

CHAPTER 9

ALTERATIONS TO LISTED BUILDINGS - EXTERNAL

GENERAL ROOF MATERIALS AND DETAILS

- 9.1 Roofing materials on Listed Buildings within South Cambridgeshire vary from thatch, natural Welsh slate, handmade clay plain and pan tiles. Alterations to the original historic roofs will require Listed Building Consent.
- 9.2 It was common during World War II to cover or replace thatch with corrugated iron. As a result, many historic roofs were lost. Historic photographs or physical evidence can provide the evidence necessary to justify and inform the reinstatement of either longstraw or water reed thatch.
- 9.3 There may be evidence within the attic space that gives clues as to what the original roofing material was. However, it depends on how old the building is and if the entire roof structure has been replaced at some point in the buildings history. Early roofs (and those found inside later ones) could contain evidence of smoke blackened beams or thatch on the inside of the roof. Originally buildings did not have chimneys and a small fire was lit in the middle of a room which produced smoke blackening. Evidence may also be provided by historic photos or written descriptions of the buildings.
- 9.4 When carrying out repairs to an existing roof or building a new roof, the material used is important. In addition, modern Building Regulations might dictate particular requirements for insulation. Ventilation can be achieved through vents in the eaves line, which is a discreet and simple way to provide circulation of air.
- 9.5 When installing a new roof, once Listed Building Consent has been granted, it may be possible to install the insulation and additional new timbers on the outside of the old roof, thereby raising the height of the new roof marginally. This can allow the original roof structure to remain in situ and be visible. In addition, a new roof may result in the change of the load structure. A structural engineer should be consulted.
- 9.6 The Council will require that all new materials are handmade, locally sourced (from within the United Kingdom and preferably from the local area) and appropriate to the building's age and style.

DORMERS

- 9.7 Historically, dormers enabled the attic or upper floor to be used by introducing light and air. However, the introduction of new or additional dormers can create a substantial loss of historic fabric and change the external appearance. For example, dormers can appear too dominant or regular. The installation of a dormer requires cutting parts of the original roof structure and the advice of a structural

engineer should be sought at an early stage. Nevertheless, whilst it may be structurally possible to create a new dormer, such an addition may harm the fabric and appearance of the Listed Building.

- 9.8 Where there is no evidence that the building ever included dormers (e.g. from old photographs or the presence of trimmers within the roof structure) then the Council is unlikely to support applications for the installation of dormers on a Listed Building.
- 9.9 When a dormer is to be reinstated, the existing roofing material will help determine the style of dormers and design. For example, within a thatched roof, the common styles are either an eyebrow dormer or a gabled dormer, but it is also common in some areas of South Cambridgeshire to find plain tiled dormers set within thatched roofs. Elsewhere, and especially in the Fen Edge villages, it is common to find 'catslide' dormers with peg tiled roofs.
- 9.10 Dormers are also to be seen in plain tiled roofs where they are usually covered in the same tiles as the main roof. Lead flat roofed dormers occur in the plain tiled or slate roofs of larger 18th Century and 19th Century houses.

ROOFLIGHTS

- 9.11 Rooflights can also result in the loss of historic fabric and alter the external character and appearance of the Listed Building. There will be a presumption against prominently located rooflights in the roofs of historic buildings. However, in some cases it might be possible to locate a rooflight discreetly, such as in a roof pitch or in an internal valley or within a modern section of the building. Rooflights should be fitted between the rafters to avoid damage to historic roofs.
- 9.12 Where the Council supports the principle of rooflights, they are to be of a traditional size, form, appearance and detailing, flush with the roof covering. The installation of a rooflight within a slate roof is likely to be visually less intrusive compared to a tiled roof. Where rooflights are to be installed on pantiled roofs, consideration should be given to the use of secret gutters to avoid unsightly lead detailing around the rooflight and minimise the visual impact.
- 9.13 The use of multiple rooflights is likely to be visually unacceptable and could result in the loss of historic fabric. Where there is a particular need for additional light, e.g. a room without a window, consideration may be given to the use of a single rooflight. However, it may be preferable to light the room artificially if it is ancillary or already has some natural light.

