



HM Government of Gibraltar

Ministry of the Environment,
Sustainability, Climate Change,
Heritage, Education and Culture

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Cultural Heritage Town Planning Guidance

In order to raise awareness amongst all interested parties, the Department of Town Planning and Building Control, the Gibraltar National Museum, the World Heritage Office and the Ministry for Heritage have produced guidance notes aimed at assisting planners, developers and others to take account of the need to protect our heritage when preparing projects.

Gibraltar has a rich and unique heritage; some of it is of international significance, as recognition by UNESCO of our World Heritage Site shows. Heritage can help us understand where we have come from, where we are going, and why we do things in the way that we do. Heritage touches all our lives.

Safeguarding our cultural heritage is an important part of the legislation and planning process. The physical assets – whether buildings, monuments or archaeological remains – are a material consideration (i.e. something that matters) in determining planning applications.

Hence, it is important to note that in determining planning applications, the Development and Planning Commission will take account of:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

The Guidance Notes are aimed at explaining frequently asked questions such as:

Why does cultural heritage matter? How do I find out whether there are cultural heritage assets I need to consider? How do I find out if a building or monument is scheduled? Can I make changes to a scheduled building or monument? What information will I be required to provide? Or, who can carry out the work?



Applicants will frequently need to provide information with any planning applications on its implications for cultural heritage.

The key message to all potential applicants is that it is important at the outset of any development project – in the early stages of project planning, due diligence and risk management – to include cultural heritage. Seek advice at the earliest opportunity.

The precise requirements for cultural heritage will be determined by the Ministry for Heritage as advised by the Government Archaeologist, the National Museum, Gibraltar World Heritage Office and other experts.

The Minister for Heritage, Professor John Cortes, welcomed the new guidance and emphasised that “Heritage is not a barrier to change. Safeguarding our cultural heritage does not mean preventing development or sustainable change. It means managing that change in order to retain and protect significant heritage places, sites or objects, which are important to our community.”

Guidance notes and further information may be found at:

<https://www.gibraltar.gov.gi/town-planning/planning-guidance>

<https://www.ministryforheritage.gi/town-planning>

<https://www.gorhamscave.gi/gorhams-cave-complex/downloads>

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