INFORMATION AND PARTNERSHIPS
HER21/6013

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Historic Environment Records (HERs) are sources of information relating to the historic environment of a defined geographical area. Typically they consist of databases, indexes and reference collections linked to a Geographical Information System (GIS).

In order for Historic Environment Records to respond to the current planning needs placed upon them under Planning Policy Statement 5, and to be responsive to Heritage Protection Reform, they need to be properly integrated within the planning system and in order to do this expand their collection of building related records.

This project was developed within English Heritage's HER 21 programme to consider what data should be incorporated into the HER to widen coverage across the whole historic environment by the addition of new building and built environment records and data. The project aimed to identify, examine and evaluate the options, resources and benefits for including additional data sources, often digital, into HERs. It set out to identify those areas of data with potential of contributing towards rapid but valid expansion of HERs looking at national sources of data covering all of the country, large parts of it or multiple regions.

Initially a primary list was developed of priority data types. This developed from the expansion of data identified in an earlier IHBC project with London Conservation Officers and the Greater London sites and Monuments Record along with information gathered from a selection of other HERs which have already carried out buildings information user needs survey with Conservation Officers in their area. The list was developed out of the priorities Conservation Officers had identified in consultation with the HER. The priorities identified by each authority were incorporated to form a prioritized list. This creates the first nationally-supported listing of building-related information for consideration by HERs in prioritizing the creation of HPR-consistent HERs. As these lists originate in a review that integrates equally both building conservation priorities (using the GLSMR study) and HER specialist interests (using current research), it has a unique authority for application in the development of built environment information for HPR-consistent HERs.

Having established a base list of priority areas, those which have a wider national and regional relevance were drawn out. The scoping and trialing aspect of the project then focused on the four national areas of data that have been most commonly requested as a priority for inclusion in HERs;

- Information on individual buildings
- Photographic archives
- Items from published sources
- Additional Maps

HER officers were asked to evaluate issues attached to the inclusion of a selection of building related information types, through an internet based survey facility and additionally in writing. For each of the four classes of information, samples of types of data were identified. As well as representing priorities in HER development, these were selected to allow for analysis of the range of practical issues that can arise with their inclusion in a HER. They were intended as illustrative samples of data types to develop recommendations and procedure rather than to concentrate specifically on the detail of the example.

The internet survey comment form allowed HER officers to comment on each sample in terms of its value, resource implications and benefits.

The survey information gathered was used to help assess each of the sample sources themselves for value to the HER, feasibility of inclusion and resources required along with specific issues for the source. The transferability of each sample to other similar types of source was then assessed and general issues identified regarding the acquisition, monitoring and maintenance of a series of data types:

- regularly changing digitally based sources on individual buildings
- generally static digitally based sources on individual buildings
- digitally based sources of photographic material
- static published formats of a recognized architectural history sources
- digitally based sources of mapping material

The project team developed a simple matrix for assessing the primary implications for HER inclusion. The matrix provides an accessible and user-friendly framework for adoption by HER stakeholders to guide in giving priority to the different classes of information for consideration for inclusion in a HER. Model options for the incorporation of each data source were then identified.

The project considered approaches to built environment information in distinct, but related, planning traditions. Colleagues in Scotland and Ireland were asked to provide their own perspectives and thoughts on the challenges of incorporating historic information on buildings and the relative systems of the Irish Architectural Archive (DIA), Canmore, the Dictionary of Scottish Architects (DSA) a GIS-based system still under development, HAGGIS, the Historic Asset Group GIS were all considered to draw out parallels and lessons. It is clear there is currently no English parallel to the DSA and the DIA. The absence of such a resource in HERs systems compromises the viability of HPR consistent HERs. The research shows that HERs are not able to encompass that information within the records without in turn compromising the data standards, and/or putting undue resource pressures on them locally. A solution identified in this report would be to produce a stand alone digitally accessible version of a

key source, linked to HER home pages and via the Heritage Gateway, which would be an 'add-on resource' to HERs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consistency of Building material in HERs

HERs vary in terms of consistency of structure, content and coverage. Whilst this is inevitable at present, given the way they have developed there are still great inconsistencies in the approach to development of building material. Some HERs and the officers responsible for them embrace the incorporation of all historic environment material and the linkages with the planning system encouraged through Heritage Protection Reform. Others still feel that the HER is neither a planning nor a buildings history resource.

HERs should aim to be consistent in both structure and content, and coverage and thus should be encouraged to see development of building records as an integral part of an HPR consistent HER. Sources examined in this project were often considered little value possibly because they are different from those normally used. HERs should consider the value of new records and data sources such as those examined in this project to planning and building conservation audiences.

<u>Headline recommendation</u>: As part of a national specification for HPR-consistent HERs,

- Operate a viable programme for including information on particular buildings (using the advisory 'commission' as per recommendation below) to include
    - o Historic plans
    - o Architects records
    - o Structural reports on historic buildings
    - o Condition surveys
    - o Records of repairs and works
    - o Building control records
    - o Estate agents particulars
- Operate a viable programme for including information from web-based resources (using the advisory 'commission' as per recommendation below) to include web-based resources identified in this study.

- Include built environment information covering as a priority the following areas:
    - o Pevsner Buildings of England
    - o Country Life
    - o Victoria County History

- o Context
- o Amenity Society journals (20th Century Society; Victorian Society; Georgian Group; Ancient Monuments Society; Garden History Society; The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings)
- o Buildings with blue plaques

Guidance for building related HER development

Given the diverse priorities registered across different HERs, priorities driven by history and locality there is no single answer to the local needs for a HER. In the absence of a substantial investment in development of a HER infrastructure, clearly HERs should clearly decide their own priorities but could do this guided by a 'commission' in governance to advise on priorities for users. This would be part of a wider decision making process allowing a commission type advisory board to feed in to priority making.

Recognising the diverse needs of each HER according to its locality it is recommended that representative local 'commissions' are established to advise HERs on the classes of information that need top be given priority to in the geographical area covered by the HER.

HERs should be encouraged to develop their web site Home Page with links to other useful and locally relevant web sources, an information hub or a sort of local heritage gateway. Again the matrix could be used to guide priorities for inclusion in light of resources, and shape decision-making processes.

Headline recommendation: Establish local advisory commissions to consider key priorities for the inclusion of built environment information within the HER.

Use of the Heritage Gateway for national information sources

It is recommended that English Heritage considers expanding the Heritage Gateway with key national sources to allow users to access useful data alongside HER information. Such an expansion of the existing resource would require a further development project on the part of English Heritage and further investment.

Headline recommendation: Establish a programme to develop the Heritage Gateway as an resource with a wider national remit to interface with national built environment records and resources, modeling it as a 'national HER', and building on the models developed in Scotland in particular. This resource should be linked to the development of the resource identified in the recommendation below.

Development of a dedicated national resource for architecture

Despite the importance of 'Colvin' in establishing the significance of key aspects of the built heritage, this project makes clear that current HER infrastructure is not able to address the huge challenge of incorporating local information to a national standard. Consequently it is recommended

that a stand alone digitally accessible version of 'Colvin' is developed, perhaps linked to HER home pages and via the Heritage Gateway, to create an 'add-on resource' to HERs

The particular advantage of developing access to 'Colvin' is that it already serves as an 'information hub' – albeit currently non-digital - to the entire range of historic built environment resources crucial to establishing the significance of 'post-medieval' buildings. A 'digital Colvin' would draw together key resources, digital and otherwise, from the RIBA drawings collection to major local history resources otherwise largely inaccessible to HERs direct. A 'digital Colvin' would be a key part of the historic built environment information to being made digitally accessible, albeit though links, on public consultation with a HPR-consistent HER.

The development of this resource should be based not only on the most recent edition of Colvin, but also on the substantial additional information in the archive of the author.

Operationally, the development of the 'digital Colvin' as an online resource, could be phased to speed up HER-linked access to what would be a key tool for the built environment sector, and expedite wider interest in and ownership of HERs. This could be done by providing the information accessible digitally first, land then later as dedicated GIS-linked product that might be more easily interfaced with the HER infrastructure.

<u>Headline recommendation</u>**:** For English Heritage (and partners) to establish a programme to make the information in the Colvin Archive digitally accessible, with key links to the resource through HERs.

Conclusion: Specifying an HPR-consistent HER
There is no single, simple route to the challenge of establishing HERs as a coherent information interface between the built environment and the historic environment.

However if the recommendations here are adopted by HERs nationally then those HERs could be considered to be consistent with HPR aspirations in terms of the inclusion of the built environment information covered by this project.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.   Historic Environment Records (HERs) are sources of information relating to the historic environment of a defined geographical area. Typically they consist of databases, indexes and reference collections linked to a Geographical Information System (GIS). Policy 2.2 of Planning Policy Statement 5 requires that "Local planning authorities should either maintain or have access to a historic environment record". Many are often, although not exclusively, maintained by County Councils and Unitary Councils allowing coverage for a larger area.

1.2. The re-casting of most HERs in recent years, following their long standing development as an archaeological resource operating under the title of Sites and Monuments Records (SMRs), has inevitably meant that HERs hold large amounts of information on archaeological sites but have a limited concentration on historic buildings. In order for Historic Environment Records to respond to the current planning needs placed upon them under PPS 5, and to be responsive to Heritage Protection Reform, English Heritage's modernization of conservation processes within the planning system, it is clear that they need to be properly integrated within the planning system and, as a necessary concomitant of this integration, expand their collection of building related records.

1.3. The current HER coverage of historic building data is patchy nationally, and often very limited beyond statutory material. This limits the wider usability of HERs and their successful application into the planning system. English Heritage has developed the HER 21 funding programme to help shape such an evolution. This requires HERs to ensure that their coverage is expanded to all classes of historic environment assets.

1.4. This project was developed within the HER 21 programme to consider what data should be incorporated into the HER to widen coverage across the whole historic environment by the addition of new building and built environment records and data to the data that currently comprises the HER. The project aimed to identify, examine and evaluate the options, resources and benefits for including additional data sources, often digital, into HERs.

2. HER 21 AND THE PROJECT BACKGROUND

2.1. **HER 21.** The English Heritage HER 21 Project made available funding dedicated to assisting HERs in the move towards HPR compliance in England. This project forms part of stream two of HER21 which developed Pilots and Case Studies to explore and demonstrate new methods of integrating the full range of historic environment data into HERs, to forge effective links with relevant data sources held outside those HERs, and to explore the challenges and opportunities presented by increased on-line public accessibility to HER data.

2.2. If HERs are to meet the needs of wider usage and integration into the planning system they need to incorporate content which is relevant, accessible and useful. As the consultation on Planning Policy Statement 5 on the Historic Environment confirmed[1], it is widely recognised that many HERs have limited information relating to matters that are of architectural, artistic and historic interest. Whilst information on these areas can be added incrementally to individual HERS as and when it become available this neither helps establish a standard for national enhancement

---

[1] PPS 5 Impact Assessment, p. 50, states that HERs 'are currently variable in quality and completeness and should not be relied upon as the main source of information'.

nor does it ensure that the information added is what is required rather than opportunistically incorporating what is available.

2.3. Already recognising the historic limitations of HERs identified through the PPS consultation process, studies for HER development throughout the country have flagged up the need for stronger buildings content. Many users want to see rapid expansion of relevant aspects of the HER if it is to be usable but HER services are not necessarily equipped with adequate resources to make this possible.

2.4. **Greater London Sites and Monuments Record.** In 2008 the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) carried out a project with the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (GLSMR) and Conservation Officers in London local authorities[2]. This project was established to consider what data should be incorporated into the GLSMR to widen coverage to the whole historic environment.

2.5. Conservation Officers were asked what built environment data they would want to see included in the GLSMR. The areas suggested by London Conservation Officers for future inclusion in the GLSMR were in order of priority for inclusion:

- Conservation Areas
- Local designation
- Information on individual buildings
- Photographic archives
- Wider access to English Heritage information
- Local authority planning current information
- Links to data held elsewhere
- Listed building information
- Public realm audits
- Design and access statements
- Items from published sources
- Further archaeological information
- Natural statutory designations
- Award winning buildings
- Additional Maps

2.6. **Application to this HER 21 project.** Many of the areas of information identified in the GLSMR project are readily available

---

[2] Greater London Sites and Monuments Development Plan 2007 – 2010, SMR-HER PROJNUM5537. The London Boroughs and English Heritage: New Historic Environment Information (http://www.ihbc.org.uk/recent_papers/docs/IHBC.pdf)

from other sources but are not integrated into the HER at present. This HER 21 project thus set out to identify those areas of data with potential of contributing towards rapid but valid expansion of HERs.

