

Appendix A

Protocol for assessing applications for adding or amending names to war memorials

Introduction

West Lancashire Borough Council recognise the importance of war memorials to local communities. They are an integral part of the social history of our villages and towns and serve as a constant reminder of the servicemen lost during the wars.

Whilst it is recognised that errors may have occurred in the past in the recording of names on war memorials, changing war memorials by adding or amending the names commemorated is a sensitive and emotive matter and one which needs careful consideration by the Council.

This protocol sets down a process which identifies how applications for adding or amending names on a war can be put forward, what information needs to be provided for the Council to validate the application and how we will assess the proposal and come to a decision on the changes put forward.

Applications

Applications to alter/amend Council owned war memorials are to be made in writing to the Assistant Director Planning.

Information required as part of an application

The person/body applying to add or alter any war memorial will be required to provide detailed supporting information to justify their application. The application will need to address and provide clear evidence on the following points in relation to any person(s) names they wish to be added/amended on a war memorial;

1. Full name(s)
2. Proof of the person(s) war service. This should ideally include their service number (if known) and/or details of their rank and regiment.
3. Confirmation that they died in service and the year/date of their death.
4. Proof of the person's place of birth.
5. Residency at the time of the relevant war. Further information may be required regarding the place they enlisted.
6. Proof of what efforts that have been made to contact any living relatives/family members of the person(s) and were contact has been made, that they support the application.

The application process

Once the application is validated the Council will acknowledge the application and will seek to determine stage 1 of the proposal within 28 days.

The Heritage and Environment Manager will assess the proposal based upon the information provided.

Assessment will be based primarily on the person(s) residency at the time of the conflict, as this is felt to best represent the person's local connection to a particular village or community. On the whole as the creation of war memorials was organised locally the names of the fallen servicemen, who fought in the world wars, were people known by their families and by local people and communities in which, they lived and worked.

Whilst we acknowledge that a place of birth has some weight in our judgement it is more important to know where the person lived/resided at the time they enlisted. Therefore significant and greatest weight, in our judgement, will be afforded this criteria in our assessment.

The second key factor in our assessment is whether the person(s) are already recorded or named on another war memorial in the locality. We recognise that honouring our dead servicemen is vital and that the Council memorials play an important role in recording the names across the borough. However there are other memorials within the Borough owned and looked after by Parish Councils or within Churches and church yards which also commemorate our fallen servicemen. We need to be careful when researching adding new names that we do not duplicate names across memorials locally. This diminishes the way in which we commemorate the 'community' based nature of the memorials.

The Council consider that being recorded on a single, local memorial will be appropriate in most cases and applications to copy names on to other memorials will be afforded little weight in our final judgement, unless there are other reasons for doing so.

On the completion of the initial (stage 1) assessment a view will be taken (in consultation with the Assistant Director Planning) to whether to continue with the application to stage 2 – consultation. In the case where applications are not taken forward to stage 2, the applicant will be notified in writing explaining the reasons for the decision.

Community consultation

The stage 2 process involves providing the opportunity for the local community to comment on any proposals to alter/amend war memorials. The Council will consult the relevant Parish Council (if applicable) and local amenity or community groups of the proposed changes and will provide 21 days for any comments.

Information on applications relating to Council war memorials will be placed on the Council's web site at;

www.westlancs.gov.uk/planning/heritage-and-environment/war-memorials.aspx

Any comments received will be considered in coming to a final decision.

Decisions

The decision is delegated to the Assistant Director Planning, in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder.

Applicants will be notified in writing of the Council's final decision and the reasons for coming to that conclusion.

Implementation

Any changes approved, under an application, will be arranged and supervised by the Council. The work will be undertaken by suitably qualified contractors experienced in conservation work in a style which matches the original design of the memorial.

Any agreed changes will be undertaken within 3 months of approval being given.

More information

If you would like to any more information on the application process or this protocol please contact Ian Bond - Heritage and Environment Manager at email ian.bond@westlancs.gov.uk or by telephone 01695 585167

Useful research information

Sources for research information include;

Commonwealth War Graves Commission (2 Marlow Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 7DX, T: 01628 634221/507200, or at www.cwgc.org).

Ministry of Defence – (Veterans Agency, Norcross, Thornton Cleveleys, Lancashire FY5 3WP, Y: 0800 169 2277, or at www.mod.uk)

Public Records Office – (National Archives, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU, T: 020 8876 3444, or at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk).

War Memorials Archive – (T: 020 7207 9863/9851, Email memorials@iwm.org.uk or at www.ukniwm.org.uk).