the range of energy efficiency measures that are available and information to enable people to select the most appropriate of these for their building. There also needs to be a cultural shift in the way we occupy and use buildings, changing habits to reduce the demand for energy.

37. The identification of this need lead to the development of Oxford's Heritage and Energy Efficiency Tool (HEET) by a successful partnership of Oxford City Council, Local Carbon Oxford, Oxford Preservation Trust and the Building Research Establishment (BRE). This is a very positive tool, enabling resource efficiency and heritage interests to be considered together.

38. To help create a low carbon environment in Oxford, the Heritage Plan should:

How heritage is linked to strategic objective:

Existing buildings and spaces can be efficient in terms of carbon consumption, not least because of their embodied energy.

To help realise full potential of integration the Heritage Plan should:

Make information available and accessible that allows people to understand the broad range of alternative energy saving options that are available and how this can be selected to avoid damaging the significance of a heritage asset.

Background work should show the possible benefits of heritage assets to reducing climate change, in particular in terms of using the embodied energy in the historic environment.

Existing relevant elements of the Heritage Plan:

The Heritage Energy Efficiency Tool (HEET) helps owners of historic buildings to understand the heritage value of their building, undertake a 'health check' to see how well it is working and explore the wide range of options for enhancing a historic building's energy efficiency.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

DEVELOPING ENGAGEMENT IN HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

39. Heritage management is often considered the realm of special interest groups, city and county council planners and museum services. But wider participation is needed to achieve good heritage management that makes the best use of the dividend that heritage brings to the city. Those responsible for the maintenance or use of heritage assets should have the tools to enable them to consider both the need to sustain the significance of the city's heritage and the opportunities to achieve the strategic objectives that make Oxford a sustainable city. Existing planning policies must be set in a context of understanding that helps to guide development proposals to sustain the significance of heritage assets and push to use heritage assets to enhance the quality of development.

40. The engagement methods suggested in this section are intended to ensure we provide information about the value of heritage and ways of making good use of it, raise awareness of everyone's role in managing heritage and provide tools for improving management of our heritage. Some of the methods and strategies outlined in the following section are already in place; others are ideas that will rely on the identification of additional resources before they can be implemented. The status of the tool mentioned is made clear.

METHODS FOR ENABLING COMMUNITY AND DEVELOPER ENGAGEMENT IN HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

41. The Council will support developers, architects, decision makers and the city's diverse communities by:

- Providing toolkits – character assessment, building assessment, health check, HEET;
- Supporting neighbourhood planning – character assessment, OHAR, Tree Strategy;
- Supporting schemes to turn issues into grant aided projects in partnership with funding bodies and other partners;
- Providing an evidence base and making it available:
 - Using the heritage policies framework – see Oxford Heritage Plan SPD;
 - Providing training in use of toolkits to aid design and to manage engagement with the public (the second client).

TOOLKITS AND OTHER SUPPORT FOR LOCAL-LEVEL PLANNING, DEVELOPERS AND DECISION MAKERS

42. A **Character Assessment Toolkit** has been developed to provide a framework for gathering evidence on the character and significance of an area, enabling identification of

Appendix 1

the features most important in contributing positively to its character. This toolkit can be used by developers to ensure the context of the area they wish to develop in is properly understood, it can be used by those making a decision about new development or those wishing to comment on it, and it can also be used when undertaking new conservation area appraisals and to help the formulation of new planning policies.

43. Work has commenced on the **Oxford Heritage Asset Register**. A form and criteria for nominations were adopted by the City Council in December 2012. The Heritage Asset Register will provide a more robust basis for decisions about heritage assets that are not on a statutory list. Nominated assets that are assessed by the review panel as meeting the specified criteria will be adopted by Council.

44. The register will be compiled by local residents in collaboration with council officers and other stakeholders. Pilot studies have been carried out in East Oxford and West Oxford. Residents helped prepare character statements to highlight the key features of the local historic environment of each area. These were used to identify heritage assets for the register.