2.7. The project looked at national sources of data covering all of the country, large parts of it or multiple regions. The options and possibilities developed for readily incorporating such information so as to make it accessible for local and sub regional HERS will help to develop a core base standard of accessible buildings based information across the more local level.

2.8. The project examined which data sources could be of most use to the conservation users of developing HERS and subsequently to assessed this list of possible data to discover which types of information can be most rapidly assimilated for actual inclusion in HERS.

3. HER 21 PROJECT 6013: OBJECTIVES

3.1. The project objectives are listed as follows, with a correspondence to the relevant sections of this report identified in square brackets, thus []:

1. To scope data sources relevant to the historic built environment, with particular reference to different data types including digital, hardcopy, web-based and archival. [Section 5]

2. To deliver a broad base-line of options and strategies by desktop assessments and stakeholder consultation across a spectrum of building information managers and users. [Sections 8,9 & 10]

3. To scope issues attached to information inclusion, entry management and provision attached to the data types, as well provide an indicative evaluation of the planning benefits arising from their inclusion. [Sections 7 & 8]

4. To review the approaches to historic building information collation and distribution outside England, notably in Scotland etc [Section 11]

5. To test HER-inclusion issues across a range of the most viable data source classes including more detailed assessments of HER-inclusion in terms of

   • Strategic implications (accessibility; feasibility and value) and

   • Resource implications (including both one-off and ongoing costs) for each data source

   • Planning and other HPR related benefits of inclusion [Section 9]

6. To provide a further list of data sources that could be included in HPR-consistent HERs, dependent on resources and capacity [Appendices].

7. To produce a recommended list of data sources that should be included as a 'base-line' for data sources in HPR-complaint HERs [Appendices].
8. To develop based on the tests model strategies for possible purchase, partnership and collection of the data to allow its effective incorporation into HERs physically or remotely [Sections 10 and 12].

4. PROJECT STRUCTURE

4.1. Primary desktop survey of the built environment data sources

4.2. Review and assess the primary list of resources for national and/or representative information data sources which can be rapidly assimilated for actual inclusion. Produce secondary list.

4.3. Select key data classes for trialing and scoping

4.4. Carry out case study application of selected data sources and user trials on data.

4.5. Agree criteria and feasibility for data input. Review information to recommend data sources for including in HPR-consistent HERs in line with priorities regarding cost and benefits of inclusion of respective data sources.

5. PRIMARY DESKTOP SURVEY OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT DATA SOURCES

5.1. The primary list was developed from the expansion of data identified in GLSMR project and information gathered from a selection of other HERs which have already carried out user needs survey for additional buildings information.

5.2. In order to find out what sort of information Conservation Officers have said they would find most useful in their local HER, a sample of HERS were asked to supply information of if and how they had carried out consultation with Conservation Officers (COs) and as a result what priorities COs had identified of sources of information.

5.3. A number of HERs have already asked their local Conservation Officers for their professional priorities and requirements for HER content development. This has included many methods from an informal chat, a structured questionnaire through to a formalised seminar or similar. By drawing together those lists which have already been produced through local consultation we are able to get a picture of those sources which regularly appear on any such lists.

5.4. In order to collect this information a list was created of:

1. HERs which covered multiple authorities so any integrated development would involve contacting and building a working relationship with COs working in another authority.
2. Some HERs in unitary authorities which have in house COs

But this sample eliminated:

1. Those authorities (37 in total) with no CO within the HER area
2. Those where the HER is an integrated team with the COs in the same authority.

5.5. This list of 47 authorities were asked what consultation they had done to date and of these 41 provided information. Of these 18 (31%) have had no consultation with COs. Some of these responses are interesting in themselves. As well as consultation over content many (27%) have been concentrating on developing better access to the HER for COs and 17% have also asked COs what useful information is held by the other Local Authorities which could be incorporated into the HER. Only 25% had discussed development of content with the COs asking what new building related HER information would be most useful for them in their work. This was less than was expected at the start of the project.
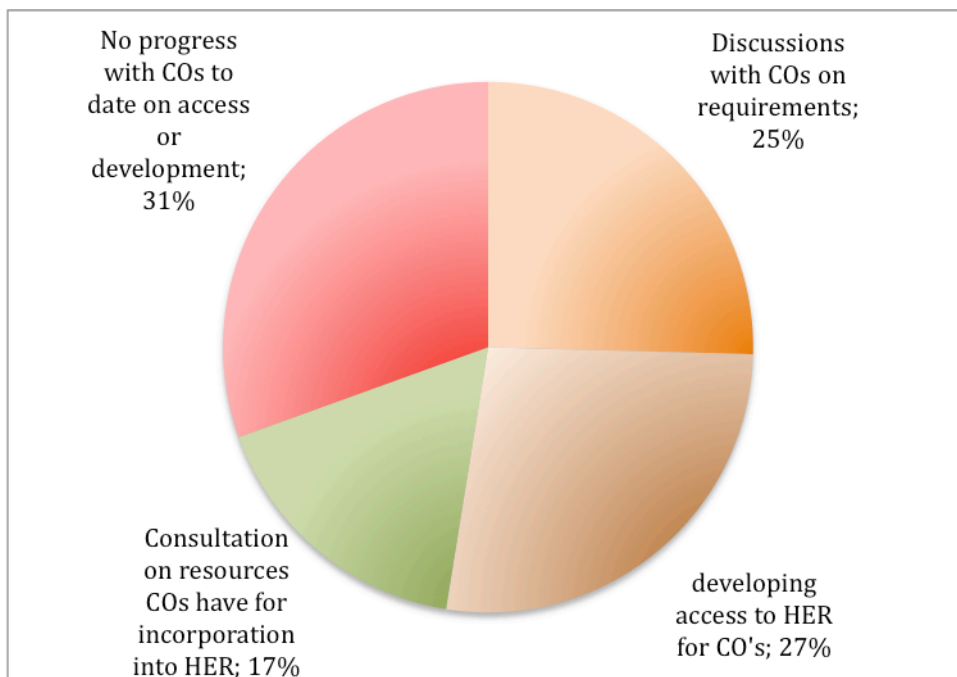

Figure 1 Consultation with conservation officers

5.6. However, those authorities which had carried out discussion with COs produced some very useful information with lists of priorities for development. These varied from long formal projects to informal meetings but showed an enthusiasm on the part of these HERs to develop the building material in HERs in a way which was useful, practical and related to the planning system.

5.7. The information submitted has been listed in Appendix 1. Then the priorities identified by each authority have been tabulated in Figure 2 below, which shows the occurrence of each type of data in the priorities of each responding HER. The basis of the table is the list identified in priority order during the IHBC Greater London SMR project with additional types of data added at the end when they have been identified in other areas. Some HERs had asked COs to prioritise, and where this has occurred they are numbered with 1 being the highest priority. Where no priority was given all categories are classified as 1 equally.

	LONDON	BERKSHIRE	BLACK COUNTRY	CENTRAL BEDS	CHESHIRE	CORNWALL	CUMBRIA	DERBYSHIRE	ESSEX	LEICS	LINCS	NORTHUMBERLAND	NORTHANTS	TEES	WINCHESTER	WORCESTERSHIRE
Conservation Areas	1	1			1	1		4		2	3					6
Local designation	2	1	1		1						4		1	1	1	2
Information on individual buildings	3		1	3		1		4		1	4		1			
Photographic archives	4		1	2	1	1		2		1	2	1				8
English Heritage information	5															
Local authority planning information	6												2			
Links to data held elsewhere	7															
Listed building information	8		1	1		1	1									3
Public realm audits	9															
Design and	10														2	

11

	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11	C12	C13	C14	C15	C16
access statements																
Items from published sources	11															
Further archaeological information	12															4
Natural statutory designations	13															5
Award winning buildings	14															
Additional Maps	15					1	1		1	1						
Thematic surveys													3			1
Historic Parks & Gardens														1		
Parish Files and Records			4				3									7
HER bibliography										4						
Grey Literature							3									
Old Planning files																

Figure 2 Priority data areas identified by HERs in consultation with Conservation Officers with 1 being the highest priority

5.8. The first draft of the primary list was made available as part of the highlight report aspect of MORPHE project management to allow for use by the associated HER 21 'SMR to HER; Integrating Built Historic Environment Records in Gloucestershire' (Gloucestershire County Council (HER 21 project number 6027)) project for use in consultation meetings.

6. REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF THE PRIMARY LIST OF RESOURCES AND PRODUCTION OF SECONDARY LIST

6.1. The list of priorities identified in the review of HER research is tabulated at Figure 3, this time including examples representing the type of information these categories cover.

6.2. No such list can be exhaustive, and respective priorities may vary significantly across the different HERs and their corresponding geographical areas. However this listing presents two key products for the future development of HPR-consistent HERs:

1. the first nationally-supported listing of building-related information for consideration by HERs in prioritizing the creation of HPR-consistent HERs, as well as, by extension,

2. a representative range of the types of data sources (reference material) which might prove to be a useful addition to HERs where they do not already hold such information.

6.3. As these lists originate in a review that integrates equally both building conservation priorities (using the GLSMR study) and HER specialist interests (using current research), it has a unique authority for application in the development of built environment information for HPR-consistent HERs.

6.4. Having established a base list of priority areas, those which have a wider national and regional relevance were drawn out. These sources have national or multi regional coverage in a single location or series of related locations. These large and often complex sources could be less likely to be readily incorporated into HERs because of scale and accessibility issues. Local sources are more likely to be incorporated by each HER according to local requirements and their potential incorporation is also being examined by other more locally focused HER 21 projects. All items on the list at Figure 3 have been identified as a priority through one or more HER. Many of the areas of highest priority were available locally with fewer solely national sources of information which this project required. National sources taken on to the next stage were identified by at least one HER as a priority.

Figure 3 Priority data types with examples

Local or national data	Class of information agreed as priority for HER inclusion	Examples
Predominantly national data sources		
	Items from published sources	Country Life
		Context
		Amenity Society journals
		Pevsner Buildings of England
		Victoria County History
		Research papers
		London architectural collection
		Photographic collections
		Buildings with blue plaques

Data sources which may be local or national		
	Information on individual buildings	Historic plans Architects records Structural reports on historic buildings Condition surveys Records of repairs and works Building control records Estate agents particulars
	Additional Maps	Old maps
	Photographic archives	Historic photographs Recent dated record photographs Aerial and oblique photographs Character appraisals Management plans Museums Local authorities
	Listed building information	Statutory listings and schedulings
	Natural statutory designations	Tree Preservation Orders Protected hedgerows Sites of Special Scientific Interest Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
	Thematic surveys	RCHME Survey of Parish Churches RCHME Country Houses EH Boot and Shoe Industry Survey Local Watermills Survey
	Grey Literature	
	Award winning buildings	Design or conservation awards
	Historic Parks & Gardens	

Predominantly local data sources		
	Audits of unprotected historic assets	Audits of unprotected historic assets
	Parish Records	
	HER bibliography	A list of books and pamphlets held in the HER
	Old Planning files	

7. SELECTION OF KEY DATA CLASSES AND CASE STUDY APPLICATION OF TRIAL DATA.

7.1. The scoping and trialing aspect of the project then focused on the four national areas of data that have been most commonly requested as a priority for inclusion in HERs (highlighted in Figure 3);

- Information on individual buildings
- Photographic archives
- Items from published sources
- Additional Maps

7.2. 82 HERS in England were asked to take part in the trialing and scoping stage of the project and 27 responded and participated in the sampling. Many gave substantial amounts of time to the project and looked carefully at each sample area.

7.3. HER officers were asked to evaluate issues attached to the inclusion of a selection of building related information types, feeding back to the IHBC through an internet based survey facility and additionally in writing. The internet survey facility (Survey Monkey) proved very successful and a number of the participating HER officers welcomed it as a method of gathering information.

7.4. Trial data was not to be created as records or used to populate HERs but the aim was to establish principles and basic practicalities which such data might incur. The invitation to participate was made extensively to widen input and ensure as many HER systems and processes were involved as possible.

7.5. For each of the four classes of information, sample of types of data were identified for inclusion in the project case studies. As well as representing priorities in HER development, these were selected to allow for analysis of the range of practical issues that can arise

with their inclusion in a HER. They were intended as illustrative samples of data types to develop recommendations and procedure rather than to concentrate specifically on the detail of the example.