RAINWATER GOODS

- 9.14 Whilst thatched roofs are capable of shedding rainwater naturally from their large overhung eaves other roofing materials traditionally had either no method of managing rainwater or used simple timber gutters. This was until the Industrial

Revolution when cast iron gutters and rainwater pipes were produced. In some instances these have more recently been replaced by plastic. There is a presumption that the Council will not support the use of new plastic replacement rainwater goods as they are not historically appropriate for use on Listed Buildings and will not provide any enhancement to the building. New rainwater goods should either be cast iron or cast aluminium of traditional design and profile.

CHIMNEYS AND CHIMNEY POTS / CAPS

- 9.15 Works to existing chimneys, such as increasing the height or installing a chimney pot will require Listed Building Consent and need to be justified. There are some cases where insurance companies advise owners that chimneys must be raised to comply with their policy requirements, especially in the case of buildings with thatched roofs. These cases will be judged on their individual merits. The Council will resist applications for the installation of spark arresters in thatched roofed properties as research indicates that these can create problems such as blocking up and trapping heat.
- 9.16 When undertaking works to a chimney it is important to consider the types of brick (size, colour, and texture) and pot that should be used, in order that they complement the existing structure. There are many types of chimney pots; however, often the best source of information is to look at other buildings within the village to gauge what style and colour is typical.
- 9.17 Chimneystacks are vulnerable to weathering and sometimes it is necessary to repoint the brickwork or even dismantle the upper part of the stack and rebuild it to match. Partial dismantling and rebuilding will require Listed Building Consent.
- 9.18 Renewing of flashings or flaunchings around the bases of a chimney may be considered a repair, depending on the extent of work. Typically these works are done using lead or lime mortar.
- 9.19 Regardless of whether the fireplace is in active use, ventilation is required to maintain air circulation in an historic building. It is important to review the best solution for the situation.

SOLE PLATES AND FOUNDATIONS

- 9.20 On timber-framed buildings, small-localised repairs to existing sole plates or foundations may be implemented as a repair. However, for more extensive repairs a structural engineer's report must be submitted to the Council together with a specification and schedule of work that clearly outlines the scope of work in order that these can be agreed before work commences.
- 9.21 Complete replacement of the sole plate or extensive works to the foundations such as underpinning will always require Listed Building Consent and should be supported by a structural engineer's report.

EXTERNAL FINISHES

- 9.22 The external finish of a Listed Building contributes to the character and significance of the building. Common external finishes include timber weatherboarding, exposed brick or stone and timber frame covered in render. Historic materials should be retained and repaired if possible. In rare cases where the exterior finishes are damaged beyond repair or where inappropriate materials have been used in the past and total replacement is necessary, it is important to discuss these issues with the Council before any works are implemented in order to ensure that what is proposed is in the best long-term interests of the building. Listed Building Consent will be required for wholesale replacements of external finishes.
- 9.23 Historic finishes, e.g. old wall paintings, pencilling, ruddling and historic advertisements, should be protected, as they may be part of the building's special character and significance.
- 9.24 Routine maintenance and small areas of repair to existing render or paint can be carried out without Listed Building Consent, providing it matches the existing, e.g. limewash applied to previously limewashed areas. Treatment of the exterior of a building can vary historically and once the building has been painted, it is difficult to remove, therefore permanently affecting the historic fabric and character of the building.
- 9.25 There are three ways a lime finish can be used:
- Lime plaster is typically used internally on the partitions
 - Lime render is typically used externally
 - Lime wash is typically used as a paint like substance, which can be coloured or tinted and used either internally or externally

Timber weatherboard

- 9.26 Timber weatherboarding is a traditional finish in South Cambridgeshire on barns and outbuildings, usually stained or tarred, but in several villages the tradition is for paint and the specific local details contribute to the character and appearance of the Listed Building. Any proposal for new or replacement boarding should consider the width and detailing of the boards, the finish (stained, painted, tarred) and the form (feather-edged or straight-edged). Ship lap boarding is rarely an appropriate detail.

Render / Paint

- 9.27 Most timber framed buildings were originally rendered or limewashed. Today many of these buildings have also been painted with modern paints and some have had inappropriate materials applied such as cement render or modern pebbledash. As

with any traditional structures, the need for the building to be flexible and allow moisture to move in and out is critical. Inappropriate materials can prevent this breathability and flexibility from happening and eventually lead to damp and structural problems. Evidence such as cracking, small areas of render falling off, damp problems and draughts can be signs that the external material is failing.

