



External Alterations to Listed
Buildings in Chichester District

Development Advice Note

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Repairs and Alterations to Listed Buildings

The information in this guidance note should be useful to you if you are an owner of a listed building contemplating works, considering purchasing a listed building or are carrying out works to a listed building on someone else's behalf.

It is a common misconception that listing only applies to the outside of the building, this is not the case. It also applies to internal alterations, any extensions attached to the building or any curtilage buildings if built before 1948 along with boundary walls and fences. The majority of alterations to a listed building, including the majority of works covered in this guidance, require a formal grant of listed building consent from this Council. Information on how to apply for listed building consent can be found on our website at www.chichester.gov.uk or is available from the Chichester District Council Offices at East Pallant House, East Pallant, Chichester.

Each building is different and any application for alterations will be judged on its own merits. This note is a general guide which will outline the most popular alterations and advise on the best way to proceed. If you are in any doubt about the works which you wish to carry out please contact the conservation officer who will be happy to discuss any issues.

Please note this publication is for guidance purposes only and does not replace the need for Listed Building Consent or guarantee a favourable outcome to any subsequently submitted application.

Building Regulations and Listed Buildings

Before submitting an application for alterations the full impact of Building Regulations on the proposal should be considered. Any deviation from the approved plans to conform with building regulations may need further listed building consents. We recommend that the likely requirements for building regulations should be shown on the listed building consent plans to allow their impact on the building to be assessed at an early stage. It may be that there is some conflict between building regulations and listed building requirements, if this is the case it is possible for some relaxation in the building regulations, however do not rely on this relaxation to make proposals acceptable. Nevertheless if both the conservation officer and building control officer are consulted early on in the process these differences can normally be resolved.

Alterations to windows and doors

The main principle should be repair where possible and only replace if joinery is beyond repair. Any original windows which are beyond repair should be replaced on a like for like basis including glazing. Under normal circumstances the replacement of single glazed units with double glazed units is not acceptable in listed building terms. Modern materials such as PVCu and aluminium are not suitable for use in historic buildings as the mouldings and mitre detailing is usually crude and frame sizes excessive and out of proportion. Top hung night vents and large sheets of fixed glazing have no historical basis and should be avoided.

The replacement of unsuitable modern windows is welcomed, provide they are replaced with a more historically accurate and sensitively designed window. Paint is the traditional finish to external joinery. European hardwoods such as oak and elm were often left unfinished to weather to a silver grey. Timber stains and varnishes are a modern introduction, and need to be used with care. For more detailed advice please refer to our *Advice Note: Window Alterations in Listed Buildings*, this also contains information regarding Building Regulations and replacement windows in Listed Buildings.



An unsuitable PVCu window on the upper floor

Painted Joinery

Paint is the traditional finish to external joinery. In terms of the colour joinery does not necessarily need to be white, sometimes blues, greens, greys or black will be just as suitable if not better than white providing a more harmonious colour. If you wish to repaint external joinery in a different colour to the existing, listed building consent may be required. European hardwoods such as oak and elm have also been used historically for doors and for early mullioned windows, normally left unfinished to weather naturally to a silver grey.



An overly modern colour of painted joinery incompatible with the listed building

Timber stains and varnishes along with tropical hardwoods such as mahogany and teak are a modern introduction, they should be avoided in listed buildings except in very particular circumstances.

Roof Coverings

Within the district the predominant historic roof covering is hand made clay tiles however there are also numerous examples of slate, thatch and stone roofs. The general principle is to repair and only replace faulty roof coverings with like for like materials. The materials do not necessarily have to be second hand as good “aged” materials are available from suppliers. Concrete replicas or machine made clay tiles should not be used as the visual appearance of the resulting tile is unsatisfactory

producing an overly regular roofscape and inferior to natural slate or stone and hand made tiles. It is very rare for the wholesale removal and replacement of roof coverings to be necessary, this includes thatch.