45. The **Heritage Energy Efficiency Tool (HEET)** will help owners of historic buildings understand the heritage value of their building, undertake a 'health check' to see how well it is working and explore the wide range of options for enhancing a historic building's energy efficiency. HEET assessment tools are already available on the City Council's website. Over time it is expected that work with building owners will provide positive case study examples and promote officer confidence in promoting best practice.

46. The **heritage plan portal** has been developed to enable easy access to the heritage evidence base. These toolkits are available on the portal, as is background evidence and links to other work to support heritage policies such as conservation area appraisals. On-going work is needed to keep it up-to-date, to raise awareness of it and to consider whether it could make a greater amount of evidence available, accessible and usable.

SCHEMES TO FACILITATE ENGAGEMENT OF ALL HERITAGE MANAGERS

47. Consideration of best practice in other aspects of managing change in Oxford has led to the following suggestions for raising awareness of heritage as an important resource amongst the wide and diverse groups who can be defined as heritage managers, and also ensure positive management of the heritage asset. None of these schemes are in place. Implementation of these schemes relies on the identification of additional resources. The schemes are linked; the Heritage Partnership Panel would be responsible for providing accreditation of Heritage Champion organisations and for maintaining the Heritage Management Register.

Appendix 1

Potential scheme aspired to	Purpose	How it would work
Oxford Heritage Partnership Panel	<p>To provide a forum for representatives of groups within the city's community to highlight issues affecting the management of heritage and to provide advice and feedback on proposals and projects. The Heritage Partnership would be responsible for providing accreditation of Heritage Champion organisations and for maintaining the Heritage Management Register.</p>	<p>Membership would be by invitation and should include a range of stakeholders, chosen with reference to the original stakeholder event that has informed the Heritage Plan Framework. It would need to include local civic societies and other interest groups, the county and city council OAHS, University and college representatives and professionals from RIBA, RTPI. The scheme would work well if administered by a local civic group, for example the Oxford Preservation Trust.</p> <p>A review meeting would be held annually for the group to discuss heritage management issues and successes across the city in the previous twelve months. The City Council would then assist in production of an annual report of the Heritage Partnership Panel. The Panel may also consider or be responsible for the following two potentially linked initiatives.</p>
Oxford Heritage Champions Scheme	<p>To facilitate the engagement of organisations in the management of their heritage assets. Membership of the Oxford Heritage Champions scheme would be available to organisations who are the owners of heritage assets.</p> <p>Being part of the scheme would help organisations to demonstrate they are actively/responsibly managing their heritage assets and that their decision making is based on understanding of the value of the resource. This will in turn help to provide certainty in the planning process. Using their understanding of the value of their assets will enable them to unlock their value by using them more effectively. It will also enable successful sustainable management programmes that help conserve assets and reduce the need for expensive remedial works.</p>	<p>Organisations to work towards diamond status as the highest level of membership demonstrating proactive positive management to sustain and enhance the significance of their heritage assets. However, lower levels of membership (gold, silver and bronze) would also be available to encourage organisations to start engaging in management of their heritage assets.</p>

Appendix 1

Heritage Management Register	<p>This would be a public record of where the greatest need for pro-active heritage management is required, designed to raise awareness of issues affecting the historic environment, build consensus on the need for positive action, galvanise action and generate creative thinking on how to resolve issues.</p> <p>Inclusion of sites, buildings or projects on the register would not represent censure of actions by any individual or party but would be seen as recognition that action is required to prevent loss of significance and to highlight positive measures that could be taken to minimise any loss of significance in the short term and to establish positive management.</p>	<p>A citywide register would be maintained that identifies areas of risk as well as opportunities for major projects or programmes to help sustain and enhance the city's heritage and to boost their contribution to meeting the city's strategic objectives.</p> <p>The register would be maintained by the Heritage Partnership Panel. It will be divided into two categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heritage at Risk - which will include Heritage Assets identified by English Heritage or the community as at risk, pending review by the panel; and• Projects and Programmes - which will identify projects with the potential to have an impact on the significance of the city's historic environment and provide a forum for considering how potential for loss of significance can be minimised. <p>Items on the Heritage at Risk Register will be classified depending on level of risk and monitored.</p>
-------------------------------------	--	---

PRIORITIES AND PRINCIPLES

48. The priorities and principles for the Action Plan are determined by considering the Heritage Plan objectives, the Scoping Assessment, the community engagement exercise and the integration framework. These have shown which heritage assets are most valued and which are under threat or most in need of management, the successes and challenges for management of Oxford's heritage and how heritage management can meet the key objectives of other strategies in Oxford.

