

A Statement of Significance:

- summarizes the description, heritage value and character defining elements of a historic place;
- reflects modern values concerning history and historic places; and
- identifies what part of history a historic place represents, and how and why that is important today.

Components:

Section 1: Description

This is a two- or three-sentence summary of the historic place as it exists today. It should not include information or details which are included in subsequent sections.

Section 2: Heritage Value

The heritage value of a historic place may be defined as the aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual importance or significance for past, present or future generations.

Historic places may have value because they:

- illustrate achievement in the development of a place;
- are associated with events that have contributed to patterns in history;
- are associated with the lives of persons of historical significance; or
- illustrate or symbolize a cultural tradition, way of life, or ideas important in the development of a place.

Section 3: Character Defining Elements

Character defining elements identify the principal features of a historic place that represent its heritage values. They should be written in point form and refer to the place as it exists today. Character defining elements should include all aspects such as materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses and cultural associations or meanings that contribute to the heritage value of the historic place, and which must be retained in order to preserve the heritage value.

Depending on the nature of the heritage values associated with that place, character defining elements may be categorized as follows:

- style, scale, massing and composition;
- interior layout or exterior spatial configuration;
- functional features;
- materials and craftsmanship;
- the relationship between the historic place and its broader setting;
- the ways in which people use the historic place; and
- customs and traditions that were or continue to be associated with the historic place.

The Province of British Columbia's Heritage Branch has created a guide titled "Guidelines for Writing Effective Statements of Significance" that will assist heritage professionals with the development of a Statement of Significance. This guide can be found on the Heritage Branch's website.

