Template for a statement of significance

Please use this template in conjunction with the guidance released on the Church of England website

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/statements-significance-and-needs>

To complete this template, please enter text in the white spaces provided below each grey box, starting where the “Enter Text Here” is highlighted. This text will need to be removed when editing these sections. The pages in this document will expand as you write, and the grey boxes should always appear at the top of a new page.

The template was last issued in May 2025 by the Cathedral and Church Buildings Department, Church Commissioners and has been produced under the remit of the Church Buildings Council pursuant to its powers under section 55(1)(d) of the Dioceses, Mission and Pastoral Measure 2007.

A logo with text on it

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

## Section 1. Your building and churchyard: its significance

### Location and setting

* Is it a rural, urban or suburban area?
* Is it in a historic settlement, or one that has more recently developed?
* How do the architecture and history of the church and the place relate?
* Are there distant or near views of the church and its setting?
* How do the trees or green spaces contribute to the setting?

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### Churchyard: memorials, natural environment, biodiversity and archaeology

* What is known about the history of the churchyard? Has it had extensions or a change of boundary?
* How are boundaries and entrances marked?
* Are there any significant gravestones, memorials or war memorials?
* Is the church or churchyard used by protected species such as bats, dormice, badgers, or barn owls?
* Is the church or churchyard a habitat for wildlife and plants?
* Are there any ancient, large or rare trees?
* Is the churchyard managed to encourage wildlife, and if so, how?
* Are there archaeological remains?

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### Social history and value to the community

* What does the community think of the building?
* Is the building a source of identity, distinctiveness or social interaction?
* Are there any historical events or people associated with the church?
* Is the church or churchyard used for special events during the year, aside from regular activities?
* Are there important memories associated with the church or churchyard?

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### Church building: exterior

You could use sections of the building e.g. nave, chancel, tower if that is helpful.

* Is this building listed? If so, what grade?
* When was a church first established on the site and how has it changed over time?
* Are there phases of building or alterations?
* Does the style link to architectural and artistic trends?
* Who are the architects, artists, craftspeople or benefactors who have been involved?
* What are the building materials?
* What is aesthetically, historically, archaeologically or socially special about each area of the church?

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### Church building: interior

You could use sections of the building e.g. nave, chancel, tower if that is helpful.

* What shape is the footprint, and what are the different sections of the building?
* What is it like inside the church?  Is the interior large, small, tall, light, dark?
* What are the floors, roofs and walls like?
* Who are the architects, artists, craftspeople and/or benefactors involved?
* How it is lit and heated?
* What is aesthetically, historically, archaeologically or socially special about each area of the church?

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### Contents

Items to include: altar; reredos; pulpit; lectern; font; communion rails; stained glass; wall paintings; bells and bell frame; monuments; organ; communion plate; registers; pews and other woodwork; metalwork; floor finishes.

* Describe the contents of the church
* What is their age?
* Are they part of a suite of furnishings or a group of items of similar date?
* Are any of the artists or craftspeople recognised locally, regionally, nationally or internationally?

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## Section 2. The proposals: the impact on significance

If you prefer, you could provide this information in the form of a table. Whatever format you choose, make sure you assess the significance and impact of your project.

### Identify the parts of the church, its setting and/or contents that would be impacted by the proposals

This can be a list. First, include the parts that would be directly impacted by the proposals, and then describe how the changes might have a broader impact on the character of the church. E.g. for pew removal, the pews will be impacted, but so too will the character of the nave/aisles, the flooring and the spatial quality of the church.

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### Set out significance of those parts

If you have already described the significance of the parts in Section 1, you can simply refer back to the description.

If not, assess significance by writing about what is architecturally/aesthetically, historically, archaeologically or socially valuable.

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### Describe the impact of your proposal on these parts and the building and/or setting

Impacts could include loss, alteration, obscuring, change of context, change of use or environmental harm.

You can also include positive impacts such as bringing back into use, conserving, revealing, improving setting, reducing energy consumption and increasing biodiversity.

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### Explain how you intend to mitigate the impact

* Are the proposals reversible?
* Are examples of historic furnishings retained in situ?
* Is any interpretation proposed?
* Will the building be recorded prior to change?

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