The principles for the Action Plan are considered to be:

- Ensuring that information about heritage is accessible, useable and robust;
- Central Oxford and the green setting of Oxford have a particularly high heritage value and should have particular focus. Schemes affecting these will be subject to wide consultation and use of review panel encouraged. Conservation areas across the city have particular heritage importance and impacts on these areas must be carefully considered. However, areas outside of these should not be dismissed as being of potential heritage importance;
- Decision makers need to be aware of what information is available so that they can use it, making sure that the importance of heritage and opportunities for enhancement are not overlooked;
- Heritage significance must be understood to enable informed decisions in all areas linked to management of change of heritage assets.

To meet these principles, the most important priorities for the action plan will be:

1. Updated guidance on heritage significance
2. Better understanding of what information is available
3. Improved accessibility of information
4. Guidance on how to apply information to inform decisions
5. Provide support for community involvement
6. Completion of evidence base studies and review of needs

ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan prioritises the initiatives that will help deliver the vision and objectives of the Heritage Plan to form a programme of work and process implementation. The progression of the Action Plan initiatives will be subject to resource availability and is subject to review periodically.

The Action Plan

List of main projects	Key principles of the heritage plan contributed to	Timescale. Is the initiative: Ongoing/planned work Recommended for earliest possible start (subject to resources) Desired
Oxford Character Appraisals and Character Appraisal toolkit	1, 3, 4, 5	The toolkit is published. Work on appraising the character of different areas is on-going and will depend on identified need.
Conservation area appraisals	1, 3, 4, 5	On-going. Conservation Area Appraisals have been consulted on, endorsed and published for 12 of the city's conservation areas. 2 conservation areas have had no work done towards a conservation area appraisal: Central and Temple Cowley. Of the other 4, Old Marston has had an appraisal draft and public consultation has taken place, so this should be close to being ready to take to committee for endorsement. North Oxford Victorian Suburb and Walton Manor both have draft conservation area appraisals, but these need revisiting and consulting on. Background research to inform a Binsey conservation area appraisal has been undertaken, but a report has not yet been drafted. The intention is to agree a project plan by 31 st March 2015, with appraisals to be completed by 31 st March 2018 at the latest.
Oxford Heritage Asset Register (OHAR)	1, 3, 4, 5	On-going. A form and criteria for nominations were both adopted in December 2012. Pilot studies have been carried out in East and West Oxford. Local people helped prepare character statements that highlight the key features of the local historic environment of each area, which led to the identification of heritage assets. A process for identifying and registering local heritage assets in the rest of the city needs to be established.
Oxford Archaeological	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	This is published and was reported to committee. Information in it could be used to inform a heritage planning

Appendix 1

Plan		SPD/advice note.
Oxford Landscape Character Assessment		This is complete. Information in it should be used to inform a heritage planning SPD/advice note.
Planning guidance	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Work on the Scoping Assessment and consultation exercise identified a need for a document to help make information about heritage and its significance more easily accessible, and to give better guidance on how policies should be applied. This will be in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document and potentially Technical Advice Notes. Work on the SPD is ongoing , with consultation on the scope taking place during March and April 2015. It is planned that a draft document will be consulted on in late 2015.
Oxford Views Study	1, 4, 5	Ongoing- public consultation took place in June and July 2014. The document and consultation statement are being prepared to take to committee for endorsement.
Other work related to heritage that may inform the Heritage Plan		
Community Engagement Strategy (as set out in this document)	Desired.	
An outreach strategy to encourage the use of heritage as an educational resource	Desired	
Heritage Routes	Desired. This would require work from partner organisations, building on existing initiatives to promote a number of heritage walking routes, runs and rides, promoting exercise and using historic sites and places to add interest.	
Oxford Tree Strategy	Desired. Part 1 will be an iTree Survey. The project is part funded and initial stages will start in Spring 2015. Part 2 is the Corporate Tree Strategy. A Project Plan to determine resources and timings will be produced in March 2015.	
Heritage Energy Efficiency Tool (HEET)	Complete	
The Oxford Heritage Statement	Complete. It has been used to inform the Heritage Plan Framework and should be used to inform other documents in the Heritage Plan.	
The Oxford Heritage Portal	Ongoing. Information about the heritage plan should be available in a clear format on the website. This is an important way for stakeholders to understand and access heritage information that is relevant to them.	

