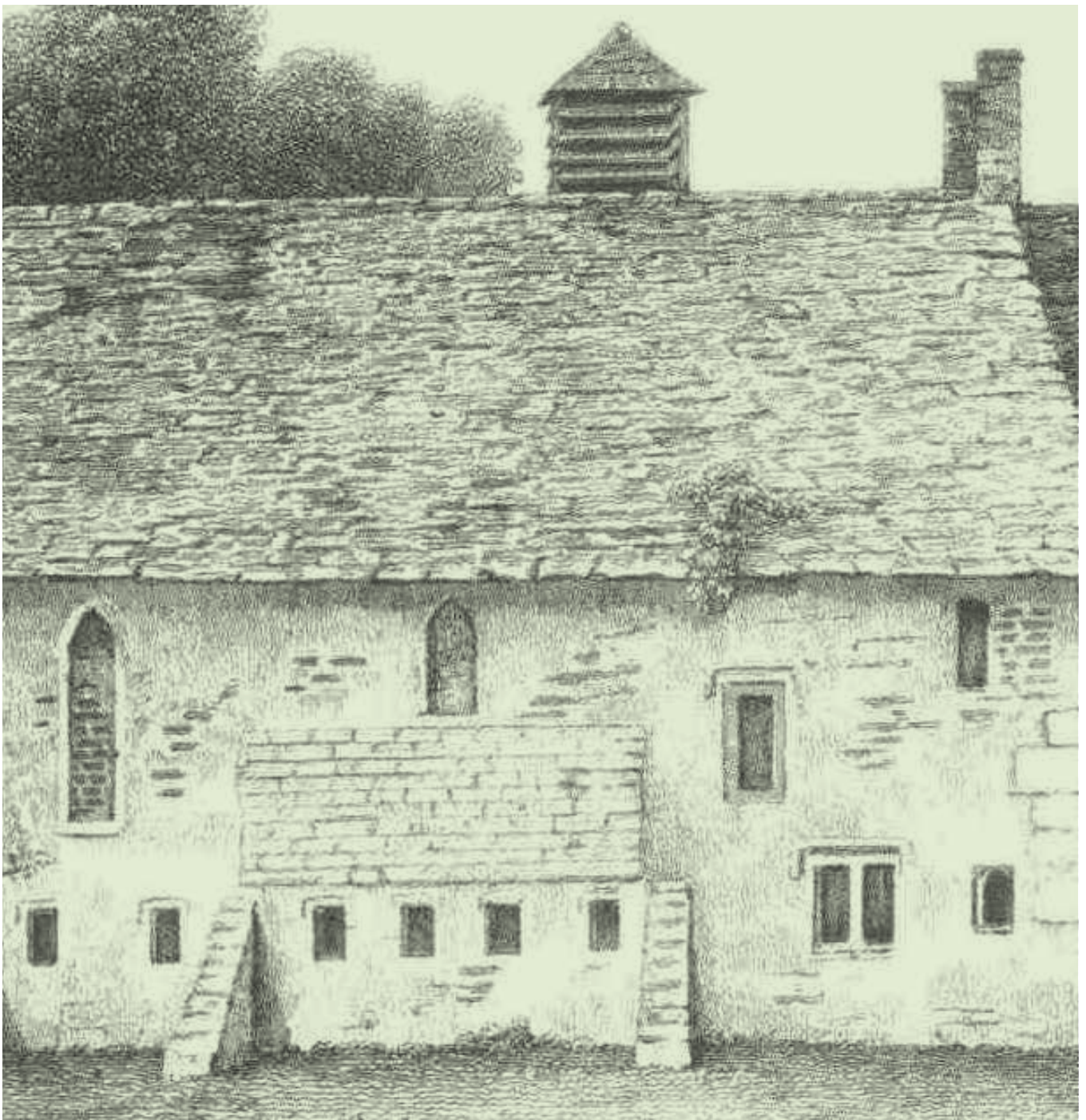# Places of Learning

Scheduling Selection Guide

Summary

Historic England's scheduling selection guides help to define which archaeological sites are likely to meet the relevant tests for national designation and be included on the National Heritage List for England. For archaeological sites and monuments, they are divided into categories ranging from Agriculture to Utilities and complement the listing selection guides for buildings. Scheduling is applied only to sites of national importance, and even then only if it is the best means of protection. Only deliberately created structures, features and remains can be scheduled. The scheduling selection guides are supplemented by the Introductions to Heritage Assets which provide more detailed considerations of specific archaeological sites and monuments.

This selection guide offers an overview of the sorts of archaeological monument or site associated with education which are likely to be deemed to have national importance, and for which of those scheduling may be appropriate. It aims to do two things: to set these within their historical context, and to give an introduction to the designation approaches employed.

