

## LISTED BUILDINGS ADVICE NOTE

### ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS

Listed Building Consent is required for any alteration that would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. This leaflet seeks to provide guidance on when consent is required for certain works, however the list is not definitive and if you are unsure whether the works you propose require consent please contact the Council.

#### First steps

In proposing an alteration, it is vital to first appreciate and understand the *significance* of the listed building, that is, the value the listed building has for this and future generations. What features contribute to the significance of the listed building? This could range from its age, the materials it has been constructed with, the roof form, the planform or layout of spaces, internal features such as staircases, its setting and relationship to any other historic buildings listed or unlisted. Understanding what makes your building special will enable you to make an informed choice about any alterations you propose to ensure this specialness is protected.

A Heritage Statement will be required with all applications for Listed Building Consent. This document describes the significance and outlines the impact of the proposal. With certain proposals, for example extensions, it is advisable to produce the Statement prior to designing the alterations as it will help you to fully understand the building. For further information, see our leaflet on 'Writing a Heritage Statement'.

#### Extensions

Listed Building Consent is required for all extensions and new additions, including porches and conservatories. These may need planning permission too. In determining an application for an extension on a listed building, we consider the following principles:

- **What is important about the listed building?** We do not carry out a full architectural assessment of the building ourselves but through the plans and documents submitted with the application (including the Heritage Statement), a site visit and other research as necessary, we learn as much as we can about the building in order to define what we believe constitutes the significance of the listed building.
- **The principle of an extension; is the building extendable at all?** Government advice in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012

recognises that the significance of some listed buildings can be ruined by unsuitable extension, and that there will always be some historic buildings where any extensions would be damaging and should not be permitted. Where the significance of the particular building would be adversely affected, we may not support *any* extension. A further important consideration is the cumulative impact of successive extensions on a building's special interest.

- **What is the impact of the extension on the significance of the listed building?** We assess the impact of the proposed extension on the listed building in terms of position, scale, bulk and mass, design, proportion of elements such as walling, windows and roofs, detailing and materials, together with the impact of any alterations to the historic fabric of the existing listed building that would be part of the scheme.

Where it would appear to us that an extension would unacceptably harm a listed building's special character, there may be potential to explore a more imaginative solution for additional space, for example converting an outbuilding, or the erection of a new building to provide an office, studio or guest accommodation (subject to any relevant permission).

### **External alterations**

Even seemingly simple external alterations can have a negative impact on the appearance of a listed building. Adding objects such as shutters, signs, advertisements, sunblind's, meter boxes, satellite dishes and spotlights are likely consent. Consent to add an object to an architecturally important or visually dominant elevation, or on particularly sensitive historic fabric, is unlikely to be supported. Other works that require consent are:

- Repointing of an elevation (see our advice note 'Repointing');
- Alterations to or replacement of windows and doors, and the insertion of new ones, including dormer windows and roof lights (see our advice note 'Replacement Windows');
- Demolition of chimney stacks, porches and balconies or the erection of new;
- Painting, rendering or otherwise applying an external wall coating (such as a waterproofing product) to brickwork, render, flint or stone, or changing the colour of previously painted work;
- Changing the roof covering, for example from natural slate to imitation slate;
- The installation of a new boiler flue as it is important that it is unobtrusive. Reusing the existing exit route is generally recommended.
- The removal or alteration of outbuildings, garden walls, gate piers, gates and railings which are considered curtilage listed.

### **Internal alterations**

Although many listed buildings are in private ownership and not open to the public the interior is also protected by the listed status. This is to ensure that changes to features of architectural or historic interest are managed. Works such as the removal of internal walls, stud partitions and staircases, or the erection of new partitions and walls and installation of staircases will require Listed Building Consent as this can

result in the loss of historic fabric or have an impact on the planform of the listed building. Consent is also required for the removal or alteration of internal doors and other architectural features such as panelling, fireplaces and decorative plasterwork.

Facilities such as bathrooms and kitchens have often been replaced so a historic bathroom or kitchen is a rare and precious survivor and should be preserved. Occasionally a single feature of historic interest may still be found, for example, a "copper" or water pump and such features should be retained. However, consent is not required for the replacement of a modern bathroom suite or kitchen units. But the insertion of new mechanical ventilation and flues and vents and new external pipework is likely to require consent. Careful consideration needs to be given to the position and type of these modern alterations.

### **Useful contacts**

See our leaflet 'Conservation Contacts' for useful sources of information.