MONITORING FRAMEWORK

The Heritage Plan should provide a framework for monitoring the heritage resource, not only in terms of the condition of physical resources, but also in terms of its contribution to enhancing the quality of life and prosperity of Oxford's citizens and reviewing the Heritage Plan itself. It will assess how Oxford's heritage assets are valued and how effective the local authority has been in sustaining the heritage significance of those assets.

It is important that the monitoring framework assesses how effectively the Heritage Plan:

- Is built on an understanding the needs of Oxford's Heritage;
- Enables emerging issues and opportunities to be identified;
- Enables effective management regimes;
- Responds to public feedback- it should be recorded, mediated and responded to.

Review needs to be a long-term process and some benefits of heritage management may not be apparent for some time.

Aim	Demonstrated by	Target
Implementation of the Heritage Action Plan.	Conservation area appraisals updated to new style.	Progress made in updating most out-of-date to a newer more meaningful style.
	TANs/SPDs to support Heritage Plan.	TANs/SPDs introduced in accordance with the Action Plan.
	Assets registered in OHAR project	A procedure for encouraging nominations from across the city to be developed.
	Improvements to the heritage portal	The website to be kept up-to-date.
Ensure policies and details in the Heritage Plan are in place to encourage and enable effective management of heritage assets.	Number of heritage assets at risk.	Decrease in heritage assets at risk or no net increase in heritage assets at risk.
	Number of application approvals involving total or substantial demolition or partial demolition of a listed building.	0% Listed Building Consents or planning permissions involving demolition of a listed building approved by the City Council.
	Number of application approvals involving total or substantial demolition of a building or structure that contributes to the	0% of Conservation Area Consents approved by the City Council contrary to Officers' and English

Appendix 1

	character and appearance of the Conservation Area.	Heritage's recommendations.
	Number of application approvals for felling of trees with tree preservation orders.	0% of applications approved by the City Council contrary to Officers' recommendations.
	Success at of appeals where conservation policies cited as reason for refusal.	80% of appeals dismissed.
Process of change to achieve a more beneficial scheme.	The return of vitality to areas (economic and social benefits) as a result of the management of change.	
	The scale of change or the reuse of heritage assets that has been achieved without harm to their significance.	

APPENDIX 1: CONSULTATION RESULTS

49. Several Groups were identified as appropriate to consult in order to fully investigate and understand the way that Oxford's heritage is understood and the way that current guidance and advice is accessed and utilised. The results of these consultation exercises are summarised here. The groups consulted were:

- Oxford heritage stakeholders;
- The Oxford Strategic Partnership (OSP);
- Oxford City Council Planning Officers and Heritage Asset Managers;
- The Public.

50. A summary of the findings from each consultation exercise follows, with conclusions regarding the implications for the Heritage Plan at the end of the section.

INVOLVEMENT OF OXFORD HERITAGE STAKEHOLDERS

51. The aim of this consultation was to engage a steering group made up of heritage focused individuals and organisations to use their expertise and local knowledge to define the heritage of Oxford in its broadest sense, and to create a baseline from which to consider the types, areas and specifics of information to be captured and disseminated to the public in the next stages.

52. The Oxford Heritage Statement provided the foundation and framework for this consultation. Attendees discussed the Statement. Attendees were able to suggest additional detail to be included in a review of the Heritage Statement, including highlighting:

- The significance of waterways;
- The contribution of trees and open spaces;
- The significance of the impact of the growth of the Universities;
- Heritage of scientific discovery in Oxford and the importance of intangible heritage and culture in the city;
- The value of people in the city, the diversity of communities and the contributions they make to, and benefits they get from, the city's heritage;
- Oxford's special status as a focus of medieval and later college and University architecture;
- The importance of the city's archaeological resource.

