

Building Site



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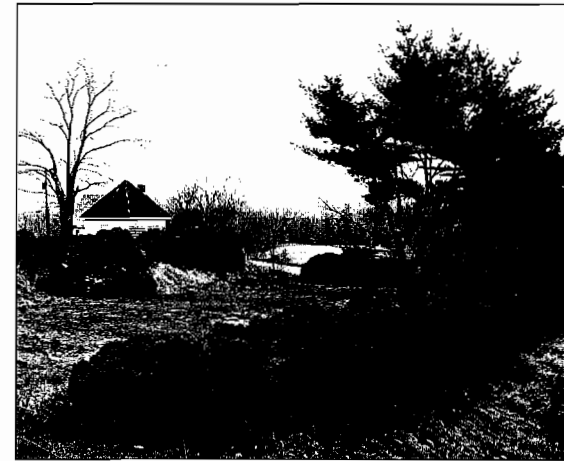
The landscape surrounding a historic building and contained within an individual parcel of land is considered the building site. The site, including its associated features, contributes to the overall character of the historic property. As a result, the relationship between the buildings and landscape features within the site's boundaries should be considered in the overall planning for rehabilitation project work.

Landscapes which contain historic buildings are found in rural, suburban, and urban communities and reflect environmental influences such as climate as well as the historic period in which they were created. Landscapes created for functional purposes as well as aesthetic enjoyment have been a part of American history since European settlement. Historic American styles in landscape design developed from 17th-18th century Spanish and Colonial gardens, evolving into the pastoral and picturesque design of the 19th century. Victorian carpet bedding, popular during the late 19th century, produced profuse plantings of annuals and

perennials. Later, the early 20th century yielded a return to classical traditions, with revival gardens reflecting European renaissance design.

The building site may be significant in its own right, or derive its significance simply from its association with the historic structure. The level of significance, association, integrity, and condition of the building site may influence the degree to which the existing landscape features should be retained during the rehabilitation project. In an industrial property, the site may be defined simply as the relationship between buildings or between the ground plane and open space and its associated buildings. Designed historic landscapes significant in the field of landscape architecture require a more detailed analysis of their character-defining features which may include lawns, hedges, walks, drives, fences, walls, terraces, water features, topography (grading) and furnishings. Vegetation is an important feature in landscapes; this material, including both native species and cultivated

plants, creates an appearance that is constantly changing, both seasonally and annually. Since most plant material is adapted to specific environments, the character of landscapes varies dramatically in different climates, elevations and regions.



Recommended

Identify, retain and preserve

Identifying, retaining, and preserving buildings and their features as well as features of the site that are important in defining its overall historic character. Site features may include circulation systems such as walks, paths, roads, or parking; vegetation such as trees, shrubs, fields, or herbaceous plant material; landforms such as terracing, berms or grading; furnishings such as lights, fences, or benches; decorative elements such as sculpture, statuary or monuments; water features including fountains, streams, pools, or lakes; and subsurface archeological features which are important in defining the history of the site.

Retaining the historic relationship between buildings and the landscape.

The stream and circular wagon approach are important features of this historic mill site.



Not Recommended

Removing or radically changing buildings and their features or site features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the property so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

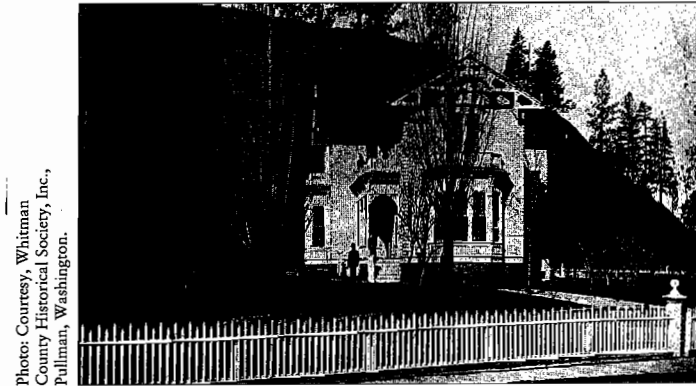


Photo: Courtesy, Whitman County Historical Society, Inc., Pullman, Washington.

Landscape features that are important in defining the historic character of a building site may include fences, walks, and small outbuildings, as well as trees, bushes and topography that may be unique, such as the hill behind the house.

Removing or relocating buildings or landscape features thus destroying the historic relationship between buildings and the landscape.

Removing or relocating historic buildings on a site or in a complex of related historic structures—such as a mill complex or farm—thus diminishing its historic character.

Moving buildings onto the site, thus creating a false historical appearance.

Radically changing the grade level of the site. For example, changing the grade adjacent to a building to permit development of a formerly below-grade area that would drastically change the historic relationship of the building to its site.