- 9.28 Listed Building Consent is likely to be required for the removal of an inappropriate material such as cement render as the method of removal and potential damage to the surface underneath needs to be assessed. Following discussions with the Council, it is recommended that a small and discreet test area be trialled to determine how easily the material is removed and to assess the condition of the materials beneath.
- 9.29 Limewash is highly porous being the final coat in a totally breathable system, as opposed to modern emulsion paints, which encase the walls in a plastic film. One major benefit to using limewash is that it provides a natural UV proof (ultra-violet) protection to the building.
- 9.30 Undertaking modest repairs to defective lime render or plaster may be carried out without Listed Building Consent, providing the repairs are minor and match the existing colour, mixture and texture. If a Listed Building has existing cement render, which is failing, Listed Building Consent is required to remove the render and replace it with the appropriate lime mix. It is possible that the removal of existing cement renders will damage the historic fabric beneath. Following consultation with the Council, a test area may be removed to understand what, if any, harm may result.

Masonry (Brick or Stone)

- 9.31 Masonry buildings were not normally painted (although limewash was sometimes used as a finish to exposed brickwork internally, particularly in cellars and ancillary buildings). Once applied to masonry walls, modern paint is difficult to remove and may affect their breathability causing problems with damp and damaging the surface. It will also affect the special character and appearance of the building and is unlikely to receive officer support.
- 9.32 In all cases, surface materials should be porous and breathable. However, it is possible that over the evolution of the building's history, an inappropriate finish may have been used. This equally applies to the internal finishes of traditional buildings.
- 9.33 Early bricks were fired at low temperature; some may not have been fired long enough, causing them to be relatively soft. In South Cambridgeshire, the soft bricks are mainly red. If these bricks have been exposed to excessive moisture, and then a frost occurs, the face of the brick may 'spall'. This is when the face of the brick starts to flake off. This can be made worse when cement is used in the mortar joints. It may be possible to carefully remove a brick that has significantly

lost its facing and either turn it around for reuse or replace it with a complementary new brick. It is important to ascertain if the material is still sound and performing well, or if it has lost its integrity.

FENESTRATIONS

Windows

- 9.34 Windows are a significant component in the character of historic buildings. Windows can be evidence for the age and evolution of the building as styles and design changed over time. Windows create patterns and rhythms on the buildings elevation, for example on terraced houses windows create a visual harmony and unity.
- 9.35 Listed Building Consent is required if the proposal is to replace single glazed windows with double glazed windows; applications will be considered based upon the merits of the individual circumstances.
- 9.36 If historic timber or metal windows exist, they should be retained and repaired. The Council holds lists of companies who are willing to make repairs rather than replace windows. It is only in the few cases where a window is completely beyond repair that the Council may consider approving replacements. The new window would have to match the existing in style, materials and design with old glass being salvaged and reused.
- 9.37 Photographic evidence of previous windows can sometimes give the detailed information needed for successful reinstatement. The Council will generally require such solid evidence and is very unlikely to support speculative proposals.
- 9.38 It is possible that prior to a building being Listed inappropriate modern windows were installed. The Council will support the replacement of these windows with a traditional size, style and design as this will be an enhancement to the building. Old photographs or documentation will be required as evidence.
- 9.39 Window furniture or hardware is important, for example, the hinges, catches and locking mechanisms should be retained for reuse where replacement joinery has been approved. When proposing new furniture, the appropriate style, size and finish should be selected to match existing or an appropriate design for the windows.

Doors

- 9.40 The style, design, size and furniture of a door can reveal the age and history of a building. Where possible, existing doors should be retained and repaired. When a new door is to be introduced, the design and detailing should be appropriate. There is a presumption that modern flush or moulded doors will not be accepted

and stable or barn doors will not be accepted in Listed Buildings other than in a barn style or stable building.

- 9.41 As with windows it is important to retain and reuse original door furniture or hardware if a replacement door has been given consent. Any new furniture should be kept simple and appropriate to the door age and character. Iron or forged metal was common in earlier buildings whilst later Georgian buildings brass or iron was used. Reinstatement of original doors should be based on photographic evidence.