53. Attendees went on to consider the impact and potential benefits heritage has on the wider environment in Oxford. Using five target areas from the Oxford Strategic Partnership, the groups were asked to consider the Heritage resources important to their designated topic area. Stakeholders in this session were not used to identifying how heritage benefitted the city beyond their specific interest area. An important role of the Heritage Plan will be to make the

Appendix 1

world of heritage assets and themes accessible to those who have little knowledge, or interest, of them to date.

OXFORD STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (OSP) CONSULTATION EVENT

54. This consultation stage involved one-to-one interviews with a number key sector champions from the Oxford Strategic Partnership. The Oxford Strategic Partnership was founded in 2003 with the intention of promoting joined-up approaches for improving the quality of life in the city. It helps to provide a direction for the city's future.

55. A structured questionnaire was used to develop understanding of how work in these sectors has involved use of heritage to date and the possible positive contributions that heritage can make in each sector.

56. This consultation stage highlighted the variety of ways in which the term 'heritage' is defined and understood by the various sectors within the city. Each sector champion was asked to consider 'their perception of Oxford's heritage in view of their specialist area' and all sectors found this connection difficult to make initially. This consultation phase provided a positive opportunity for open dialogue with these sector groups and the discussions themselves resulted in a better understanding of how heritage plays a role in achieving the key objectives, and areas where it could potentially prove more beneficial.

57. The results of this consultation provide evidence to support the need for the heritage plan and suggest that one of its key aims should be to improve the accessibility of information and open dialogues with different strategic sectors.

WORKSHOP WITH OXFORD CITY COUNCIL PLANNING OFFICERS

58. Oxford's planners play one of the most significant roles in managing the physical, built heritage of the city. The city's planning team include policy makers, development control decision makers, heritage specialists and economic development managers. A workshop in November 2013 was designed to engage this group in the preparation of the Heritage Plan in order to access their experience of planning for and managing the process of change in the city. They have unique access to understanding the decision-making processes including expertise in the framework of policy, guidance and evidence that guides the decisions that are made. Through working with landowners, developers and communities they also have a unique perspective on the impacts and pressures for change that affect the city's heritage assets.

59. The group considered what heritage the Heritage Plan should aim to manage and what its objectives should be. In considering **what heritage the plan should aim to manage** the following assets were identified:

- Information about what makes the heritage significant – including historic maps and photographs that help us to manage the physical environment;
 - Buildings that provide the city's 'heritage dividend';
 - Historic Areas – including identifying opportunities to make better use of each area's heritage by understanding what has been lost and reintroducing links to the past where necessary (referred to as opportunities for rediscovery);
 - The quality of the wider environment as a whole, rather than the sum of its parts. This reflects an emerging concept of the city of Oxford as a single landscape level heritage asset;
 - The setting of the City.
60. Key **objectives for heritage management** identified were:
- Providing clarity for owners and decision makers;
 - Striking a balance / achieving harmony between different values;
 - Enabling/facilitating the positive management of change;
 - Well informed and responsible management of change.
61. Looking at the **resources needed to deliver positive management of change** the group identified the following requirements:
- **Heritage assets** (the vital ingredient of heritage management);
 - **Information** (including knowledge of existing information sources and how to access them);
 - **Help for decision makers**, including expert guidance;
 - **Tools** to work through (extract information) from the evidence base;
 - Easy access for both of the above, to empower decision makers by providing more influence;
 - **Familiarity** – building up a personal knowledge base of both the heritage assets and the management of change is useful for decision makers. Having an area based workload can help decision makers build familiarity more rapidly. This helps to develop understanding of the interrelationship between heritage assets, people and the local context, as well as understanding of the impact of cumulative change within an area over a period of time;
 - **Awareness of existing skills, experience and strategies;**
 - **Finance;**
 - **Wider knowledge and approach** – Bringing in external expertise from time to time to provide awareness of alternative approaches, skills and strategies for managing change. This might be developed through more cross regional working with other city planning teams but needs include a cross section of management levels to ensure dissemination and positive implementation;
 - **Urban design expertise** – the Council currently lacks direct access to these specialist skills;
 - **Co-ordination** – an overview to ensure a consistent approach;

Appendix 1

- **Wider understanding of archaeology** – possibly through up-skilling staff through dissemination of the archaeological plan;
 - **The Heritage Plan Website** – An important single point of access for information, which needs to include technical information used by decision makers.
62. During the workshop a number of high profile examples of success and failure in heritage management were identified that should inform development of our approach to heritage management. The identification of drivers of successes and sources of failures was enlightening.