7.6. The samples selected for analysis were as follows:

7.6.1. Information on individual buildings, represented by:

    a. Estate agent particulars available online, identified at the discretion of the SMR/HER officer.

        Access: Various web-based sources on agents' sites, to be identified at the discretion of the SMR/HER.

        Indicative issues: Test access using searches on agents' sites, selecting sample buildings, and consider practical issues arising from HER inclusion.

    b. The *DiCamillo Companion to British & Irish Country Houses* http://www.dicamillocompanion.com/Houses_dbsearch.asp

        Access: This material is accessed through web site links.

        Indicative issues: Consider how web links are incorporated and how they can be kept up to date

7.6.2. Photographic archives, represented by:

    a. My home town http://www.myhometown-oldphotos.co.uk/a.htm

        Access: This material is accessed through web site links.

        Indicative issues: Consider how web links are incorporated and how they can be kept up to date.

    b. Francis Frith http://www.francisfrith.com/

        Access: This material is accessed through web site links.

        Indicative issues: Consider how web links are incorporated and how they can be kept up to date.

7.6.3. Items from published/printed sources[3] represented by:

    a. Nikolaus Pevsner *et al*, *Buildings of England*[4]

        Access: This material is accessed through web site links or indexed hard copy, though the index is currently available digitally only on CDROM

---

[3] Various editions of each of the selected publications. It was anticipated that copies should be accessible through a HER or available from colleagues or in local libraries.

[4] An index is available only on CDROM, *c.f.* http://www.pevsnerindex.co.uk/

> Indicative issues: Consider incorporation of this data, which could be from the CD index or from scanning or typing in from published sources.

> b. Howard Colvin*, A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600–1840*[5]

>> Access: Hard copy

>> Indicative issues: Consider incorporation of this data from a national roll out of data or from scanning or data entry from published sources.

7.6.4. Additional Maps, represented by:

> a. http://visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/

>> Access: This material is accessed through web site links.

>> Indicative issues: Consider how web links are incorporated and how they can be kept up to date

7.7. The internet survey comment form allowed HER officers to comment on each sample in terms of its value, resource implications, and benefits from very low to very high.

7.8. In some cases 'very high' may be a positive thing such, as considerable benefit in assessing significance, informing planning decisions, or shaping development proposals. In others, such as those with very high resource implications, it may be less positive. These distinctions are recognised in the analysis of the responses.

7.9. For each identified data source the following aspects were examined
   a. Accessibility for HER inclusion
   b. Feasibility of HER inclusion
   c. Value for HER users overall
   d. One off resource implications
   e. On going resource implications
   f. Value in informing cultural assessments
   g. Value in informing planning processes
   h. Value in informing development initiatives

8. ASSESSMENT OF SAMPLE SOURCES

8.1. SAMPLE 1 ESTATE AGENTS DETAILS

8.1.1. Background to sample

Estate agent particulars represent an ongoing digitized source of information about particular individual buildings. Unlike some

---

[5] See for bibliographic information only
http://yalepress.yale.edu/yupbooks/book.asp?isbn=9780300060911

sources of material that remain static they are a changing resource. As a property comes up for sale a variety of possibly useful information becomes available including especially internal descriptions, photographs and plans. But clearly they will only cover a certain number of buildings in any period.

This sort of information can provide HER users with a dated set of information on the building at the point it was for sale. This could be useful for understanding change, establishing authorized and unauthorized changes for enforcement purposes and recording building condition. But the value of this information can vary greatly depending on the individual site and the estate agent.

8.1.2. Transferability of sample to similar types of source

The transferrable issue of this type of resource is to look at how HERs might handle constantly changing web based material on a number of specific buildings but not all buildings within the HER.

Answer Options	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very low	Responses
Accessibility for HER inclusion	2	6	9	6	4	27
Feasibility of HER inclusion	0	1	9	8	9	27
One off resource implications	10	6	6	1	3	26
On going resource implications	10	9	6	2	0	27
Value for HER users overall	1	2	6	13	4	26
Value in informing cultural assessments	1	1	8	13	4	27
Value in informing planning processes	1	2	8	11	5	27
Value in informing development initiatives	1	3	5	13	5	27

Responses from participating HERs on accessibility, feasibility, resources and value of inclusion of sample source. Values in chart form are shown in Appendix 4

8.1.3. Value

The participating HERs felt in the main that the value information such as estate agents details had for HER users and for use in cultural assessments, planning processes and development initiatives was limited with most counting them as of low or very low value. One suggested that "modern info is of limited use to the general public for general heritage interest purposes" but this does not include the uses of such material for planning management and enforcement. Another suggested "as far as I can see, they would be useless for any informed assessment of the significance of an historic building"; this may be the case but it does provide accurate photographic material and plans which can be invaluable for a variety of different uses. Some HERs questioned the quality of the information which such sources could provide but the quality of photographs and plans rather than the descriptive element is surely not open to question.

Many appreciated the value of recording information about individual buildings on the HER but questioned this particular type of material.

8.1.4. **Resources**

The majority of responding HERs felt that both the one off and on going resource implications of including estate agents details were very significant with many ranking them as high or very high. Comments made consistently included the use of "time consuming" and as a result of time constraints many felt that the "benefits were considered limited". One issue was the time it would take to search for individual buildings especially as there is no way of sifting through easily to find buildings of interest. As a result it was felt that "such material would not be a high priority for HER development".

8.1.5. **Feasibility**

The majority of responding HERs felt that the value of the material did not justify the effort, time and resources required to introduce such constantly changing material.

It was suggested it would be "unfeasible to try to obtain this information for all buildings on the HER as a block piece of work" and that as a gradual process of acquisition it will be a difficult and time consuming project as "you will have to look at every entry to see if its potentially of interest, as you cannot search on criteria such as age".

Some HERs incorporate estate agents particulars where possible but it was not felt feasible to collect such information systematically.

8.1.6. **Issues particular to estate agents details**
1. **Coverage.** Some buildings will come onto the market regularly and many versions of estate agents details may become available whilst other owned by bodies such as trusts, religious organizations and estates will never be put up for sale. This would mean that no complete coverage could ever hope to be achieved.

2. **Referencing and data sourcing.** "Ideally a website should make clear the sources of information that have been used to create the website. It is best practice, where possible, for the HER to use the original source of information rather than the website." This is not always going to be possible with sources such as Estate Agents details where unreferenced sources are used and some details may be based upon hearsay and information from owners. However the

basic information of plans and photographs will be produced by the estate agents and thus be appropriately sourced.

8.2. SAMPLE 2 THE DICAMILLO COMPANION TO BRITISH & IRISH COUNTRY HOUSES

8.2.1. **Background to sample**

The sample of the The DiCamillo Companion to British & Irish Country Houses (http://www.dicamillocompanion.com/) represents a generally fairly static but gradually developing digitized source of information about particular individual buildings. It is a changing resource which is updated and added to from time to time. The site claims that the Database is updated daily, with information coming from professional journals, a 2,000-volume library on country houses and allied subjects, and from contributors around the world. The Database apparently contains records for more than 7,100 houses, with images for over 1,180 houses, and listings of over 570 houses where movie and TV filming has taken place. The sites author Curt DiCamillo is an American architectural historian who seeks to document every English, Scottish, Welsh, and Irish country house ever built, standing or demolished, together with a history of the families who lived in the houses, the architects who designed them, and the history of the collections and gardens. The site has an entry for each property which aims eventually to include details on the current and historic county, architects, start date, completion date, circa date, extant status and if it is open to the public. The following categories of information are potentially included:

Country	Phonetic Pronunciation of House Name	Location	Historic County
Latitude	District Today	Images	Start Date
Completion Date	Longitude	Architects	Bibliography
House Listed As	Extant Details	On SAVE Britain's Heritage's List of Buildings at Risk	Historic Houses Association Member
References	Gardens Listed As	Email	Website
Phone Number	Access	Current Ownership Details	Current Ownership Type
Fax Number	Possible (Unsure) Seat of	Awards	House Replaced By
Today Seat of	Primary Current Ownership Use	Collections	History / Gardens & Park / Movies
A Past Seat(s) of	Location for Movies / TV	Built / Designed For	Earlier House(s) / Building(s)
Garden, Park, Follies and Outbuildings	House & Family History	Chapel & Church	Related Resources

An example of a complete record is that for Holkham Hall in Norfolk which   can   be   seen   at

but a number of other houses have very limited entries to date. HER Officers looking at this site have therefore responded depending to some extent upon the level of coverage the site has in their area.

This sort of information can provide HER users with an overview of historic architectural and visual details of the historic house. This could be useful when researching and understanding the building.

8.2.2. Transferability of sample to similar types of source

The transferrable issue of this type of resource is to look at how HERs might handle regularly amended and enhanced web based material on a group of buildings of a specific building type which are a relatively small part of the buildings recorded within the HER.

Answer Options	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very low	Responses
Accessibility for HER inclusion	4	10	10	3	0	27
Feasibility of HER inclusion	1	9	9	5	3	27
One off resource implications	2	10	5	7	3	27
On going resource implications	2	4	9	10	2	27
Value for HER users overall	1	2	10	9	5	27
Value in informing cultural assessments	1	3	8	9	6	27
Value in informing planning processes	1	3	6	10	7	27
Value in informing development initiatives	1	3	5	11	7	27

Responses from participating HERs on accessibility, feasibility, resources and value of inclusion of sample source. Values in chart form are shown in Appendix 4

8.2.3. Value

There is a perceived desire to see the addition of new information rather than the reinforcement of existing data. Many HERs felt that sources such as DiCamillo contain "little or no information that is not already in the HER or otherwise available". It does, however, identify the primary sources so that the HER can use those directly or quickly identify buildings which are missing from the HER. The participating HERs generally felt the value of such a site was medium to low but there were also those who saw it as potentially very useful "it might help quickly flag up some buildings not on the HER for inclusion. This would be a high priority source" and those who believed it would be of little value "Already more information on the HER and plenty of better local resources. The key resource for lost building research are the trade directories of the C19th - this website is no value."

Perhaps surprisingly the values attributed to this source were similar for all value categories; cultural assessments, planning processes or development initiatives. Whilst such a source may not impact directly upon the planning or development process it is more likely to influence cultural assessment. It will also, as indicated,

have a medium value for all HER users overall as this will include those carrying out wider research and personal interest projects.

8.2.4. **Resources**

In general terms the immediate resource implications of adding such a source were considered to be high to medium whilst the long-term implications were medium to low. The material does not cover all of the buildings on the HER so could be carried out as a discrete piece of development work with some resource implications but once in place would also require checks on weblinks and checking for new additions.

8.2.5. **Feasibility**

The majority of responding HERs felt that the value of the material could possibly justify the effort, time and resources required to introduce such constantly changing material. The feasibility of obtaining and maintaining the information was felt to be medium to high.

8.2.6. **Issues particular to The DiCamillo Companion to British & Irish Country Houses**

Reliability and accuracy.
The geographical information in the site was found by those testing it to be relatively unreliable making it difficult to transfer to the HER. "For example Belvoir and Burghley Houses are recorded in Lincolnshire which they are not and a house in Barnack is recorded as being historically in Lincolnshire which is untrue. The mapping of several of the houses I checked was centred in Lincolnshire rather than at their true location, even for houses where their location is clearly marked on Google maps which is the map base that the website uses. The database features searching for 'District today' and allows searches for Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire but giving results that are in error. Buildings in North Lincolnshire are recorded in Lincolnshire and vice versa for example. This consequently makes searching very time consuming and the data confusing." The site is generated from the USA so lack of local knowledge may be the cause but any source which is used needs to be reliable and accurate otherwise it will rely on the local knowledge of the HER officer to correct errors before incorporating into the HER and if the site links were to be used this would be difficult to do.

8.3. **SAMPLE 3; PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES 1 MY HOME TOWN HTTP://WWW.MYHOMETOWN-OLDPHOTOS.CO.UK/A.HTM**

8.3.1. **Background to sample**

My Home Town is a developing commercial web site containing historic images. At present it does not have coverage for all counties and indeed where there is coverage it is only for certain towns and villages. The intention for the site is that historic images can be purchased for domestic use but it does contain at a single source a large number of viewable photographs which could be of value for historical research including general historical research but also for planning and development related research to establish historic detail, townscape and context.