Recommended

Providing proper drainage to assure that water does not erode foundation walls; drain toward the building; or damage or erode the landscape.

Minimizing disturbance of terrain around buildings or elsewhere on the site, thus reducing the possibility of destroying or damaging important landscape features or archeological resources.

Surveying and documenting areas where the terrain will be altered to determine the potential impact to important landscape features or archeological resources.

Not Recommended

Failing to maintain adequate site drainage so that buildings and site features are damaged or destroyed; or alternatively, changing the site grading so that water no longer drains properly.

Introducing heavy machinery into areas where it may disturb or damage important landscape features or archeological resources.

Failing to survey the building site prior to the beginning of rehabilitation work which results in damage to, or destruction of, important landscape features or archeological resources.

Whenever possible, non-destructive techniques should be used to inventory and evaluate archeological resources to ensure their protection.



Recommended

Protect and maintain

Protecting, e.g., preserving in place important archeological resources.

Planning and carrying out any necessary investigation using professional archeologists and modern archeological methods when preservation in place is not feasible.

Preserving important landscape features, including ongoing maintenance of historic plant material.

Protecting building and landscape features against arson and vandalism before rehabilitation work begins, i.e., erecting protective fencing and installing alarm systems that are keyed into local protection agencies.

Not Recommended

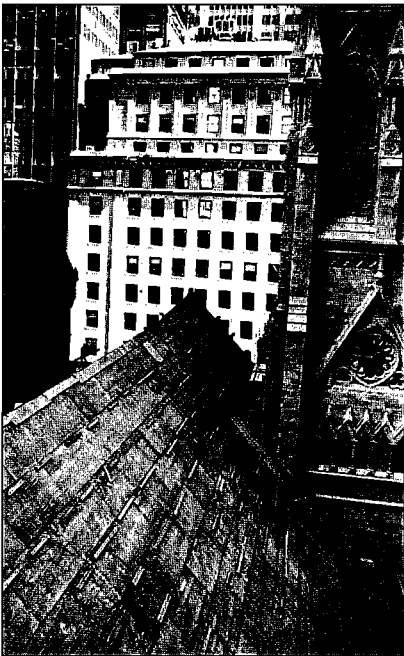
Leaving known archeological material unprotected so that it is damaged during rehabilitation work.

Permitting unqualified personnel to perform data recovery on archeological resources so that improper methodology results in the loss of important archeological material.

Allowing important landscape features to be lost or damaged due to a lack of maintenance.

Permitting the property to remain unprotected so that the building and landscape features or archeological resources are damaged or destroyed.

Removing or destroying features from the building or site such as wood siding, iron fencing, masonry balustrades, or plant material.



▲► The roof and stained glass windows of this historic church have been appropriately covered with plywood as a protective measure during construction of a new building on an adjacent lot.



Recommended

Providing continued protection of masonry, wood, and architectural metals which comprise the building and site features through appropriate cleaning, rust removal, limited paint removal, and re-application of protective coating systems.

Evaluating the overall condition of materials and features to determine whether more than protection and maintenance are required, that is, if repairs to building and site features will be necessary.

Repair

Repairing features of the building and site by reinforcing historic materials.

Park-like settings surrounding many historic mansions are important in defining their historic character. However, the relationship between building and site was destroyed by an inappropriate rehabilitation when this house was converted into offices, and the formally landscaped grounds in front of the house were bulldozed to provide a parking lot.

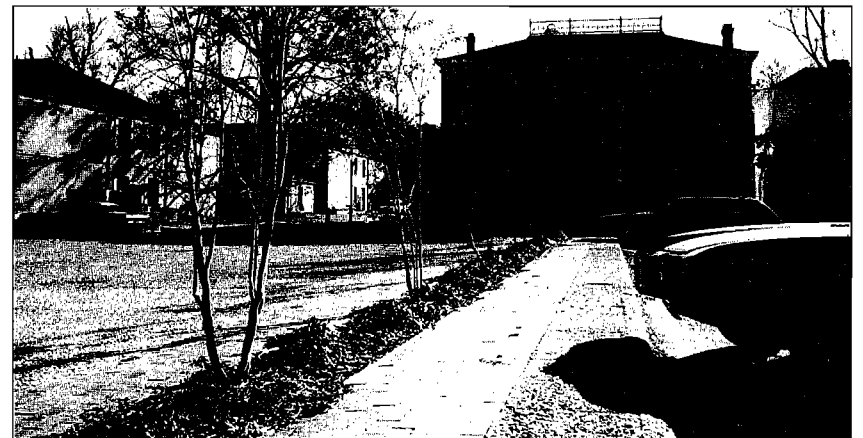
Not Recommended

Failing to provide adequate protection of materials on a cyclical basis so that deterioration of building and site features results.