Drivers of success:

- Working effectively in partnership both within the Council and with our external partner organisations or applicants;
- A proactive approach to managing change, with individuals or teams taking responsibility for ensuring a positive outcome.

Sources of failure:

- Competing priorities and a reactionary approach favouring short terms wins over long term benefits of improved design or conservation or sticking to the development plan;
- Lack of appropriate consultation or this taking place too late in the process and not informing design or consideration of use;
- Absence of understanding across the Council of the significance of the Local Plan as the Council's document – not the planning department's;
- Lack of communication between teams or between those planning change and those making decisions;
- Lack of understanding, awareness or monitoring of cumulative impacts.

63. Some **key challenges** were identified for management of the city's heritage in the next ten years, including:

- **Intensification** – we need to make the most out of each piece of development because our available land is a dwindling resource;
- **Understanding the economic value of heritage;**
- **Within the city centre** – continuing competition (arms race) between colleges to provide facilities and imposition of building height control pushing development down and resulting in rapid loss of the archaeological resource or infilling of the distinctive skyline. However, maintaining the strength of these institutions is seen as a priority for the city and the maintenance of their heritage assets;
- **The urban fringe** – is going to be the focus of future development. It is sensitive because of the impact on the green belt and key green spaces and we need an approach that means we can manage change to be positive;
- **Pressures in the suburbs;**
- **Development of the highways infrastructure.**

Appendix 1

64. The group identified elements as part of a vision for heritage management in the city for the next ten years, including:

- **Within Conservation Areas** – develop conservation management plans to set an agenda and a clear approach for sustaining and enhancing the heritage of these priority areas that provides certainty for developers and residents;
- **The City Centre** - sustain the quality of its heritage whilst development is facilitated to respond to the changing needs of the city;
- **Within the suburbs** – recognise the importance of these areas as the places where most of the city's residents live and the need for a high quality environment to which heritage makes an important contribution. Specific actions identified included maintaining or restoring the green character of front gardens and the 'urban forest' of garden and street trees that make an important contribution to the health of residents and the local economy;
- **Working with partner organisations** – such as the highways planners to provide a high quality public realm that responds to the quality and use of the historic buildings and spaces of the city.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

65. A comment form was available on the City Council's website from 27th January 2014- 24th February 2014. The questionnaire was intended to help understand how consultees consider heritage contributes to the city, what threats there are to heritage management and what opportunities exist.

66. Consultees were asked whether they consider there to be areas/suburbs of Oxford where strengthening heritage management through information or designations should be a priority (other than existing conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and registered parks and gardens). A few respondents said that the focus should be on existing designations and should not be diluted further, or perhaps that some conservations areas could be extended to include late 19th century or early 20th century suburbs if this does not affect protection of existing conservation areas and listed buildings. However, there were many respondents who mentioned other areas such as 20th century suburbs as being of importance and warranting strengthened heritage management. Quite a few respondents mentioned specific places they thought could benefit from strengthened heritage management and information, including Cowley, Botley, Binsey, Cutteslowe/Cutteslowe Wall, North Hinksey, Northway and Quarry.

67. Consultees were asked to comment on how heritage assets contribute to achieving the city's sustainable community objectives. In terms of improving health and social inclusion quite a few respondents consider there to be no strong link between heritage assets and achievement of this aim. However many said that the opportunity for a healthy lifestyle should be available to all, with many noting heritage assets as being important to wellbeing, with examples given including the ice rink, museums and public libraries and in particular green

Appendix 1

open spaces. Open space was seen as having an intrinsic value that helps improve wellbeing and it was also pointed out that much work is done in green spaces by volunteers, increasing social cohesion.