8.3.2. **Transferability of sample to similar types of source**

The transferrable issue of this type of resource is to look at how HERs might handle occasionally updated digitally based sources of photographic material.

Answer Options	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very low	Responses
Accessibility for HER inclusion	2	7	10	6	1	26
Feasibility of HER inclusion	0	6	6	8	5	25
One off resource implications	4	7	6	3	6	26
On going resource implications	2	7	7	5	5	26
Value for HER users overall	1	4	5	7	8	25
Value in informing cultural assessments	1	2	8	6	9	26
Value in informing planning processes	1	1	6	7	11	26
Value in informing development initiatives	1	1	6	7	11	26

Responses from participating HERs on accessibility, feasibility, resources and value of inclusion of sample source. Values in chart form are shown in Appendix 4

8.3.3. **Value**

When HERs have consulted Conservation Officers on their priorities for HER content as seen above, one of the sources which were felt would be most valuable were photographs. To them historic photographs are of use for establishing historic form and appearance, guiding restoration projects, establishing historic context and townscape and carrying out appraisals. It is perhaps then surprising that there is no consensus amongst HER officers as to the value of historic photographs. Indeed some felt them to have no value or place in the HER such as "photographic archives, by nature, are snapshots in time and therefore have medium value to researchers using the HER, prioritising their accessibility would be lower than a written record"

Whilst some HERs did appreciate the value of historic photographs to the HER in general there was less enthusiasm for the value of photographic web sites such as those sampled. These were considered to have more value for general HER users and in cultural assessment but only a medium to very low value for use in the

planning process or development initiatives. There was also a view that such sites would be "too general and vague" for the HER.

8.3.4. **Resources**
The immediate resource implications of adding such a source were considered to be high to medium whilst the long-term implications were also high to medium. As well as the time constraints in making links or importing material into individual records there is also the potential cost of purchasing photographic material to ensure a more easily viewable image, at a better scale and without copyright issues.

8.3.5. **Feasibility**
Although a moderately accessible source the feasibility of adding such a source to the HER is considered to be low.

8.3.6. **Issues particular to My Home Town**
1. **Limited current scope.** The choice of this sample which had good general coverage, but only very limited coverage for each HER area, distracted the participating HERs a little as once they found they only had ten or twenty examples for their area concentrated on the lack of available material rather than the issues surrounding incorporation of a source such as this. It is also possible that even a small number of photographs might be as valuable as a large number if they are more relevant to users.

2. **Reliability and accuracy** The photographs on this site are poorly dated and often the locations are often too vague sometimes with the name of villages given only.

8.4. SAMPLE 4; PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES 2 FRANCIS FRITH HTTP://WWW.FRANCISFRITH.COM/

8.4.1. **Background to sample**

The Frith archive was founded by Francis Frith (1822 – 1898), a Victorian photographer, in 1860 and contains over 300,000 photographs of 7,000 towns and villages taken between 1860 and 1970. The photographs were taken by Frith and by photographers working on his behalf. For each town or village there are an average of 80 photographs taken from the same position some years apart. The collection is catalogued with considerably more care than many other commercial photographic collections. Historic images can be purchased for domestic use but it does contain at a single source an immense number of viewable photographs which could be of value for historical research including general historical research but also for planning and development related research to establish historic detail, townscape and context. The photographs are also available in book collections for specific areas which may

also be of use to researchers and the web site contains a number of other aspects such as some historic mapping and an interesting social history angle where site visitors can share memories of the place in the photograph.

8.4.2. Transferability of sample to similar types of source

The transferrable issue of this type of resource is to look at how HERs might handle a very large but static digitally based sources of photographic material.

Answer Options	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very low	Responses
Accessibility for HER inclusion	1	8	11	5	2	27
Feasibility of HER inclusion	1	6	4	11	5	27
One off resource implications	7	6	4	5	2	24
On going resource implications	5	4	8	6	2	25
Value for HER users overall	1	7	11	4	4	27
Value in informing cultural assessments	1	3	13	5	4	26
Value in informing planning processes	1	3	11	6	5	26
Value in informing development initiatives	1	2	12	6	5	26

Responses from participating HERs on accessibility, feasibility, resources and value of inclusion of sample source. Values in chart form are shown in Appendix 4

8.4.3. Value

The Francis Frith photographs were considered to have greater value than the My Home Town photographs presumably because of coverage, completeness and cataloguing accuracy etc. They were assessed as having high to medium value for HER users overall and predominantly medium value for cultural assessments, development initiatives and the planning process.

The books are known resources and if no copies are kept at the HER are available from the Library or Museum. The memories of the county are of interest but probably for a community based project rather than a source of information.

There seems to be a general view that the such sites with limited coverage do not have great value for the HER but this does not consider the possibility of drawing together a number of such sources to give greater coverage or simply using the sites as a general supporting resource.

8.4.4. Resources

The large number of photographs available in such a source present a resource issue. The immediate resource implications were considered to be high or even very high whilst the ongoing resources required were also thought to be generally quite high. The issues against the inclusion of such material on resource

grounds are mainly resulting from the large number of images of a variety of dates which could each need linking to relevant records.

The costs of acquiring images from commercial sources is also a relevant resources issue. It was suggested for example that "you cannot view the images properly unless you pay to do so. It would be easier and probably more cost effective to obtain access to old images from the County Archives." This begs the question if the County Archives hold historic images and even if they are making them available on line or through other wider access projects, how does this unconnected photograph help the HER user. A photograph which is known to exist could be indexed at very least to the monument record allowing users to know where to go for the material, for the HER to act, at least, as a signpost for material.

8.4.5. **Feasibility**

Accessibility of this source is relatively easy with many participating HERs agreeing accessibility is medium to high.

Many HERs do not "see how this site could be usefully incorporated into the HER". But some HERs appreciate that the work to incorporate the source into the HERs might actually be worth it even though "it would need a lot of work to link each photograph to the relevant HER records".

The published books produced from the Frith Collection were received with interest by HER officers and some say they "consider ordering some of their books for our library". It follows, though, that access for the library could still require linking to the database record to enable users to at least know the photograph exists

8.4.6. **Issues particular to Francis Frith**

1. **Location search**. Some issues were indentified on the locational searching facility of the site for example "some places in Lincolnshire such as Brocklesby, Ludborough, Great Limber and others are listed under South Humberside….. This makes searching across the county more time consuming".

8.5. SAMPLE 5; ITEMS FROM PUBLISHED SOURCES 1 NIKOLAUS PEVSNER, BUILDINGS OF ENGLAND

8.5.1. **BACKGROUND TO SAMPLE**

The Pevsner Architectural Guides, were begun in 1951 by the architectural historian Sir Nikolaus Pevsner (1902-83) with the aim of providing an up-to-date portable guide to the most significant buildings in every part of the country, suitable for both the general reader and the specialist. Each volume provides an introductory overview of the architecture of the area, followed by a descriptive gazetteer arranged alphabetically by place. The books have been

updated and expanded periodically with new entries, including more modern buildings and incorporating new research. The Pevsner guides are considered by many building conservation professionals to be one of their most vital sources of basic information. Whilst the Pevsner guides have a web site it is a general site about the books rather than one which allows access to the content (http://www.pevsner.co.uk/) and there is also a companion site funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund http://www.lookingatbuildings.org.uk/ which uses the Pevsner information to present a guide to architecture and building types.

The main digital source of partial access to the Pevsner volumes is The Buildings of England database which is produced on CD Rom. has over 550,000 records created from Pevsner's Buildings of England series. It does not replace the books but instead summarises the text with page-references. The main advantage of the index is its searchable nature. The database can be searched by building type, site and name.

8.5.2. **Transferability of sample to similar types of source**

The transferrable issue of this type of resource is to look at how HERs might handle and relatively static published format of a recognized architectural history source.   It also allows consideration of how useful a limited database or a full electronic version might be for HER use.

Answer Options	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very low	Responses
Accessibility for HER inclusion	9	8	8	1	1	27
Feasibility of HER inclusion	9	8	5	2	1	25
One off resource implications	5	12	8	0	2	27
On going resource implications	2	1	10	7	7	27
Value for HER users overall	6	14	6	0	1	27
Value in informing cultural assessments	3	16	7	1	0	27
Value in informing planning processes	1	15	8	3	0	27
Value in informing development initiatives	1	15	8	3	0	27

Responses from participating HERs on accessibility, feasibility, resources and value of inclusion of sample source. Values in chart form are shown in Appendix 4

8.5.3. **Value**

Given the level of information and the reputation of the Pevsner volumes as an authoritative and credible source one might expect a high level of acceptance of the value of Pevsner to the HER. Indeed some HER officers agreed that it was "an invaluable and essential source of information about the historic built environment" or that it is a "rigorously academic description and analysis of historic buildings".   But many of the HER officers who responded were often, perhaps surprisingly given their background, rather scathing of the Pevsner source calling it 'highly opinionated', 'limited in its

scope and reliability' and 'I have often found mistakes in it and it only considers noteworthy buildings and is quite snobbish and opinionated in places'. They were also in some cases unsure of how valuable it is for use in the planning process; 'how useful this information has been in informing the planning processes or the development initiatives is questionable, the information is provided but I don't know whether it is used to inform a decision'.

However despite these misgivings the Pevsner source was felt to be one of the most valuable of the sample sources examined. It was seen by a large majority as having high value for HER users overall, for informing the planning process, development initiatives and cultural assessments.

Information from Pevsner is, however, already used extensively in the HER in a variety of different formats. Many already have copies of the relevant books in the HER library. Some have then transferred the data manually into the HER record. Despite the time this takes the information contained was clearly considered worthwhile. The material is often used alongside other published surveys and other sources. Some HER officers felt that 'Pevsner is particularly useful for the identification of 'undesignated heritage assets', along with other standard local gazetteers and periodicals' and that 'to identify buildings and briefly index them, Pevsner is an excellent source'.

8.5.4. Resources

The one off resource implications of entering Pevsner information into the HER were considered to be high. This would mainly be based on the idea of adding each entry manually for the published source which is a long and time-consuming piece of work. Some HERs have opted to add only summary details and a reference to the printed text. They believe it 'would be possible to type out the whole thing but there would be resource implications (staff time)'. The other option would be the CD Rom index, which allows immediate searchable access to the key Pevsner information when time resources prevent the information direct from the volume being entered into the HER. The cost of the index for a single institutional user would be £120. The CD Index could be a viable way of getting data on to the HER, although it would still take some time to insert the material into the database.

The ongoing resource implications were considered to be medium to low. Once entered the Pevsner information changes very rarely. Some of the earlier editions have been updated once already, for example Nottinghamshire was published in 1951, revised in 1979 and has not been updated since. Others are more recent and some such as Greater London has been developed and expanded extensively during the 1990's. If the first edition has already been entered it should be some time until the next batch of material is needed although leaving the first edition too long can be unlucky;

"having just about added in all the references from the 1966 edition, I've now got to start again with the new three times larger 2010 one!"   On this basis there is a one off high resource implication and then a further twenty years or so when no further changes are necessary giving very low resource implications.

8.5.5. **Feasibility**

The participating HERs felt that the Pevsner material was very accessible and that the feasibility of entering the material to HERs was very high.

In general despite the long time and intensive resources required to enter information from each entry, it was felt that adding data manually was actually more feasible than using the CD Rom database.   There was some concern that the CD would not be accessible or compatible; 'the contents could not be transferred into the HER database and it is difficult to say whether the database could be sustained (or even installed) on our Local Authority computers'. The CD Rom contains summarized information which is not the complete details included in the books and many felt that the fuller details of the published text would be required although scanning or typing the text out in full would also be unlikely due to copyright implications.

8.6.   SAMPLE 6; ITEMS FROM PUBLISHED SOURCES 2
HOWARD COLVIN - A BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS, 1600–1840

8.6.1. **Background to sample**

Howard Colvin's *Biographical Dictionary of English Architects* is a key source for the post-medieval period of England's architectural history.   Sir Howard Colvin[6] (1919-2007) was a foremost architectural historian and established Biographical Dictionary of English Architects as the definitive resource for the period. Structured around biographical information and lists of works extending to some 2,000 architects who practiced in England, Scotland and Wales from the late medieval to Victorian periods. The information contained is currently available as a published edition produced by Yale and retailing for £75.

