

1. Role of Attribute Listing in Heritage Impact Assessment

Attribute listing is a foundational tool in Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA). It involves systematically identifying and describing the physical, spatial, visual, and experiential characteristics that underpin a heritage site's significance. These attributes—such as materials, layout, views, craftsmanship, landscape features, or intangible practices—are the tangible and observable carriers of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) or local heritage value.

In HIA, attribute listing serves three critical roles. First, it establishes a baseline for impact prediction. Before assessing potential harm from a proposed development, assessors need a clear inventory of what makes the site significant. Second, attribute listing enables precise impact evaluation. Rather than vague statements about “damage to heritage,” assessors can predict how a new building might block a specific view axis (visual attribute) or how foundation digging might disturb buried stratigraphy (archaeological attribute). Third, it supports mitigation design. If a proposed road affects the acoustic attribute of a historic garden (e.g., tranquility), mitigation can target that attribute through screening or rerouting.

Attribute listing thus directly supports protection, management, and conservation. For protection, it identifies legally defensible features that must be preserved. For management, it prioritizes monitoring efforts (e.g., checking the stability of a listed decorative plaster ceiling). For conservation, it guides intervention choices: conserving a stone portal (material attribute) may require different treatments than conserving the processional route (spatial attribute). Without a clear attribute list, HIAs risk overlooking subtle but significant values, leading to incremental erosion of heritage.

References

1. ICOMOS. (2011). Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties.
2. Kerr, J. S. (2013). The Conservation Plan (7th ed.). National Trust of Australia.
3. Rodwell, D. (2019). The historic urban landscape and the attribute listing. *Historic Environment: Policy & Practice*, 10(3-4), 245–263.

2. Attribute Listing for the Historic Centre of Rome (UNESCO, 1980)

List of at least 10 attributes

1. Roman Forum ruins (republican and imperial structures)
2. Colosseum (amphitheatre form, travertine façade)
3. Pantheon (oculus, coffered dome, rotunda)
4. Baroque fountains (e.g., Trevi Fountain – sculptural groups, water flow)
5. Pilgrimage routes (viae papali, esp. to St. Peter's)
6. Renaissance palazzi (e.g., Palazzo Farnese – rusticated ground floor, courtyard)
7. Axis roads (Via del Corso, Via dei Fori Imperiali – straight vistas)
8. Archaeological stratigraphy below modern street level
9. Church floors with inlaid Cosmatesque marble
10. Panoramic viewpoints (Pincio Terrace, Gianicolo Hill)

Classification into categories

Category	Attributes
Archaeological	Forum ruins, stratigraphy
Architectural	Colosseum, Pantheon, palazzi, church floors
Urban spatial	Axis roads, pilgrimage routes, panoramic views
Hydraulic/artistic	Baroque fountains

Explanation of how attributes convey heritage significance

The Historic Centre of Rome is a layered urban palimpsest. The Roman Forum and Colosseum embody Rome's imperial power and engineering mastery, while the Pantheon demonstrates a unique concrete dome that influenced Western architecture. Baroque fountains

illustrate papal patronage and public water management. Renaissance palazzi convey the revival of classical order and aristocratic culture. Pilgrimage routes and axis roads show how the city structured movement for religious and civic spectacle. Together, these attributes narrate Rome's continuous habitation from antiquity through the Baroque and modern eras, fulfilling UNESCO's criterion (i) (masterpiece of human genius) and (vi) (direct association with events and ideas of universal significance – e.g., Roman law, Christianity, Renaissance humanism). Loss or alteration of any single attribute would diminish the city's legibility as an evolving historical whole.

References

1. ICOMOS. (1980). Advisory Body Evaluation of Rome (C 91). UNESCO.
2. Camerlenghi, N. (2018). St. Peter's in the Vatican: From Constantine to Michelangelo. Cambridge University Press.
3. Taylor, R. (2016). Rome: An Urban History from Antiquity to the Present. Cambridge University Press.