Front cover
De Vaux College, Salisbury, Wiltshire, founded 1262.
The first university-level college in England for secular clergy

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Introduction

This selection guide offers an overview of the sorts of archaeological monument or site associated with education which are likely to be deemed to have national importance, and for which of those scheduling may be appropriate. It aims to do two things: to set these within their historical context, and to give an introduction to the designation approaches employed. As will be seen, a recurrent theme is that the identification of buildings or places where education (of whatever sort) took place is likely to be problematic for, as far as is known, the rooms or spaces where it took place generally required no distinct features or facilities which might be evidenced in the archaeological record.

A parallel Education Buildings selection guide treats the selection of buildings for listing. Designed landscapes associated with educational establishments, including colleges and universities, are treated in a selection guide on Institutional Landscapes.

1 Historical Summary

1.1 Roman

Education is an aspect of all societies, but information on its provision in early English contexts is slight. That many in Romano-British society were educated – as we would today understand it – is indicated in a number of ways. The precise extent of literacy is hard to determine, but evidence for its dissemination across quite a broad spread is documented by the everyday nature of the correspondence on the Vindolanda (Northumberland) writing tablets and the finds of styli and inkwells here and elsewhere. There was a large administrative body, both civilian and military, and many professions, such as surveying, where at least a modest knowledge of mathematics would have been necessary. Presumably many of the skills required could have been taught by tutors at home, or in the workplace, without need of formal schools or the like, although from what is known of Roman society it seems likely that schools would have been found in at least the larger towns. That there were at least some places of formal learning is suggested, for instance, by occasional mentions of such establishments in classical texts. Towards the end of the first century AD Juvenal states that eloquent Gauls were teaching Britons to plead causes. That said, while it is known that education was valued and there is clear evidence of a literate society, no buildings or structures which can be said to be 'schools' have been identified.

1.2 Anglo-Saxon and Viking

It should not be forgotten that Celtic, Germanic and Scandinavian societies had strong oral, bardic, traditions, whereby learning and verse passed by word of mouth: formal schooling was by no means the only form of knowledge transfer.

The arrival of Augustine in Kent in 597, supported by a literate, Latin-speaking and reading body of priests, is sometimes said to mark the foundation of England's earliest school, at Canterbury, since the eighteenth century known as the King's School. While that is perhaps an ambitious claim, the Anglo-Saxon church certainly required and supported a clergy that at least in part was literate, and with musical specialists: Bede records a song school was established at York in 634 where 'chanting after the Roman or Canterbury fashion' was taught. Other monastic schools are recorded, and scriptoria where texts were duplicated, all serving the growing number of monasteries and minsters which spread the Word.

There were also some, at least, in the upper levels of lay society who were literate, most famously King Alfred (reigned 871-99). In the 880s as he strengthened Wessex against the Vikings, and alongside military reforms, he promoted religion and learning, which had lapsed since the seventh century. A much-quoted (but probably exaggerated) lament had it that, in Alfred's time there were not many men capable of understanding Latin north of the Humber, and very few to its south, and none south of the Thames.

To reintroduce learning churchmen-scholars were brought from Mercia and the Continent, translations commissioned, and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle initiated. The revival of learning was facilitated, in part, by the establishment of a school, apparently within the royal household, for the education of Alfred's children and the sons of leading men, and also ones of lesser birth. The emphasis was on literacy, especially the reading of works in English. A further revival in English cultural and intellectual life followed in the late tenth century alongside monastic reform.

All this activity presumably took place in minsters and monasteries (or, in the case of Alfred, in palaces), rather than in separate or freestanding schools. The archaeological identification of school rooms (if such existed) has yet to occur, although finds of styli (as from Flixborough, Lincolnshire) indicate writing activity was relatively commonplace, as does its use to capture charters, wills, poetry, medical treatises, and much else. (For early monasteries see the Religion and Ritual post-AD410 scheduling selection guide). The importance of books in higher levels of Anglo-Saxon society is shown most spectacularly by those that survive, and by the so-called Alfred Jewel of the late ninth century (in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), probably the end of an aestel, or pointer, used to help read religious and other texts with appropriate solemnity.

In western, Celtic, Britain there were different and overlapping traditions of knowledge transfer, notably via the use of written Ogham script for territorial markers and memorials (for which see the Commemorative and Funerary scheduling

selection guide). It is also here that there is the strongest evidence for the bardic tradition, whereby stories and genealogies were passed down and transmitted by verbal recall.