One area which is perceived to be lacking in available HER data is in depth information on the history of historic buildings.   For many,

---

[6] http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/obituaries/article3114648.ece
http://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/sir-howard-colvin-architectural-historian-whose-biographical-dictionaries-laid-a-foundation-for-all-other-scholars-in-his-field-767556.html
http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/2008/jan/15/books.obituaries
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/1574761/Sir-Howard-Colvin.html

this is restricted simply to reproduction of the list description which describes the building but reveals little of the history of the building other than the date, style and the architect where one is known. For most HER custodians and planning officers this information will be insufficient to form an understanding of the importance of the building and its architectural background.

This sample source is intended to cross reference to other similar sources covering different periods such as John Harvey, *English Mediaeval Architects: a Biographical Dictionary down to 1550 (*Stroud, 1987), A Stuart Gray, *Edwardian Architecture, a Biographical Dictionary* (Duckworth,1986) or indeed the relevant entries of *Oxford The Dictionary of National Biography.*

8.6.2. **Transferability of sample to similar types of source**

The transferrable issue of this type of resource is to look at how HERs might handle a static published format of a recognized architectural history source covering a specific area of interest. It also allows consideration of how useful electronic access might be for HER use.

Answer Options	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very low	Responses
Accessibility for HER inclusion	2	3	7	9	6	27
Feasibility of HER inclusion	0	3	14	5	5	27
One off resource implications	9	11	6	1	0	27
On going resource implications	0	4	11	10	2	27
Value for HER users overall	0	3	14	7	3	27
Value in informing cultural assessments	0	6	12	6	2	26
Value in informing planning processes	0	3	13	8	3	27
Value in informing development initiatives	0	2	14	8	3	27

Responses from participating HERs on accessibility, feasibility, resources and value of inclusion of sample source. Values in chart form are shown in Appendix 4

8.6.3. **Value**

Unlike Pevsner which is a reference source for historic environment professionals and non specialist members of the general public Colvin's Biographical Dictionary is often considered a more specialist reference work mainly for architectural history specialists but it does contain potentially valuable information for all HER users. The HERs participating in this project felt that for all HER users as well as for informing cultural assessment, planning processes and development initiatives the Colvin Biography was only of medium value. They considered it to be 'probably not a very significant source'. In one area the volume was not used at all; 'We gave our copy to the Local Studies library as it was not used in approx 15 years', perhaps had the relevant local entries been reference to the HER its value might have been greater.

The addition of what is actually an accessible and valuable source of information on the architects who created our historic environment could be a useful and new area of HER development. It is not simply the biography of the architect which it provides but an authoritative list of their works which can be used practically for informing research on a single building including using other works by the same architect for comparative exercises of detail, specification and material.

Some HERs felt it would be of value if they had the resources to add the material and with 'the new emphasis on buildings in the HER, would agree that indexing by architect would be very useful'. Others felt it had less value to them 'I probably would not include biographical information about architects as the HER is intended as a signpost, an index. It is important to identify which architect(s) have been involved with a building/site but it is not relevant to include their life story'.

Some felt its concentration on high profile national architects was a limiting factor and thought 'it would only be of real value if it could be used to provide information for local listing, but this would require it to have lots of info on local architects'.

8.6.4. Resources

The resources required for the one off addition such a source to the HER were considered to be high to very high and the ongoing resource implications medium to low. Being a single source of information which is not regularly updated the costs resources involved are mainly in adding the material initially.

The process of linking the records together, with each architect added as a person record then linked to an organisation record for their practice or company known, and then linked to the buildings in the HER, could be time consuming as it would have to be done manually.

A number of HERs felt that source did not have sufficient value or was not a high enough priority to justify the resources which would be required. Those who felt it would be valuable still felt they could not justify the resources required. One HER did see this as a useful additional and one which they were prepared to spend money on 'we are going to purchase this book for the HER as we
do not have our own copy at the moment and it is a useful reference'.

8.6.5. Feasibility

The accessibility of Colvin's Biography was considered to be low as very few HERs already had the book and so the information could only be accessed by buying or borrowing the book; 'the main issue with this resource is accessibility - it is very expensive and I cannot get it via local libraries'. The cost of purchasing it (£75) seemed to be considered by some too high for the potential resulting benefits.

Going through the published material to add to the HER was not seen as feasible for the value of information which would be gained. The lack of an electronic data version was an issue in the potential addition of this material and it was considered by some more feasible and likely to be added to the HER if a more accessible electronic version were available.

8.7. SAMPLE 7; ADDITIONAL MAPS
HTTP://VISIONOFBRITAIN.ORG.UK/MAPS/

8.7.1. **Background to sample**

'A vision of Britain through time' is a web-based collection of historical surveys of Britain. It has been created by the Great Britain Historical GIS Project based in the Department of Geography of the University of Portsmouth. The Great Britain Historical GIS Project is aiming to provide a systematic spatial framework for historical information about Britain. It contains more than twenty types of map including boundary maps, land use and topographic (including some Ordnance Survey) maps. It was felt a useful sample because it contains a wide variety of mapping which is GIS based and as it is based on administrative units would sit more happily alongside the mainly local government administrative area based HERs as an information source. The web site also includes other potentially relevant material such as a large collection of historical travel writing with the key works of authors such as William Cobbett (Rural Rides) Celia Fiennes (Through England on a Side Saddle*)* which describe, in some cases in some detail, the architecture of the are they are visiting.

8.7.2. **Transferability of sample to similar types of source**

The transferrable issue of this type of resource is to look at how HERs might handle regularly amended and enhanced web based material on a group of buildings of a specific building type which are a relatively small part of the buildings recorded within the HER.

Answer Options	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very low	Responses
Accessibility for HER inclusion	2	4	14	7	0	27
Feasibility of HER inclusion	1	4	7	11	3	26
One off resource implications	7	11	2	3	3	26
On going resource implications	1	8	8	5	4	26
Value for HER users overall	2	8	6	8	2	26
Value in informing cultural assessments	2	4	11	5	4	26
Value in informing planning processes	2	4	8	8	4	26
Value in informing development initiatives	2	4	8	8	4	26

Responses from participating HERs on accessibility, feasibility, resources and value of inclusion of sample source. Values in chart form are shown in Appendix 4

8.7.3. **Value**

The highest value was considered to be for cultural assessments where a variety of historic mapping might assist contextual research. For other uses, informing the planning process and development initiatives and for HER users overall the value was generally medium to low.

One of the main reasons the value of such sites was seen as limited was because many HERs already have a selection of historic mapping available. Some have all Ordnance Survey maps from the first edition onwards available digitally whilst most at least have a selection of maps either as hard copy or digitally. Others do not feel that mapping of this type is not something the HER ought to be holding; 'Most HER's would point users to Record Offices etc for further historic map research, rather than seeking to hold these resources themselves - HER's are not archives'. As historic mapping was identified as one of the areas which conservation officers felt would be most useful to them fro the HER this may be an area where communication of what is available from the HER could be widened. This is perhaps exacerbated by the lack of historic mapping available through the Heritage Gateway which forms a principle interface between users and many HERs. If the material exists and the users do not know it is there they will, of course, not be using it.

The uses of historic maps to the HER itself and to the users are an interesting area. Conservation Officers would use maps to look at the date or development of a building or settlement over time. This can be a very useful quick assessment method and is why sets or layers of historic mapping can be of value. However to the HER officers the maps were in some cases seen as a source of more monument records rather than a useful and practical tool for the planning or development process; 'OS historic maps are already available on this (and many other) HERS. It is often the 'source' of monument records on the HER (for example 'smithies' and 'wells' are comprehensively recorded on early OS series)'.

8.7.4. **Resources**

The one off resource implications of adding such mapping sources were considered to be high to very high with the ongoing resource implications being high to medium. Locating and identifying individual buildings on maps was considered to be a resource issue.

8.7.5. **Feasibility**

Although considered relatively accessible as a data source the internet based map site 'A vision of Britain through time' is considered to be of low feasibility for addition of HERs. The principle issue identified with the use of such mapping was how it could be incorporated into the HER in a usable form. Many felt the main feasibility problem was the lack of availability of digital copies which they felt were necessary to allow the data to be loaded directly onto the GIS. If web sites were to be used to access maps they would need to be ones which provide a grid reference to link into the database.

8.7.6. **Issues particular to 'A vision of Britain through time'**

1 **Scale of maps**. The scale of maps available on site such as this is also a possible issue; 'these maps are too small in scale and sometimes too pixilated'. The maps shown were considered to be 'not detailed enough to accurately locate individual buildings'.
2 **Maintaining links**. The site gives a number of pages including the home page for historical mapping (www.VisionOfBritain.org.uk/maps) which are intended to remain at the same address and be constant. It is also possible to link to a search result which allows searching by counties. But the ID numbers for each place will change regularly so links to individual sites or areas cannot be saved. It could be possible though to link to the mapping by National Grid references to form a link which can then be added to the HER record. To do this a URL needs to written using six digit grid references in the format of www.VisionOfBritain.org.uk/location_page.jsp?easting=NNNNNN&northing=NNNNNN

9. ACQUISITION, MONITORING AND MAINTENANCE OF CLASSES OF SOURCE

9.1. GENERAL ISSUES REGARDING ALL TYPES OF REGULARLY CHANGING DIGITALLY BASED SOURCES ON INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS:
Including Sample 1 Estate Agents Details

9.1.1. **Copyright of material**.

HER information is accessed by professionals and the public. Photographs, details and the web site itself all are copyright of the author and the transfer of information will have copyright issues. "Disseminating this information to third parties may be considered to be an infringement of copyright." "Many websites have 'terms of use' that govern how the data on the website may be used and all websites are the copyright of the author. The copyright of a website is often explicitly stated on the site but even without a copyright

statement the rights of the author are protected by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. The following extract from the website of Savills the estate agents is typical of the terms and conditions of use on such websites that seek to protect their intellectual property:

The copyright in this website and its content belong to Savills. You may not make a permanent copy of or reproduce this website or any of its contents in any form. You may not reproduce or incorporate this website or any of its contents into any other website. You may only print or cache temporary copies of the content for your own personal non-commercial use. You may not link to this site or frame it without the express consent of Savills."

9.1.2. **Privacy and data protection**.

The reuse of photographs and other material may breach the Data Protection Act or simply issues of property owners privacy. Interior photographs of properties could be especially problematic as could those taken from gardens or vantage points away from the public highway.

9.1.3. **Permission for use**.

The use of information owned by other bodies within the HER presents issues about how the necessary permission can be achieved to do so. This may be feasible for a single source or web site but for a variety of sources which all need to be consulted, such as for estate agents details, seeking permission for such use could be overwhelming.

9.1.4. **Storage**.

Storing such a large amount of information may pose issues for servers as many sources such as Estate Agents details contain images and could be large files. "There would be a cost implication for storage and maintenance on a server"

9.1.5. **Maintaining and refreshing information formats and sources.**

Sources such as estate agents details are available on line for a limited period of time whilst the property is on the market. Initially links to the records may be made through web links but when the details change, for example when properties are sold, the URL would change. Many participating HERs wondered how they would know when the URL changed. The links would no longer work and would have to be removed or would be found to be dead when consulted. The information would then need to be converted into another format, printed out or put into descriptions so that it could be digitally archived or it would be lost.

9.1.6. **Other sources**.

It was suggested that in some cases gathering this information may be a duplication of material available in other sources. In some areas "this type of historic data is held by another service, the local studies library, not the HER" Although significant indexes to Archives are available, such as those of the National Archives, they do not often list the specific piece of information and so would be of little use to those looking for a body of information on a singe building. If the HER is a signposting to material the issue of signposting to other sources should be considered. For example Tyne & Wear "would record the reference in the sources database".

9.1.7. Consistency.

Many sites would need to be trawled to be comprehensive and consistent. Each site works differently and therefore a standardized search cannot be used thus increasing the time and resources needed to carry out this work.

9.2. GENERAL ISSUES REGARDING ALL TYPES OF GENERALLY STATIC DIGITALLY BASED SOURCES ON INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS
Including Sample 2 The DiCamillo Companion to British & Irish Country Houses

9.2.1. Accessibility through the internet.

The need for incorporation of material which is freely available to all through the internet was questioned. "We would assume that the COs in our districts would access this online data if necessary." This assumes that they know about the source and have time to check this and other internet sources as well as checking with the HER or the Heritage Gateway. If the HER, is as is postulated, an index which points the way to information should it not draw together and index items of useful information. A one-stop shop for relevant material rather than a partial source.

