

## Do I Need to Employ a Professional?

All works to a listed building, whether repairs or alterations, require a high standard of craftsmanship and professional skill.

In view of this, the appointment of a suitably qualified architect and other specialists is to be recommended. To help you Planning Services maintains a list of skilled professionals who have experience of working with historic buildings. *The list is a guide only, it is not comprehensive and does not constitute a recommendation. The District Council does not accept responsibility for the firms workmanship and you must satisfy yourself that they are capable of carrying out the works.*

## Buying a Listed Building

If you are considering buying a listed building it is worth bearing in mind the following points:

- ✎ Listed buildings are a precious, finite resource and an irreplaceable asset. As the new owner of a listed building you will be acting as its custodian and will be expected to keep it in good repair.
- ✎ Surveys for mortgage purposes are sometimes carried out by surveyors with limited experience of old properties, and recommendations may be made which are not appropriate to historic buildings. Always try to ensure that your surveyor has appropriate experience and seek a second opinion if necessary.
- ✎ Local Searches sometimes show that alterations have been carried out without Listed Building Consent. There is no time limit on pursuing enforcement action against such unauthorised works and as the owner you may be liable for any offending work carried out by previous owners.
- ✎ If your purchase is dependent on adding an extension or altering the listed building in some way, ask the District Council for advice before buying the property. In some cases we may resist any changes and you could be disappointed. New building within the setting of a listed building may be controversial and should not be relied upon to finance restoration or increase property value.
- ✎ It can be difficult to obtain insurance cover for buildings in a poor state of repair, or for those made of particular materials such as thatch. The cost of rebuilding a listed property is often considerably higher than modern buildings, and adequate insurance cover must be secured. Specialist Insurers may be able to assist.



## Further Advice

This leaflet is designed to answer only general queries. To find out whether a building is listed or to seek advice on Listed Building Consent, Conservation Area Consent, Planning Permission and Building Regulations, please contact Planning Services.

**Copies of the Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance such as Conservation Area Character Statements can be obtained from Planning Services.**

Planning Services  
Huntingdonshire District Council  
Pathfinder House  
St Mary's St  
Huntingdon  
Cambridgeshire

**Tel: 01480 388424 / 388423**  
**Website : [www.huntsdc.gov.uk](http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk)**

## Listed Buildings

### A guide for Owners & Occupiers

The purpose of this guide is to explain to the owners, occupiers, and potential purchasers of listed buildings, what listing means and how it may affect them. It is advisable to contact Planning Services if you are considering carrying out any works to a listed building: it could save you time and money.

## What is a Listed Building?

Buildings are listed by the Secretary of State when they are considered to be of special architectural or historic interest. The term 'building' includes a variety of structures, from stately homes to milestones.

Buildings are not automatically listed because they are old. They are judged against a set of national criteria laid down by the Secretary of State which include:

- ✎ **Age:** the older a building the more likely it is to be listed, though sometimes even buildings constructed only 30 years are included.
- ✎ **Architectural interest:** a building may be listed because of its design; decoration; technical innovation, and even internal layout.
- ✎ **Historic interest:** this includes buildings which display important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural or technological history.
- ✎ **Historical association** with nationally important people or events.
- ✎ **Group value,** for example where buildings form an important architectural or historic unity (e.g. Squares or terraces).

Copies of the list of Listed Buildings can be seen at your local Library, at the District Council Office or on the District Council Website.



Church Street, St Ives.

**Once listed, buildings are classified in grades. There are about 2,500 listed buildings in Huntingdonshire. Of these 60 are grade I, 131 are grade II\* and the rest are grade II:**

**Grade I and Grade II\*** buildings are of outstanding architectural or historic interest.  
**Grade II** buildings are of national interest and are a major element of our environment.

**All listed buildings, regardless of their grade, are afforded the same protection by law.**

## What Part of the Building is Listed?

The following elements are protected when a building is listed, whatever its grade:

- ✎ The **whole** building is protected, including its interior, its external walls and roof, and fixed features such as windows and doors, staircases, plasterwork and fireplaces;
- ✎ Any object or structure physically attached to it such as a garden wall;
- ✎ Any free-standing building built within the curtilage which was erected before July 1<sup>st</sup> 1948, such as outbuildings, barns, garden structures and boundary walls.

The list description of a building is intended for identification purposes only and will not specifically mention all the features of a building that are protected.

## What are the Implications of Owning a Listed Building?

If you own or are thinking of buying a listed building you should be aware of the following:

- ✎ Once a building is listed, Listed Building Consent is required for any works of demolition, or for the alteration or extension of the building in any manner that affects its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest.
- ✎ It is a criminal offence to carry out such works without first obtaining Listed Building Consent: the penalties for this can be heavy, usually in the form of a large fine or even imprisonment.
- ✎ The District Council has powers to secure the repair of listed buildings that have been neglected, and maintains a register of 'Buildings at Risk' which is regularly updated. Details can be obtained from the District Council Offices or Website.