Ventilation and extraction systems

- 9.42 As discussed above, it is important for any historic building to be able to breathe, allowing air movement and moisture to enter and leave the building naturally. In particular, ventilation needs to be considered in light of the particular characteristics of the historic building construction. Poor ventilation can lead to the following problems to both the building and its occupants:

- Promotion of moisture and condensation
- Decay and damp
- Impact on historic fabric
- Changes to relative humidity
- Health problems such as allergies, asthma

- 9.43 All new bathrooms, utility rooms, and kitchens will require ventilation and extract systems to allow for the additional moisture to be discharged to the outside. These works must meet Building Regulations requirements.

- 9.44 In commercial buildings, extract and ventilation can have a significant impact on the character and appearance of a Listed Building. For example, a restaurant is required to have an extract system, with an external flue projecting from the wall or roof. The form, appearance, materials and extent of the projection all require careful planning. Where these systems are essential, the units and extract terminals should be kept as simple and discreet as possible.

- 9.45 The units and extract terminals will require Listed Building Consent and it is essential to ensure that the proposed location is both sensitive to the building's character and appearance and minimises the loss of historic fabric. The specification and location of these units must be included in any application for Listed Building Consent. Applications must include full details of the entire system including specifications, locations and detailed drawings.

- 9.46 Airbricks are a conventional way of providing ventilation. There are now alternatives to the installation of an airbrick, which can be discreetly located and

installed. However, each case will be reviewed on its own merits and Listed Building Consent may be required.



Air vent open



Air vent closed

AERIALS AND SATELLITE DISHES

- 9.47 Modern technology exists in most historic buildings and almost all have televisions, which require an aerial (unless a cable supply is available). The visual impact of a conventional antenna on the roof or chimney has been widely accepted. However, when new aerials are to be installed the location should be carefully selected to minimise their impact.
- 9.48 As technology advances, the Council will continue to re-evaluate its policy in terms of impact on Listed Buildings. There is a Government policy to convert all analogue aerials to digital between 2008 and 2012. As a result, new aerials will be required to replace the old. The installation of television aerials on residential Listed Buildings is classed as permitted development not requiring prior approval, but the Council is always willing to offer specific advice and whilst aerials are not generally of a sympathetic design they are becoming smaller as technology advances. Large and stridently coloured aerials should be avoided. Care needs to be taken to ensure any fixings are screwed into the mortar joints and not into the historic fabric, such as brickwork or stone.
- 9.49 Unlike television aerials, the installation of a satellite dishes on a Listed Building requires specific Listed Building Consent. The Council will not support applications for the installation of satellite dishes on a Listed Building where they will detract from the character and appearance or result in the loss of historic fabric. As such, there is a presumption against installing dishes on Listed Buildings and alternative locations should be investigated, these include on a modern (unlisted) outbuilding, on the ground or pole mounted in the rear garden.
- 9.50 It **may** be possible to locate an aerial or satellite dish within the attic or roof space. However, consult the installer or manufacturer to ensure this option does not pose any fire hazard or damage to the historic fabric. Contact the Council to discuss locating a dish or aerial in the attic space and if the work would require Listed Building Consent.

- 9.51 There are government guidelines for the location of dish antenna, which can be found in a document entitled *A Householder's Planning Guide for the Installation of Antennas, including Satellite Dishes* available from the Communities and Local Government website, www.communities.gov.uk

A good example of a freestanding satellite dish not attached to the Listed Building



EXTERNAL LIGHTING

- 9.52 The installation of new light fittings attached to the exterior of a Listed Building in commercial use will require Listed Building Consent. When proposing new lighting, the style, design and scale shall be appropriate to the age and character of the building. There may be some instances where a modern and simple design is appropriate rather than a pastiche 'coach light' fitting. However, it is best to consult with the Council prior to submitting any proposals for consent. Listed Building Consent is required to install any new external lighting, when not using an existing electrical point. The style, design, location, and size of the proposed light should be considered in relation to the age, character of the building and the potential harm to the external appearance and light pollution.
- 9.53 Within a commercial use, low-level lighting may be more appropriate than installing fixtures on the Listed Building. For example, discrete and simple bollards with lights can minimise the impact to the setting of the Listed Building and avoid disturbing neighbours.
- 9.54 Harsh flood lighting should be avoided and care should be taken to avoid light pollution caused by poorly sited fittings, and impact on neighbours.
- 9.55 There is a presumption that the Council will not support the use of any flood lighting.
- 9.56 When proposing to install any new exterior lighting, the following should be considered:
- Use of timers to ensure the lights are turned off after closing time (commercial premises)