9.2.2. Availability of information from other sources.

Such sources draw together basic information on primary data and thus become a secondary source. Unless the information is accurate and extensive it may be that the use of the primary sources would be preferred but such sources can provide a lot of basic source information rapidly without the time resource needed to acquire the information otherwise. Whilst the information may be available elsewhere the issue is if it will be obtained from the other sources or if the material will simply not be added to the HER because of resource constraints. In this case the addition of such basic material will of course be preferable to nothing. They can also be a useful starting point where existing HER information is sparse on a particular building, building type or area.

9.2.3. **Reliability and accuracy**

The DiCamillo web site was found to have some issues of reliability and accuracy (see site specific issues above) but a general point can also be made concerning the need to only incorporate material which is felt to be reliable and accurate.   This requires a certain amount of existing knowledge on the part of the HER officer to assess accuracy.

The nature of the source is relevant in this case and official academic research may be more acceptable for inclusion.   For example one HER said they "wouldn't include such work by individuals, only university and other academic or official organisations' research".

9.2.4. **Links to other sources**

The DiCamillo site encourages submission of photographs and is trialing material from Flickr, which is currently leading to incorrect images being displayed. Not only is it important that the main source is reliable it is also equally so to ensure that links to other information or other web sites are likewise.

9.2.5. **Maintaining and refreshing information formats and sources.**

Sources such as this do not always change on a regular basis, some may remain static for a long time others may be updated daily. The HER would need to check the site at very regular intervals both for new additions and amendments and to ensure the weblinks are up to date.

9.2.6. **Copyright**

In order to incorporate material from other sources copyright may be an issue. For web sites this can be less of an issue than some other sources but "copyright permission would be needed to copy the text of any database entry".

9.3.   GENERAL ISSUES REGARDING ALL DIGITALLY BASED SOURCES OF PHOTOGRAPHIC MATERIAL
Including sample 3 My Home Town & Sample 4 Francis Frith

9.3.1. **Other local collections.**

Many HER officers identified other useful local sources of historic photographs which were much fuller for the provision of local historic photographs and which they might be more inclined to incorporate into the HER. Examples of these included Windows on Warwickshire http://www.windowsonwarwickshire.org.uk

Picture the Past for Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire http://www.picturethepast.org.uk. The identification of local sources is a useful addition to the HER and the practical implications of including the national information can be applied to such county and regional sources.

9.3.2. Coverage in national sources for each HER area.

Some larger national sources do not have equal coverage for each area and so make the source of more value for certain HERs. This does not mean, however that there is no value in a small number of relevant pieces of material.

9.3.3. Commercial sites and quality of web images.

Resources are going to be required to get the most of some commercial sources such as those sampled. Although low-resolution web based versions of the photographs are available there was a feeling that this was not sufficient and that it is "difficult to get to the good quality information without buying it". The commercial nature of such sites also makes linking potentially difficult (see copyright and acquisition below)

9.3.4. Copyright and acquisition cost.

Permission is likely to be needed to use content from sources such as these. Images will be owned by either the original photographer or a subsequent owner and web sites and other published sources will be copyrighted. For example The My Home Town images all appear with 'Sample' written prominently over the photograph making close observation more difficult. The Francis Frith photographs appear with the Frith logo in the corner to protect the copyright but can be increased in size on screen to allow close study.

Even if material is bought from the site or source there is a also an additional issue as to how this use of a single purchase can be made available for wider public access. It would be inappropriate or unlawful for HERs to buy, print or link the photographs from the site and then make them available to the public.

For example the users of the Francis Frith site may not "copy, reproduce, republish, download, post, broadcast, transmit, make available to the public, or otherwise use any Frith content in any way unless explicitly stated within these terms and conditions. You also agree not to adapt, alter or create a derivative work from any Frith content".

There is value in existing public access sites which are intended to link in with use of the HER such as Viewfinder or Images of

England. The expansion of historic photograph resources available through The Heritage Gateway would help to develop access to photographic material which can be viewed alongside much HER data.

9.3.5. **Incorporating images which show townscape not individual buildings**

Many of the photographs available from sources such as these are not of a single building but of a piece of townscape or group of buildings. This still allows for inspections of the building but also sets the building in its context and can have other planning and enhancement uses.

This non-building specific focus is seen as a potential problem by HER officers. Some see the fact that the photographs are not of single buildings as something which will "give an overall impression of a place, but will be of limited use in identifying individual buildings". There is, though, a practical issue with the addition of photographs of townscape into the HER where they cannot be added to a single monument record but only to a town or settlement based entry.

9.3.6. **Maintaining and refreshing information formats and sources.**

Sources such as this do not always change on a regular basis, some may remain static for a long time others may be updated daily. To maintain the information in the HER it would be necessary for a member of staff to regularly review the website to identify new photographs that have been added, assess them for inclusion in the HER and add information to the HER where appropriate. If web links were used these would need to be checked to ensure they were still correct. Some HER officers have suggested that sites might offer an alert where changes have been made but this does rather assume that relevant sources might consider the HER important enough to provide this information.

9.4. GENERAL ISSUES RELATED TO STATIC PUBLISHED FORMATS OF A RECOGNIZED ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY SOURCES
Including Sample 5 Nikolaus Pevsner, Buildings of England and Sample 6 Howard Colvin - A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600–1840 and Pevsner Buildings of England

9.4.1. **Copyright of material**.

Many similar sources which are already included in HERs are only done so in the form of extracts, references or summaries to circumvent copyright issues whilst making the best use of the material. If more such sources are to be incorporated into HERs it may be that copyright issues on the key sources needs to be dealt with centrally to allow its use on HERs. A licence negotiated by

English Heritage to use the material for specific HER purposes could encourage wider integration of the material. The two sources identified as samples in this study would be a good starting point to ensure that all HERs have a baseline of basic architectural information.

9.4.2. **Accessibility in digital format.**

The accessibility and feasibility of adding these architectural sources to the HER has been seen to be rather dependent upon the resources available which could be considerable when it involves taking material from books and adding it manually into the HER. A digital version of such material could assist with its wider adoption in HERs. As some sources, such as Colvin, are ordered by Architect, a national roll out of digital data could allow material to be sorted into various datasets to add to the database.

9.5. GENERAL ISSUES RELATED TO DIGITALLY BASED SOURCES OF MAPPING MATERIAL
Including sample 7 'A vision of Britain through time'

9.5.1. **Maintaining and refreshing information formats and sources.**

Sources such as this do not always change on a regular basis, some may remain static for a long time others may be updated daily. To maintain the information in the HER it would be necessary for a member of staff to regularly review the website to identify any new maps that have been added and to check to ensure links are still current.

9.5.2. **GIS linkages.**

One of the issues identified with the sample site was the lack of GIS references available which would allow better integration with the HER. There are other web based mapping sources available which are geo-referenced which could used more directly such as Old Maps (www.oldmaps.co.uk).

9.5.3. **Copyright.**

The copyright of sources can be complex because of the variety of original material used. For example the copyright for 'A vision of Britain through time' is as follows "The maps created by the Land Uitlisation Survey of Great Britain are © L. Dudley Stamp/Geographical Publications Ltd, while the scanned images of these maps, for England and Wales, are © Environment Agency/DEFRA, and for Scotland © Great Britain Historical GIS. Many of the individual statistical datasets were computerised by academic researchers who hold copyright in the transcriptions; a future release of the system will identify these in context. The resource as a whole is © Great Britain Historical GIS Project 2004.

The GBH GIS is a network of collaborating academic researchers". However as sources such as this are intended for research the copyright issues should be less than with more commercial sources. Other similar sites such as Old Maps which can be viewed at a better scale are, however, watermarked when viewed due to the expectation of users making a purchase and also to the copyright requirements of the licensing agreement with the Ordnance Survey.

10. DEVELOPMENT OF MODEL STRATEGIES FOR PROGRESSING INCLUSION OF DATA SOURCES ACROSS KEY DATA SOURCE TYPES

10.1. Based on an analysis of key data types of buildings-related information in Table 3 the project team developed a simple matrix for assessing the primary implications for HER inclusion. The matrix is based on the recognition that, while each class of information necessarily give rise to unique issues for inclusion in any HER, the central challenge to HER inclusion for each data type is based on resource implications, rather than specific technical issues. Building on this principle, the matrix provides a simple framework for adoption by HER stakeholders to guide in giving priority to the different classes of information for consideration for inclusion in a HER.

10.2. The IHBC's HER matrix integrated data types against resource implications as per the table below, with sample data sets used in the survey representing each of the unique cells. It is intended to help users link a prospective information resource with the generic issues for its information type as described in this study. A resource under consideration can be placed in the appropriate place in the matrix, either by analysing it in itself, or by linking it through similarities to one of the examples. The general points raised for each information type should highlight the key issues for consideration in each prospective resource.

Figure 4
Matrix for scoping sample data types (National, Building)
(NB Excludes LPA and EH as separate research strands in HER 21 and beyond

	DATA TYPE	Digital	Hardcopy
RESOURCES			
Initial costs			

High initial cost Skilled research or payment required	My Home Town Francis Frith A vision of Britain through time	Colvin Dictionary of architects
Medium initial cost	Estate Agents Details The DiCamillo Companion to British & Irish Country Houses	Pevsner Buildings Of England
Low or Nominal initial cost	None identified in project samples	None identified in project samples
Ongoing Costs		
High Ongoing cost	Francis Frith A vision of Britain through time	None identified in project samples
Medium Ongoing cost	Estate Agents Details My Home Town	None identified in project samples
Low Ongoing Cost	The DiCamillo Companion to British & Irish Country Houses	Pevsner Buildings Of England Colvin Dictionary of architects

10.3. The survey was also used to analyse the sample data, testing them against implications HER-inclusion in line with the matrix. Based on the information provided in the survey, each built environment data set was evaluated by the project team for its 'transferability', that is to say, how the data set would represent key issues in considering the transfer to HERs comparable data types.

Sample	Transferability	Other sources with similar issues
Estate agents details	Used to investigate at how HERs might handle	Geograph (http://www.geograph.org.uk/)

	constantly changing web based material on a number of specific buildings but not all buildings within the HER.	
The DiCamillo Companion to British & Irish Country Houses	Used to investigate how HERs might handle regularly amended and enhanced web based material on a group of buildings of a specific building type which are a relatively small part of the buildings recorded within the HER.	Subterranea Britannica (http://www.subbrit.org.uk/) GENUKI Church database (http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/churchdb/)
The photographic archive in My Home Town	Used to investigate how HERs might handle occasionally updated digitally based sources of photographic material.	RIBA Pix (http://www.ribapix.com/)
The Francis Frith archive	Used to investigate how HERs might handle a very large but static digitally based sources of photographic material.	Country Life Picture Library (http://www.countrylifeimages.co.uk/) Footsteps http://www.footstepsphotos.co.uk/
The Buildings of England	Used to investigate how HERs might handle and relatively static published format of a recognized architectural history source. It also allows consideration of how useful a limited database or a full electronic version might be for HER use.	Victoria County Histories (http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/NationalSite/Home/Main)
A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600–1840	Used to investigate how HERs might handle a static published format of a recognized architectural history source covering a specific area of interest. It also allows consideration of how useful electronic access might be for HER use.	John Harvey, English Mediaeval Architects: a Biographical Dictionary down to 1550 (Stroud, 1987), A Stuart Gray, Edwardian Architecture, a Biographical Dictionary (Duckworth,1986) Oxford The Dictionary of National Biography.
The maps in A	Used to investigate how	Old Maps

Vision of Britain	HERs might handle regularly amended and enhanced web based material on a group of buildings of a specific building type which are a relatively small part of the buildings recorded within the HER.	(http://www.old-maps.co.uk/index.html)

10.4. The analysis of the practical methodologies inform decisions by HERs on what priority to give when including built environment information.

10.5. PRACTICAL METHODOLOGIES FOR TYPES OF REGULARLY CHANGING DIGITALLY BASED SOURCES ON INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS:
Including Sample 1 Estate Agents Details

10.5.1.   The basic methods of addition of such material:[7]
1. With full permission from the company to make its website data publicly available through the HER (though of course HERs can restrict access to classes of information, and this is at least publicly available on the web at some point, which is more than can be said for lots of others!!). Copy a pdf of the particulars (if available), or relevant images and text, into a digital document (ideally a pdf) and link this document to the appropriate historic building record in the HER. It may be necessary to create a record for the building in the HER if no record exists. There are already HER records for all listed buildings. Some degree of professional expertise would be needed on the part of the person doing the work as they would need to be able to recognise whether a building on the website was historically significant and met the criteria for inclusion in the HER. Once the pdf is linked to the HER record it would be available to users of the HER including through the Heritage Gateway website.