In terms of thatch the main material for thatching in the district is combed wheat reed however there are some examples of long straw thatching. In straw thatching there is a tradition of localised repair by patching which can substantially extend the life of the main coat. Although a thatcher will try to thatch a roof as evenly as possible areas of differential decay will occur. The most obvious case is the ridge which will require replacement sooner than the main coat, but valleys, chimney abutments, dormers and other complications of the roof form can provide opportunities for decay as can the action of birds or casual damage. The performance of the thatch is not linked to its appearance, like a much repaired old wall it may appear patched and unattractive but not necessarily be inferior to a much neater new job. In terms of wheat thatch the lower layers of thatch should be retained and overlaid. There is not normally any reason to completely strip a roof and re-thatch from scratch. Water reed is not part of the local vernacular in terms of roof material and as such is unlikely to be acceptable when rethatching a wheat reed or long straw roof.



An example of thatch in Tangmere

Listed building consent is required for rethatching when-

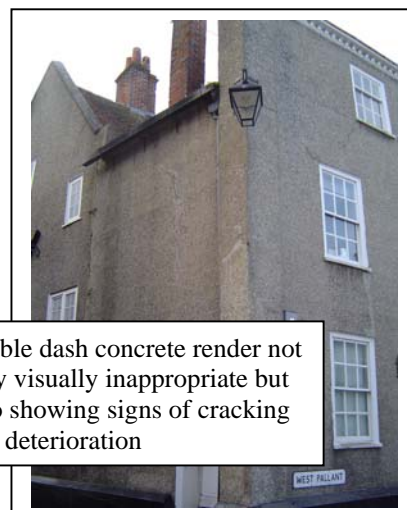
- a change of materials is proposed (e.g. wheat reed to water reed)
- the removal of any archaeological material is proposed (e.g. soot blackened thatch which can be found close to the rafters on the underside of the thatch)
- a change in thatching style (e.g. long straw to combed wheat reed)
- or it is proposed to change the external appearance such as the formation of different ridges.

If your thatcher recommends that a complete replacement and rethatch is required please contact the conservation officer to discuss whether listed building consent is required. For further advice on thatch and thatching please refer to “Thatch and thatching – A guidance note” produced by English Heritage, this is available free to download at www.english-heritage.org.uk

The removal of thatch and replacement with other roofing material is not normally acceptable along with the removal of any historic roofing material and replacement with a modern alternative.

Rendering/Cladding

The exterior treatment of a listed building should, in the



Pebble dash concrete render not only visually inappropriate but also showing signs of cracking and deterioration

main, be retained. Lime render, tile hanging and weatherboarding are traditional within the district and should be retained as far as possible.

Concrete render and stone cladding are not traditional and can cause more harm than good not only aesthetically but also in terms of the deterioration of the fabric of the building. Both seal the building and do not allow the walls to breathe, historic buildings work on the principle that moisture absorbed by the fabric will evaporate from the surface. The addition of an impervious layer such as a concrete render can seal in moisture preventing its escape and allowing the building to become damp. If your building already has concrete render or stone cladding and you are thinking about removing it please consider this carefully, levering off large sheets of render can damage soft underlying materials. You may also be disappointed to find inferior stone or brickwork below the concrete render, materials were often scored to allow the render to key into the wall. If you wish to pursue this course of action please contact the conservation officer to discuss the best way forward for your property.

Lime render should be patch repaired, as should tile hanging, with like for like materials. Weatherboarding should be replaced on a like for like basis, traditionally in the district this has been dark stained or tarred softwood or natural indigenous hardwood.

For more information please refer to SPAB technical Q&A 1 – Inappropriate cement renders. This can be found at www.spab.org.uk

Painting

Changing the colour of the paint used on your listed building needs listed building consent, this includes any joinery (see *Painted Joinery*). Paints and how they were made have changed over time and some of the modern paints and dyes now use chemicals to produce colours which would not have been available historically. Please be aware that if something is labelled as “Heritage Paint” this does not guarantee its acceptability as an exterior paint, many of these colours have been copied from internal walls. The traditional way of colouring the exterior of the house was by mixing natural dyes, such as bulls blood, with lime wash or lime render, this tended to produce a slightly more muted colour rather than the brighter more strident colours available today.



The use of a modern water resistant paint has resulted in the damage to this brickwork

The painting of any previously unpainted exterior surfaces, brick or stone work for example, is not normally encouraged. Not only could this result in an inappropriate visual change it could also lead to damage to walling materials.

The type of paint used on external surfaces is also important. Most modern external paints provide a water tight barrier which can have the same effect as using concrete render trapping water in walls which rely upon evaporation to prevent long term damp problems. Traditionally

limewash was used for external painting and is still the best option when repainting