1.3 Medieval

After the Norman Conquest the introduction of Norman-French as the principal spoken language of the elite, and the decline of Old English, meant that the way language was used in England became extremely complex. As written record keeping became more common in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Latin, French and English were all in use, and their relative merits, dignity and status were much debated. In addition, Hebrew was used as a language of parlance and record by the Jews who arrived in England in the twelfth century. This linguistic complexity, and the need for language to be precisely deployed, was presumably one of the drivers behind an expansion in the number of places of learning, and by about 1100 all the cathedrals

Figure 1
De Vaux College, Salisbury, Wiltshire, founded 1262. The first university-level college in England for secular clergy.

and collegiate churches had schools. Teaching was a core function of these institutions, and the schoolmaster one of their most important officers.

Additionally, as at Canterbury, there were schools expressly established for the education of the young public laity, while others – Bedford, Christchurch (Dorset) and Waltham (Essex) – were removed from monastic control and handed to secular canons. Bury St Edmund's School (Suffolk), founded as part of a collegiate church, was endowed in the later twelfth century to

convert it to a grammar school. Rhetoric, logic and grammar, and for a few some of the rudiments of music, arithmetic, geometry and astronomy, formed the curriculum in such medieval schools.

After the successive visitations of the Black Death in the mid-fourteenth century, chantries (where masses were said for the souls of the dead) were established in increasing numbers of churches, and some had schools attached; the first was probably the grammar school at Wotton-under-Edge (Gloucestershire) founded in 1384. At much

Figure 2
Nicholas Orme's plot of known fourteenth-century schools in Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire.

the same time independent schools began to open, precursors of the later public schools, combining the methods of the grammar school with the inculcation of the skills a gentleman would need. Winchester (Hampshire) was founded in 1382, Eton (Berkshire) in 1440. By the start of Henry VIII's reign in 1509 it has been estimated there were some 400 schools in England of one sort or another. Nicholas Orme (2006, pages 346-72) provides a list of those known or assumed on reasonable evidence, to have existed in England and Wales 1066-1530.

Most schools lay in urban areas, and not necessarily close to any church with which they were institutionally linked; Orme characterises their typical location as a street on the edge of the commercial area. Sometimes churches were used for teaching, sometimes rooms over town gates, and sometimes what had been a private house, given for the purpose as an endowment. From the later fourteenth century generous endowments increasingly funded purpose-built schools such as Winchester and Ewelme (Oxfordshire) with a schoolroom – typically a

Figure 3
A schoolmaster and pupils. While a continental woodcut, this image was used in early Tudor English schoolbooks and shows a schoolroom which would have been familiar to pupils, arcaded and with a prominent master's desk.

single space, sometimes aisled, with master's and usher's seats in prominent positions – and master's lodgings. In smaller towns schools could be the most impressive building after the church; when John Leland visited Crewkerne (Somerset) in 1542 he observed, 'the church standeth on a hill, and by it the grammar school'. Other school foundations utilised existing buildings, such as the King's School, Worcester, which after the Reformation occupied the former rectory of the monastic complex.

The history of English universities begins with the expansion of teaching at Oxford after 1167 when Henry II banned English students from attending the University of Paris. What would later become halls of residence and then colleges were established from the mid-thirteenth century. Well before then, in 1209, some scholars moved to set up an alternative centre of education at Cambridge. Northampton also had a scholarly community. Further university colleges were set up around England later in the century: Howden, East Riding of Yorkshire (1266); Glasney, Cornwall (1267); Lanchester, County Durham (1283); Chester-le-Street, County Durham (1286), and many others. The local whereabouts of these foundations is largely a mystery, and it is problematic to interpret specifically educational functions from the evidence of surviving medieval buildings.

1.4 Post-Medieval

The Dissolution of the monasteries speeded the transfer of learning and teaching to the secular realm. From the sixteenth century the number and range of schools grew markedly, with many now catering for the education of younger children. Many parishes managed to retain chantry funds when the chantries themselves were dissolved in the 1540s, to re-found a school, usually at the edge of the churchyard, or nearby. An extension of the 1540s to the Carnary College (a former charnel chapel) at Norwich Cathedral Close shows how religious buildings might be adapted for educational use during the Reformation.

Taking schools in general, some were well-endowed, others a sideline to shop-keeping or trade. The larger schools were modelled on Oxford and Cambridge colleges; smaller schools might be one- or two-storey buildings with the schoolmaster's house attached. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and especially after the Restoration (1660) England became a semi-literate society; a school was available within walking distance for most boys, and some girls. Some specialised in the teaching of 'scrivener's English and the casting of accounts' for those destined for trade.

Charity schools serving the poor of England's growing towns and cities were set up from the late seventeenth century, and there were also schools associated with industrial complexes like Styal Mill (Cheshire) and some workhouses, but it was not until the early nineteenth century that more systematic provision was made. Many school buildings survive from this period, and designation is primarily concerned with the identification of standing buildings which possess the necessary levels of special interest for listing: for this see the listing selection guide on Education Buildings.