2. With permission from the company to make its website data available for professional use only through the HER. As above except that the pdf document will be marked as not for publication on the publicly available website. Consequently the data would only be available to in-house HER users and to any professional users (such as Conservation Officers) with password-protected access to the HER computerised data.

3. Without permission from the company to use its website data. Summarise the information from the site and add this

---

[7] Based almost exclusively on suggestions of Mark Bennet, Lincolnshire County Council

summary into the description field of the appropriate historic building record in the HER database, sourcing the information as being from the website and including the date the information was accessed. No images could be downloaded.

4. Investigate other ways of getting the data through partnerships with other collections and related bodies such as museums, local study centres and Record Offices.

10.5.2. To maintain the information in the HER it would be necessary for a member of staff to regularly review all estate agent particulars on-line to identify new buildings that have been added to the websites, assess them for inclusion in the HER and add information to the HER where appropriate.

10.6. PRACTICAL METHODOLOGIES FOR TYPES OF GENERALLY STATIC DIGITALLY BASED SOURCES ON INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS
Including Sample 2 The DiCamillo Companion to British & Irish Country Houses

The basic methods identified of incorporation of such material;

1. Hyperlink to relevant pages in the relevant HER record.

2. Link this as a source of information only rather than any form of direct link to the HER. Enter as a source with an Accessed Date as part of the source record.

3. Keep abreast of such sources without adding them into the Her in any way and suggest to users of the HER.

4. Produce a list of such other sources on main HER page or alongside the HER. A moderated list would be of the most use in this case, where HER officers assess the source with specific reference to the material for their area and write a short summary of what it contains, how accurate it is and how it fits in to other information available through the HER. This would help prevent users having to spend time on fruitless internet searches which could produce inaccurate or unreliable information.

5. Adding information directly from the source into the HER. If there is any additional information then this would be summarised and added into the description field of the appropriate historic building record in the HER database, sourcing the information as being from the website and including the date the information was accessed. Images could also be downloaded if appropriate[8]. This would be time

---

[8] Based on suggestions of Mark Bennet, Lincolnshire County Council

consuming and would need to be periodically checked for changes. The web address would be included as source.

10.7. PRACTICAL METHODOLOGIES FOR DIGITALLY BASED SOURCES OF PHOTOGRAPHIC MATERIAL
Including sample 3 My Home Town & Sample 4 Francis Frith

The basic methods identified of incorporation of such material;

1   Purchase the pictures and add them to the HER as scanned images linked to the appropriate historic building record or perhaps to the record for the town in the HER.
2   Link the webpage containing the photograph to the appropriate HER record.
3   Add the reference into the sources record and leave it to the user to obtain a copy of the actual photograph. An HER may be able to link to the site but permission may well be needed since permission for this is not explicitly stated within their terms and conditions[9]. In some cases it may not be possible to make web links as some sites have no ID numbers for the images.
4   Check the websites for informing planning process to see if relevant to HER area, rather than add to records on HER.
5   Do not add to Her but flag the source up for users to refer to. Produce a list of such other sources on main HER page or alongside the HER. A moderated list would be of the most use in this case, where HER officers assess the source with specific reference to the material for their area and write a short summary of what it contains, how accurate it is and how it fits in to other information available through the HER. This would help prevent users having to spend time on fruitless internet searches which could produce inaccurate or unreliable information.

10.8. PRACTICAL METHODOLOGIES FOR STATIC PUBLISHED FORMATS OF A RECOGNIZED ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY SOURCES
Including Sample 5 Nikolaus Pevsner, Buildings of England and Sample 6 Howard Colvin - A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600–1840 and Pevsner Buildings of England

The basic methods identified of incorporation of such material;

1. Provide a summary of the published text in each relevant record description and referenced to the original published text. Not including the entire text avoids copyright issues from scanning or typing in verbatim.
2. Each volume (for volume based works such as Pevsner) is added as a 'source record' and then building records added for each building in the volume. This is what we have done already in many cases where Pevsner has already been

---

[9] Based on suggestions of Mark Bennet, Lincolnshire County Council

included and would allow references such as Colvin to be consulted where architects are named or other facts given.

3. Each architect (as in Colvin) or other personal entry would be added as a person record, possibly linked to an organisation record if practice or company known, and linked to the buildings in the HER they are associated with. This would be very time consuming, as it would have to be done manually[10].

4. Data of this sort could be added to the HER regularly either through 'ongoing updating of all HER records on a parish by parish basis or through specific projects to add data from a particular publication to enhance existing records and create new records as necessary'

10.9. PRACTICAL METHODOLOGIES FOR DIGITALLY BASED SOURCES OF MAPPING MATERIAL

Including sample 7 'A vision of Britain through time'
The basic methods identified of incorporation of such material;

1   Add the website to the HER record as a source.
2   Maps available as GIS layers can be more readily integrated
3   Identify buildings shown on the maps and add links to individual records
4   Link settlement entries to the relevant map

11.   PRIORITIES IN HISTORIC BUILDING INFORMATION OUTSIDE ENGLAND.

11.1. Recognizing the substantial legacy of archaeological priorities in the HERs in England, the project also included a consideration of approaches to built environment information in distinct, but related, planning traditions. Colleagues in both Scotland and Ireland were asked to provide their own perspectives and thoughts on the challenges of incorporating historic information on buildings as a resource with planning as follows:
1. Information management priorities
2, Relevant current research and/or statistics
3. Relevant projects
4. Other (primarily personal) considerations that may be relevant, and
5. Perspectives on the situation in England

11.2. Responses were received from Historic Scotland and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS), though none from the Irish Architectural Archive (IAA). While no response was received from the IAA, and resources were not available support a site visit, as the IHBC director Seán O'Reily worked at the IAA for some 10 years his review of the working of that system, supported by reference to the web site, provides adequate background for the study in hand.

---

[10] Based on suggestions of Mark Bennet, Lincolnshire County Council

11.3. In Scotland, the Canmore database provides a national, Scotland-wide, integrated approach to the architecture, archaeology and maritime heritage of Scotland and its waters, in the fashion and tradition of a publicly accessible digital HER. It presents 300,000 sites, of which almost 140,000 are records of the built and industrial heritage. These are linked to related archive material and digital images held in RCAHMS collections. Public usage is high, as, for the year 2010 (to 22 December) it has had nearly 700,000 unique visitors and 28 million page visits.

11.4. Registered users can customise Canmore and in the 14-month period from August 2009 to October 2010, 2135 people have registered as users, of whom 300 are active. Canmore also allows users to add their own comments and images (via a Flickr account) to the online resource. Since release of this upgrade in August 2009 several thousand images have been linked and over 500 comments added[11].

11.5. Canmore is seen to have both educational and planning purposes, corresponding largely to the approach taken in England's (and other Scottish) HER/SMR operations. However, though both highly accessible and comprehensive within its remit, much of Canmore is an index to the availability of material in the RCAHMS search room rather than a tool that interacts dynamically with planning processes direct.

11.6. RCHAMS comments as follows:
Online resources raise awareness of the importance of the historic environment and just how fragile it is. Participatory, online resources such as Canmore allow people to take an interest in their locality, be involved in the recording of the nation's heritage, and to participate in how that heritage is protected.

Information about the historic environment is key to enabling 'sustainable economic development'. Opening up access to such information unlocks the data for the people who live and work in and near historic buildings and areas, and can facilitate future community-based recording programmes.

11.7. While there are clear benefits to an integrated national system based around the HER concept, Scotland's RCAHMS also recognizes the challenge that such a national system has in reaching, and integrating with, a localized planning system, a distinct building and construction industry, and other holders of the vast body of documentation that the HE can encompass. RCAHMS writes as follows:

---

[11] *Robin Turner, RCAHMS*

At a more technical level, developing systems using Linked Data approaches to stimulate the public into new and creative uses of information we (the sector) curate. Linked data between planners and the archives that hold this data for posterity is important in all parts of the UK and a clear systematic approach, appropriate to each nation, needs to be agreed upon. Organisations could be more joined up if we had a more systematic, agreed relationship with planners for the likes of the RCAHMS Threatened Building Survey, but also, in Scotland, if papers could be routinely digitally passed to RCAHMS by architects and planners.

11.8. The RCHAMS/SMR 2003 'Statement of co-operation' http://www.rcahms.gov.uk/assets/files/Survey/Co-op_statement.pdf 'http://www.rcahms.gov.uk/assets/files/Survey/Co-op_statement.pdf attempted to bridge the link between local and national information service provision, though interestingly it did not encompass the gathering of information of the sort referred to here.

11.9. Separately, but also as part of an attempt to consolidate an interface between local built environment outputs and nationally accessible historic environment resources, RCAHMS also conducted a major research programme under the title 'Scottish Survey of Architectural Practices' in the early 1990s, and the subsequent 1999-2004 Scottish Architects Papers Preservation Project (SAPPP).

11.10. As RCAHMS notes Canmore is essentially an interface for that information, but no more, and those other projects are part of a wider programme to facilitate access to built environment information especially relevant to historic environment interests: 'The active search for collections in private hands, their acquisition and their cataloguing has been substantial in order to provide results made available in Canmore and in allied resources such as ScotlandsPlaces.

11.11. Consequently even if the projects are not seen intrinsically as material that can be incorporated directly in digital form in a HER-style service, these projects are important examples of additional strategies to transform built environment development outputs into historic management resources.

11.12. Historic Scotland's initiatives in assessing built environment information relevant to historic environment management highlight a different approach to that of the RCHAMS. This is best represented by their two key resources, the Dictionary of Scottish Architects (DSA: http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/), and a GIS-based system still under development, HAGGIS, the Historic Asset Group GIS (www.http://sedsh13.sedsh.gov.uk/HAGGIS/).

11.13. With regard to DSA, its web site provides a publicly accessible

database described as follows:

'…a database providing biographical information and job lists for all architects known to have worked in Scotland during the period 1840-1980, whether as principals, assistants or apprentices.'

11.14. The DSA is developed from an information resource built up in the first instance around historic architect- and buildings-related data by David Walker, former chief inspector at Historic Scotland. Data management and public interfaces such as search systems reflect its origins, as the web site describes:

The resource is searchable by name or location of architect, practice, or building, as well as by client. Architects based in Scotland have their known works fully catalogued; but only the Scottish works of English and Irish architects have been included. The Dictionary is currently being extended to cover up to 1980 and the entries for many architects who practiced after World War II are skeletons only. These will gradually be filled out over the next three years.

11.15. The response from Historic Scotland recognized particularly the limitations of such a system in linking the building or area, and the information relating to it. Thus the essential issue for the DSA '*is clarity of ID... What building or component thereof are we referring to?*' so that all users can be sure they are linking correctly the subject and the information relating to it, and that all are '*talking about the same thing?*'. The solution to this challenge is recognized as lying within GIS: '*GIS bases seem to be the way around an inevitable variety and evolution in naming traditions among the various data holders.*'

11.16. The reservations raised by the above questions have not prevented HS, or the other sponsors of the DSA, including the Arts and Humanities Research Council, from seeing the value of the project, and investing in the project. Usage is less than Canmore, and there is no analysis of the user profile. However, at 5.2million enquiries since its inception in mid-2006 (the counter is 200,000 below actual, as it was re-set erroneously after the launch), or an average of more than 1 million enquiries a year, the figures are far in advance of what might be expected of what might seem to be at first a relatively limited historical resource, and can reasonably be considered to be used in planning cases outside of its operation as a tool for the Scottish Government's Inspectorate, which is responsible for its maintenance and operation today.

11.17. In the context of planning use, the DSA also recognizes the limitations in information quality, and the interpretation of that information by the user. The home page of the web site carries substantial qualifications to the information held there and access routes to it. The web site states:

The DSA does not claim to be definitive and it does not make value judgements. Its purpose has been to assemble all known published data and personal recollections in a searchable form, to eliminate the drudgery of blind searches and provide a quick key to further research. It is, and hopefully will remain, an ongoing project and it is hoped that users will report new finds and any errors there may be, together with the relevant references, for the mutual benefit of users, both now and in the future.

11.18. Crucially, the DSA accepts that the limits of the referencing, and the qualifications to content, do not outweigh the benefits to be derived form a web-based information resource that provides public access to built environment information even without interfaces with a GIS system.