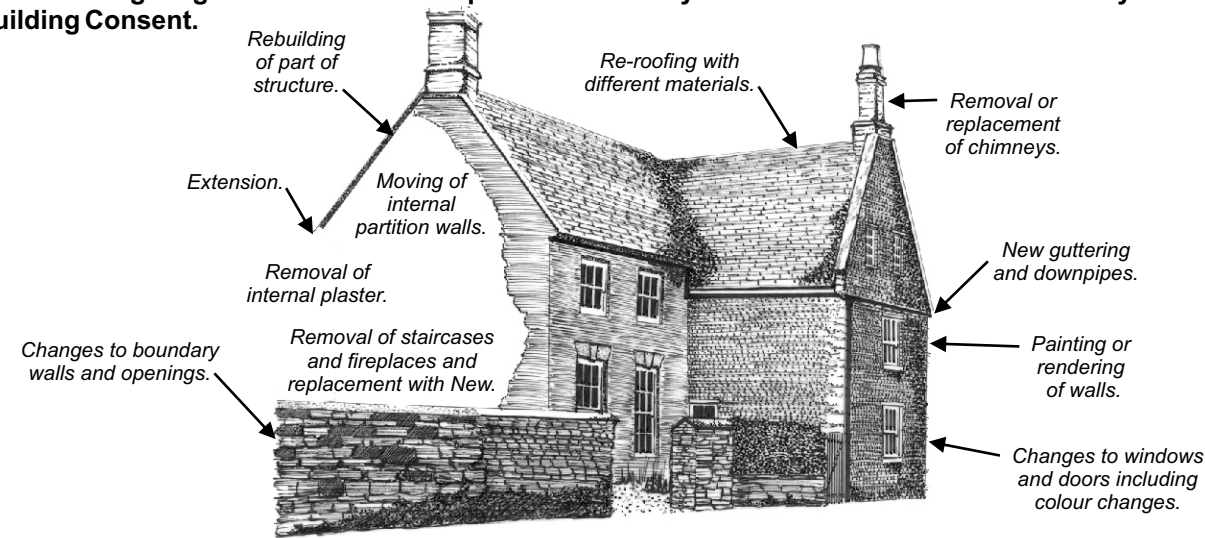
## When do I Need Listed Building Consent?

If you intend to carry out any works of demolition, alteration or extension to a listed building you will normally require Listed Building Consent.

This applies to internal as well as external works. This system is not intended to prevent change but to ensure that all works are carried out in a sympathetic manner that do not harm a listed building's special character.

- ✎ Certain types of work do not normally require consent, for example internal redecoration, renewal of concealed services, routine repairs in matching materials and maintenance works. More substantial repairs may require consent depending on their extent and nature, as discussed below.

The following diagram illustrates examples of commonly-encountered works which usually need Listed Building Consent.



Planning Permission and/or Building Regulations Approval may also be required. Planning permission is also required for the erection of new structures within the setting of a Listed Building.

## What About Repairs to Listed Buildings?

Normally limited works of repair do not require Listed Building Consent when they are carried out on an exact like-for-like basis using traditional materials.

However, there is often a fine line between repair and alteration. If repair involves a degree of replacement, even if that replacement is desirable, the work may require consent. Likewise if you are using different materials or changing a certain aspect of a building's detailing, consent may well be needed.



## What About the Costs of Works?

The cost of repairing listed buildings can be higher than for modern properties because of the need to use traditional methods and materials.

- ✎ Grants may be available from various sources including English Heritage and the District Council, but criteria are quite strict. The District Council operates a small grant scheme for essential repairs to listed buildings, though priority is given to buildings on the Council Buildings at Risk register. Application forms and further details are available from Planning Services.
- ✎ Some work on listed buildings enjoys a better position regarding the payment of Value Added Tax. At present this applies to works of alteration. In order to establish whether specific works will be exempt from VAT it is best to contact the VAT advice centre on 0845 010 9000 or on-line at [www.hmce.gov.uk](http://www.hmce.gov.uk). The publication covering VAT and protected buildings is VAT notice 708: Building and Construction (July 2002).

## How do I Apply for Listed Building Consent?

Applications for Listed Building Consent are free of charge and are made to the District Council.

- ✎ Your application should include drawings which show clearly and accurately and to a metric scale, the existing building and the proposed alterations. Some works however may best be described in a method statement or schedule of works.
- ✎ In most cases plans, elevations and sections at a scale of 1:50 will suffice. These should be clearly annotated to show the extent of retention and/or removal of the existing features and fabric of the building. Alterations to features such as windows will require drawings at a larger scale such as 1:20 or 1:5 for clarification.
- ✎ Applicants may be asked to justify their proposals, especially where a change of use or demolition is proposed. It may therefore be necessary to provide clear and convincing evidence about the viability of existing and proposed uses or about technical and economic constraints on the use of a building.
- ✎ If consent is granted the Council is likely to attach conditions. These may require you to submit further information before work commences. All conditions should be read carefully and must be complied with.

If consent is refused you have the right to appeal to the Secretary of State.

*New glazed link built with consent. Designed in appropriate style and built using traditional materials.*