68. Another sustainable community objective is economic regeneration- raising the rate of sustainable growth. Several respondents consider that heritage assets attract tourists and also encourage businesses by making Oxford an attractive place for employees to live. Regeneration is important in areas that have been allowed to deteriorate or were built with poor quality housing to give the whole city a sense of pride. Support and promotion of the industrial (eg car production) history of the city was seen as important. There may also be opportunities to adapt and preserve heritage assets that were used for employment as new employment sites. However, there was also a worry that growth and regeneration are not helping pockets of poverty and that growth is a threat to the quality of existing heritage and to quality of life overall. Overall, preservation and enhancement of the historic character of the city was seen as the best way to contribute to collective quality of life.

69. Increasing affordable housing is another sustainable community objective. While many respondents agreed that this is an important aim, the strength of a link with heritage was questioned. A few thought that run down and abandoned property that may be heritage assets could be converted to provide affordable housing. More generally, new housing was seen as a potential threat to heritage assets in various ways, for example by increasing flooding, increasing pollution or being crammed into limited space.

70. In terms of the climate change aim of making Oxford a carbon neutral city, many respondents saw a link with heritage assets, mainly in terms of the potential threat to heritage assets from flooding. A few respondents noted that flood plains are an important heritage asset that also play a vital role in protecting the city from flooding. There were no other comments about the importance of heritage assets in dealing with climate change or achieving the aim of a carbon neutral city.

71. Respondents were able to comment on where they consider heritage management by the City Council has been successful, where it has failed and how it could be improved. Some respondents gave specific examples of where heritage management has failed, which included Roger Dudman Way, the Blavatnik Centre, the existing Westgate, the modern buildings of Hertford College at Folly Bridge, a missed opportunity at the Radcliffe Infirmary site, which has uninspiring buildings and failure to properly protect natural heritage assets such as the SSSI at Lye Valley. Listed successes included Bonn Square (also listed as a failure), Gloucester Green and the maths building on Woodstock Road. One respondent thought that the scheme at Jericho Canalside looked like it was going to be successful because of the design brief and wondered why no such document was in place for other areas, for example Westgate, where it looks like the new development may be overbearing and out-of-scale with its surroundings.

Appendix 1

72. The biggest general threat to heritage was seen to be traffic, with a failure to manage traffic successfully to reduce its negative impact on heritage assets in the city centre. The need to ensure there is not a preoccupation with obviously important buildings and areas that lead to lower standards in less beautiful areas, which are in fact where most people live, was noted. A failure of process was considered to be the time taken in approving major applications, which can involve years of debate and resubmission. It was questioned whether this was because of developers attempting to get cheaper solutions approved or because of a lack of guidance on which to base plans in the early stages.

Key Conclusions from the Consultation Exercise:

- The city will continue to change as a perpetual process of modernisation to which the heritage will need to be adapted. Heritage needs to be introduced as a developing resource that will have different meanings for different audiences and that may have both negative and positive associations.
- The Heritage Plan needs to highlight the need to take a long-term approach to heritage management, including sustaining the city's heritage dividend through maintaining the highest standards of change.
- The heritage plan should enable consideration of how use of buildings may or may not be compatible with sustaining their significance as part of a process of change
- The heritage plan should include guidance on taking the opportunity to reintroduce links to the past.
- The Heritage Plan should reflect the emerging concept of the city as a single landscape level heritage asset.
- The importance of facilitating consultation to encourage positive management of change needs to be highlighted. The role of the local plan as the City Council's key tool for planning change in the local environment should also be highlighted.
- The Heritage Plan should consider what may be less obvious heritage assets outside of the city centre, including natural environment assets.
- Information should be collated and made accessible via the Heritage Plan website. An awareness raising campaign should be considered. Guidance should be available to ensure good designs in the first instance. Dissemination of the Heritage Plan Framework, drawing attention to the Integration Framework and Community Engagement Strategy may help to achieve this.
- The Heritage Plan Framework provides a useful review of the resources the Council needs to provide or have access to, to facilitate good heritage management through planning and managing the city's environment, which should be reflected in the Heritage Plan.