11.19. Separately from the DSA, a GIS-linked system is also under development by HS under the memorable acronym of HAGGIS, the 'Historic Asset Group GIS' (: http://sedsh13.sedsh.gov.uk/HAGGIS/). Haggis is described as a '*web map provided by Historic Scotland that shows Scottish heritage assets. You can view these heritage assets on a variety of backgrounds including modern mapping, aerial photography, and old Ordnance Survey maps. All the data can be downloaded'.* (http://data.gov.uk/apps/haggis-heritage-asset-group-gis-provided-by-historic-scotland)

11.20. Still very much at the early stage of development, and so with no substantial figures for usage, HS reports that it is 'heading' the way of a system developed '*specifically to explore the inclusion and/or retrieval of building related information'.* It includes Conservation Area boundary information as well as Listed Building information, and is intended to serve as a platform for local authority input and use as well for carrying other information.

11.21. In Ireland, the Irish Architectural Archive (IAA) is the body that corresponds to the former National Monuments Record in England, or RCAHMS in Scotland. This was developed from 1976 as the repository for information relating to the history of Ireland's architecture (http://www.iarc.ie/)[12]. Its development was shaped by reference to RCAHMS – Roger Mercer, then Secretary of the RCAHMS, was an adviser during its development – though operationally it has always retained a more specific focus on its titular topics, architecture and archives, and their application within both historical and planning processes, rather than having a specific interest in Ireland's archaeological resource.

11.22. In line with its corporate objectives, the IAA holds archives from architectural practices, images, and other historic architectural

---

[12] The Irish Architectural Archive was established in 1976 to collect and preserve material of every kind relating to the architecture of the entire island of Ireland, and make it available to the public.

material such as models. The collections typically correspond to the resources generated by built environment practitioners, supplemented by historical information and documentation. Data is indexed, but no publicly accessible GIS-linked database is maintained on the website.

11.23. The IAA hosts an equivalent of Historic Scotland's DSA, the Dictionary of Irish Architects (DIA), which derives from a paper index developed from the Alfred Jones Biographical index (http://www.dia.ie/). Like the DSA it is a database of historical material structured around the history of people related to the country's architectural tradition, and like the DSA it does not operate within a GIS system.

11.24. As the 'Background page (http://www.dia.ie/pages/background) states, the DIA has its roots in a biographical system comparable to that underpinning the DSA, a biographical dictionary taking
'the form of several hundred files of information which had been assembled during the 1950s and 1960s by the retired Dublin architect Alfred Edwin Jones (1894-1973)…. The unsuitability of the Jones files for consultation by members of the public … gave rise to the idea of creating a database of Irish architects which would not only incorporate the information contained in Jones's files but would also draw together other data held in - or made available to - the Irish Architectural Archive….'

11.25. Although accessible to public use, the DIA was not primarily intended as a resource for public participation in planning. The site states:
'It should be noted that the Irish Architectural Archive's database was not originally intended for publication but for in-house use, to provide information for staff, visitors to the reading room and correspondents'.

11.26. While recognizing the value of the GIS link for HERs, the key built environment resource for England's built environment corresponding to the DSA and the DIA, Colvin's Dictionary, is not accessible on line. The absence of such a resource in HERs systems fundamentally compromises the viability of re-titled SMRs as HPR consistent HERs. At the same time the research shows that HERs simply are not able to encompass that information within the records without in turn compromising the data standards, and/or putting undue resource pressures on them locally.

11.27. A solution to these issues would be to produce a stand alone digitally accessible version of Colvin, linked to HER home pages and via the Heritage Gateway, created an 'add-on resource' to HERs. Apart form its immediate use in informing the understanding of the significance of key parts of the built heritage, the particular value of generating such a resource is that, with its references, it already serves as an information 'hub' or 'signpost'

for guiding interested parties to other sources that may be relevant to their needs, sources that would be otherwise extremely difficult to gather or signpost.

12. INCORPORATING MATERIAL FOR HER USERS VIA METHODS OTHER THAN DIRECT HER INCORPORATION

12.1. USE OF THE HERITAGE GATEWAY

12.1.1.   The use of the Heritage Gateway as a dissemination tool for HER information should also be considered. At present the Heritage Gateway contains uploaded material from a number of HERs but by no means all of them. The lack of buy in to the Heritage Gateway may be due to concerns over loss of income where record information is available free of charge but not all information has to be included on the heritage gateway and the public benefit for easily accessible data should offset these concerns. Other HERs are developing their own much more comprehensive and responsive web based systems and these are clearly to be encouraged but their existence does not preclude additional use of the Heritage Gateway. Certainly more HERs should be encouraged to become involved with the Heritage Gateway.

12.1.2.   The use of the Heritage Gateway to expand the available data would also allow users on-line access through links to locally held records and national web resources. Key national sources could be added to the Heritage Gateway centrally to allow the records to display when local searches are done along with other material. Such an expansion of the existing resource would require a further development project on the part of English Heritage and some further investment.

12.2. LINKS FROM HER HOME PAGES

12.2.1.   There are a large number of very local archive sources for all regions of the country which could be useful to HER users.
For example an independent trawl of photographic sources for Lincolnshire reveals many useful sources.
http://www.imagesoflincolnshire.co.uk/
http://www.mug-shots.co.uk/Caythorpe/photointro.htm
http://www.oldairfields.fotopic.net/
http://www.withamstaple.com/GArchive/BArchivePhotos.htm
http://www.skegnessphotos.co.uk/index-2.html
http://www.yourlocalweb.co.uk/lincolnshire/crowland/old-historical-nostaligic-pictures/
http://www.mablethorpe.info/town/history-basin.htm
http://www.raf-lincolnshire.info/metheringham/metheringhamphotos.htm
http://homepage.ntlworld.com/david.enefer/lincs/lincs.htm
http://www.flickr.com/groups/churches_conservation_trust_lincolnshire_friends
http://www.flickr.com/groups/1016887@N24
http://wparkinson.com/Churches/index.htm
http://www.flickr.com/groups/coldwarlincs
http://www.flickr.com/groups/lincolnshirechurches

http://www.yourlocalweb.co.uk/lincolnshire/louth/old-historical-nostaligic-pictures/
http://www.flickr.com/groups/1016887@N24
http://wparkinson.com/Churches/index.htm
http://www.flickr.com/groups/coldwarlincs
http://www.flickr.com/groups/lincolnshirechurches
http://www.yourlocalweb.co.uk/lincolnshire/louth/old-historical-nostaligic-pictures/

12.2.2.   The Lincolnshire HER web site contains a number of useful links including some of these sources http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/conservation/historic-environment-record/historic-environment-record-useful-links/photographs/77117.article. Such links are useful to HER users and where the addition of material to the HER from web sites and other sources has been decided against will at least provide a signpost to additional sources of information. The more structured and informative these link lists can be the more useful to users they will be.

12.3. Linkage to a dedicated national resource for architecture

12.3.1.   The high value of an information base structured around a 'dictionary of architects', as revealed in the usage of such material in Scotland and Ireland (where no HERs operate), suggests that there is a real potential to developing a comparable programme in England. The key resource in this area is Colvin's Dictionary, referred to above. This was created as a paper-based personal reference system and there is a significant amount of information beyond that published in the book form. Malcolm Airs, Director of the Centre for the Historic Environment at Kellogg College, Oxford has already established a dialogue with the executors of Howard Colvin's estate and Yale University Press (the publishers of the dictionary).

12.3.2.   This could form the basis for a national resource to which all HERs could link as an add-on.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1. Consistency of Building material in HERs
13.1.1.   HERs vary in terms of consistency of structure, content and coverage. Whilst this is inevitable at present, given the way they have developed there are still great inconsistencies in the approach to development of building material. Some HERs and the officers responsible for them embrace the incorporation of all historic environment material and the linkages with the planning system encouraged through Heritage Protection Reform. Others still feel that the HER is neither a planning nor a buildings history resource.

13.1.2. HERs should aim to be consistent in both structure and content, and coverage and thus should be encouraged to see development of building records as an integral part of an HPR consistent HER. Sources examined in this project were often considered little value possibly because they are different from those normally used. HERs should consider the value of new records and data sources such as those examined in this project to planning and building conservation audiences.

- <u>Headline recommendation</u>: As part of a national specification for HPR-consistent HERs, Operate a viable programme for including information on particular buildings (using the advisory 'commission' as per recommendation below) to include
  - Historic plans
  - Architects records
  - Structural reports on historic buildings
  - Condition surveys
  - Records of repairs and works
  - Building control records
  - Estate agents particulars
- Operate a viable programme for including information from web-based resources (using the advisory 'commission' as per recommendation below) to include web-based resources identified in this study.

- Include built environment information covering as a priority the following areas:
  - Pevsner Buildings of England
  - Country Life
  - Victoria County History
  - Context
  - Amenity Society journals (20th Century Society; Victorian Society; Georgian Group; Ancient Monuments Society; Garden History Society; The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings)
  - Buildings with blue plaques

13.2. Guidance for building related HER development

13.2.1. Given the diverse priorities registered across different HERs, priorities driven by history and locality there is no single answer to the local needs for a HER. In the absence of a substantial investment in development of a HER infrastructure, clearly HERs should clearly decide their own priorities but could do this guided by a 'commission' in governance to advise on

priorities for users. This would be part of a wider decision making process allowing a commission type advisory board to feed in to priority making.

13.2.2.   Recognising the diverse needs of each HER according to its locality it is recommended that representative local 'commissions' are established to advise HERs on the classes of information that need top be given priority to in the geographical area covered by the HER.

13.2.3.   HERs should be encouraged to develop their web site Home Page with links to other useful and locally relevant web sources, an information hub or a sort of local heritage gateway. Again the matrix could be used to guide priorities for inclusion in light of resources, and shape decision-making processes.

13.2.4.   <u>Headline recommendation</u>:   Establish   local   advisory commissions to consider key priorities for the inclusion of built environment information within the HER.

13.3. Use of the Heritage Gateway for national information sources

13.3.1.   It is recommended that English Heritage considers expanding the Heritage Gateway with key national sources to allow users to access useful data alongside HER information. Such an expansion of the existing resource would require a further development project on the part of English Heritage and further investment.

13.3.2.   <u>Headline recommendation</u>: Establish a programme to develop the Heritage Gateway as an resource with a wider national remit to interface with national built environment records and resources, modeling it as a 'national HER', and building on the models developed in Scotland in particular.   This resource should be linked to the development of the resource identified in the recommendation below.

13.4. Development of a dedicated national resource for architecture

13.4.1.   Despite the importance of 'Colvin' in establishing the significance of key aspects of the built heritage, this project makes clear that current HER infrastructure is not able to address the huge challenge of incorporating local information to a national standard. Consequently it is recommended that a stand alone digitally accessible version of 'Colvin' is developed, perhaps linked to HER home pages and via the Heritage Gateway, to create an 'add-on resource' to HERs

13.4.2.   The particular advantage of developing access to 'Colvin' is that it already serves as an 'information hub' – albeit currently non-digital - to the entire range of historic built environment resources crucial to establishing the significance of 'post-

medieval' buildings. A 'digital Colvin' would draw together key resources, digital and otherwise, from the RIBA drawings collection to major local history resources otherwise largely inaccessible to HERs direct. A 'digital Colvin' would be a key part of the historic built environment information to being made digitally accessible, albeit though links, on public consultation with a HPR-consistent HER.

13.4.3. The development of this resource should be based not only on the most recent edition of Colvin, but also on the substantial additional information in the archive of the author.

13.4.4. Operationally, the development of the 'digital Colvin' as an online resource, could be phased to speed up HER-linked access to what would be a key tool for the built environment sector, and expedite wider interest in and ownership of HERs. This could be done by providing the information accessible digitally first, land then later as dedicated GIS-linked product that might be more easily interfaced with the HER infrastructure.

13.4.5. <u>Headline recommendation</u>: For English Heritage (and partners) to establish a programme to make the information in the Colvin Archive digitally accessible, with key links to the resource through HERs.

14. Conclusion: Specifying an HPR-consistent HER

14.1. There is no single, simple route to the challenge of establishing HERs as a coherent information interface between the built environment and the historic environment.

14.2. However if the recommendations here are adopted by HERs nationally then those HERs could be considered to be consistent with HPR aspirations in terms of the inclusion of the built environment information covered by this project.