Failing to undertake adequate measures to assure the protection of building and site features.

Replacing an entire feature of the building or site such as a fence, walkway, or driveway when repair of materials and limited compatible replacement of deteriorated or missing parts are appropriate.

Using a substitute material for the replacement part that does not convey the visual appearance of the surviving parts of the building or site feature or that is physically or chemically incompatible.



Recommended

Replace

Replacing in kind an entire feature of the building or site that is too deteriorated to repair if the overall form and detailing are still evident. Physical evidence from the deteriorated feature should be used as a model to guide the new work. This could include an entrance or porch, walkway, or fountain. If using the same kind of material is not technically or economically feasible, then a compatible substitute material may be considered.

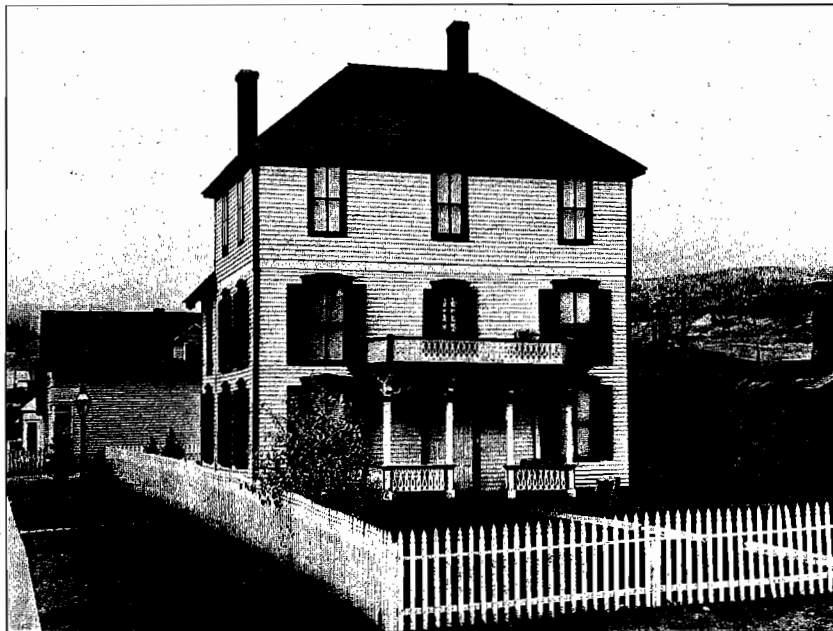
Replacing deteriorated or damaged landscape features in kind.

Not Recommended

Removing a feature of the building or site that is unreparable and not replacing it; or replacing it with a new feature that does not convey the same visual appearance.

Adding conjectural landscape features to the site such as period reproduction lamps, fences, fountains, or vegetation that is historically inappropriate, thus creating a false sense of historic development.

Photo: Library, The State Historical Society of Colorado



This wood picket fence is as important to the site as the shutters, porch detailing, and clapboards are to the house. As such, the fence was carefully repaired and painted as part of an overall project to preserve the historic residence.

The following work is highlighted to indicate that it represents the particularly complex technical or design aspects of rehabilitation project work and should only be considered after the preservation concerns listed above have been addressed.

Recommended

Design for Missing Historic Features

Designing and constructing a new feature of a building or site when the historic feature is completely missing, such as an outbuilding, terrace or driveway. It may be based on historical, pictorial, and physical documentation; or be a new design that is compatible with the historic character of the building and site.

Alterations/Additions for the New Use

Designing new onsite parking, loading docks, or ramps when required by the new use so that they are as unobtrusive as possible and assure the preservation of the historic relationship between the building or buildings and the landscape.

Designing new exterior additions to historic buildings or adjacent new construction which is compatible with the historic character of the site and which preserves the historic relationship between the building or buildings and the landscape.

Removing nonsignificant buildings, additions, or site features which detract from the historic character of the site.

Not Recommended

Creating a false historical appearance because the replaced feature is based on insufficient historical, pictorial, and physical documentation.

Introducing a new building or site feature that is out of scale or of an otherwise inappropriate design.

Introducing a new landscape feature, including plant material, that is visually incompatible with the site, or that alters or destroys the historic site patterns or vistas.

Locating any new construction on the building where important landscape features will be damaged or destroyed, for example removing a lawn and walkway and installing a parking lot.

Placing parking facilities directly adjacent to historic buildings where automobiles may cause damage to the buildings or to important landscape features.

Introducing new construction onto the building site which is visually incompatible in terms of size, scale, design, materials, color, and texture; which destroys historic relationships on the site; or which damages or destroys important landscape features.

Removing a historic building in a complex of buildings; or removing a building feature, or a landscape feature which is important in defining the historic character of the site.