2 Overarching Considerations

2.1 Scheduling and protection

Archaeological sites and monuments vary greatly in character, and can be protected in many ways: through positive management by owners, through policy, and through designation. In terms of our designation system, this consists of several separate approaches which operate alongside each other, and our aim is to recommend the most appropriate sort of protection for each asset. Our approach towards designation will vary, depending on the asset in question: our selection guides aim to indicate our broad approaches, but are subordinate to Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) policy.

Scheduling, through triggering careful control and the involvement of Historic England, ensures that the long-term interests of a site are placed first. It is warranted for sites with real claims to national importance which are the most significant remains in terms of their key place in telling our national story, and the need for close management of their archaeological potential. Scheduled monuments possess a high order of significance: they derive this from their archaeological and historic interest. Our selection guides aim to indicate some of the grounds of importance which may be relevant. Unlike listed buildings, scheduled sites are not generally suited to adaptive re-use.

Scheduling is discretionary: the Secretary of State has a choice as to whether to add a site to the Schedule or not. Scheduling is deliberately selective: given the ever-increasing numbers of archaeological remains which continue to be identified and interpreted, this is unavoidable. The Schedule aims to capture a representative sample of nationally important sites, rather than be an inclusive compendium of all such assets.

Given that archaeological sensitivity is all around us, it is important that all means of protecting archaeological remains are recognised. Other designations such as listing can play an important part here. Other sites may be identified as being of national importance, but not scheduled. Government policy affords them protection through the planning system, and local authorities play a key part in managing them through their archaeological services and Historic Environment Records (HERs).

The Schedule has evolved since it began in 1882, and some entries fall far short of modern standards. We are striving to upgrade these older records as part of our programme of upgrading the National Heritage List for England. Historic England continues to revise and upgrade these entries, which can be consulted on the Historic England website.

2.2 Heritage assets and national importance

Paragraph 194 and footnote 63 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018) states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification and for assets of the highest significance should be wholly exceptional; 'non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets'. These assets are defined as having National Importance (NI). This is the latest articulation of a principle first raised in PPG16 (1990-2010) and later in PPS5 (2010-2012).

2.3 Selection criteria

The particular considerations used by the Secretary of State when determining whether sites of all types are suitable for statutory designation through scheduling are set out in their Scheduled Monuments Policy Statement.

3 Considerations by Period

While archaeological investigation may reveal more about the phasing and development of medieval and earlier complexes where education took place, hitherto no sites have been designated as scheduled monuments because of their demonstrable or potential importance to the history of education. Those early education buildings which do survive are protected through listing.

3.1   Roman

As noted above, while it is known that education was valued and there is clear evidence of a literate society, no buildings or structures which can be said to be 'schools' have been identified. It is unlikely anyway that they would have a distinctive plan or features which would lead to their identification and possible individual designation. The probability is that these would anyway lie within broader urban areas which would be assessed for scheduling on a broader area basis, rather than on a building-by-building basis.

3.2   Anglo-Saxon and Viking

The sites of monasteries and cathedrals, where schools or places of learning and teaching were based, will always be strong candidates for scheduling in their entirety: see the Religion and Ritual post-AD410 scheduling selection guide.

3.3   Medieval and later

Again, schools which formed part of greater churches or colleges will generally be assessed or designated as part of the whole site rather than as independent structures. Free-standing buildings which remain in beneficial use – normally this will mean roofed – will be listed if of sufficient special interest, whereas ruins, or the sites of educational buildings, will be eligible for scheduling, again if of sufficient national importance. Factors which will be especially relevant in such cases will be:

Period
Sites of all periods are eligible for consideration, but those predating the Reformation and subsequent flourishing of school foundations in the mid-sixteenth century are likely to be of particular rarity and interest.

Survival/Condition
The potential of remains, both above and below ground, to yield information (say about a school's layout) beyond what is already known is an important factor in assessment.

Documentation
Establishments which are well-documented, especially those which possess archival material (including modern analyses) which helps explain how buildings functioned, are likely to have a claim to greater significance

Group Value
As outlined above, educational sites often stood close to churches, or almshouses or other charitable foundations. Where these survive, either as standing structures or as known archaeological sites, their independent and collective significances are strengthened.

4 Select Bibliography

Orme, N., *Medieval Schools: From Roman Britain to Renaissance England* (2006)

Seabourne, M., *The English School, vol. 1, 1370-1870* (1971)

5 Where to Get Advice

If you would like to contact the Listing Team in one of our regional offices, please email: customers@HistoricEngland.org.uk noting the subject of your query, or call or write to the local team at:

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Acknowledgments

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