- Impact on the setting and appearance of the Listed Building
- Impact on the neighbours
- Style, size, location and design should be appropriate to the age and character of the building

ADVERTISEMENTS

- 9.57 Signage and advertising is an important feature for many local businesses. The name of the premises, the opening times, and facilities available are generally on display. A certain amount of signage is appropriate, but can easily become visually intrusive and harmful if not managed. Some businesses are part of a national chain and signage is encouraged to reflect a corporate image. Where traditional signs survive, they are considered significant and should be retained and repaired as required. New signs will require Listed Building Consent and care should be given to their design. Refer to the Council's *Design Guide* for more information on signage and advertisements.
- 9.58 Historically, signage was hand painted directly onto the building or on timber boards hung or attached to the building and were not illuminated. There is a shortage of traditional sign making skills, leading to the inappropriate use of modern materials such as fibreglass and plastic.
- 9.59 New signs or advertisements (include those which replace or add to existing signage) can have a major impact on the character and appearance of a Listed Building. Where a proposal to display signs or advertisements on a Listed Building is considered acceptable in principle signs should be designed specifically complement the age and architectural style of the building. They should also be carefully located and should not obscure, overlap or cut into any architectural detailing or structural divisions of the building. These considerations will to a large extent dictate the scale of any signage. In many cases a traditional sign produced by a skilled sign writer on a timber board or painted directly onto the building will be the most acceptable.
- 9.60 The use of standard corporate signage by major companies will generally be inappropriate, as will modern man-made materials. Individually applied lettering can be damaging to the historic fabric as it is rarely fixed into the mortar joints or brickwork.
- 9.61 New projecting or hanging signs can adversely affect the appearance and character of Listed Buildings. Where their presence is allowed because of their location and building type and use, particular attention will be paid to size, design and materials. Hanging signs should be vertical in proportion, with a timber frame.

- 9.62 In most situations signs and advertisements displayed on Listed Buildings should not be illuminated. Where illumination is justified it should be achieved unobtrusively. Internally illuminated signs will not normally be supported.
- 9.63 Almost all advertisements on Listed Buildings will constitute an "alteration" to the building and, therefore, require Listed Building Consent in addition to Control of Advertisement Consent. Special care is essential to ensure that any advertisement displayed on, or close to, a Listed Building does not detract from the integrity of the building's design, historical character or structure, and does not spoil or compromise its setting.
- 9.64 The advertisement control system can be quite complex and the Department for Communities and Local Government's *Outdoor Advertisements and Signs: A Guide for Advertisers* (www.communities.gov.uk) is a useful starting point for more detail regarding consent requirements.



Examples of signage hand painted onto the building



Example of traditional hanging public house signage

SHOP FRONTS

- 9.65 Existing traditional shop fronts on Listed Buildings should be retained and repaired as necessary, even when the business has ceased trading or has changed use. Historic shop fronts tell the story of the village development and provide character and charm to the area. When refurbishing existing shop fronts, quality traditional materials and methods should be used. The installation of signage and advertising

on shops is similar to that for public houses. Traditionally a single sign written board was sited above the display window. The Council will not generally support the removal of historic shop fronts.

- 9.66 Components of shop fronts may include windows, doors, pilasters, fascia, lettering, cornices, entrance vestibules, plinths, corbelling and detailing, all of which are equally significant.
- 9.67 Where there is a need to improve security (especially in Pharmacies or shops with high value merchandise), the introduction of security may be appropriate. For example, shutters, grilles or bars should be located *discreetly* on the inside of windows behind displays providing this does not damage existing features of interest. Listed Building Consent will be required. There is a presumption that the Council will not support any applications for external shutters.