

Listed Buildings: A Guide for Owners & Occupiers



Listed buildings are an important part of our heritage and once they have gone they are gone forever. Listed buildings are of national importance and unauthorised works to these structures is considered to be a criminal offence

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. The guide is intended to offer general guidance only

What is a Listed Building?

A listed building is selected by the Secretary of State for digital, cultural, media and sport because of its special architectural or historic interest. The term 'building' includes a variety of structures, from stately homes to milestones. Once listed, buildings are classified in grades to show their relative importance:

- Grade I are buildings of exceptional interest and only 2.5% of all listed buildings are Grade I
- Grade II* are particularly important buildings of more than special interest. Just over 5.5% of listed buildings are Grade II*
- Grade II are buildings of special interest which warrant every effort to preserve them.

There are around 2,200 listed structures within Huntingdonshire and all listed buildings, regardless of their grade, are afforded the same protection by law.

How are Buildings Chosen for Listing?

Buildings are not automatically listed because they are old. They are judged against national criteria including:

- Age: the older a building the more likely it is to be listed, though sometimes even modern buildings 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).

Historic England publishes a series of selection guides that set out what is special about different types of buildings and helps to define what buildings should be recommended for listing.



A milestone can be a 'listed building'



A Grade II House, Earning Street, Godmanchester*

Which Part of the Building is Listed?

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

- Listing covers the whole of the building, 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 1st 1948, these are known as curtilage listed structures.

Because all listed buildings are different what is actually covered by the listing can vary. The list description which accompanies the listing of a building is intended for identification purposes only and will not specifically mention all the features of a building that are protected. The more recent the listing the more detailed the list description is likely to be.

[The National Heritage List for England](#) is a searchable database of all listed buildings in England, each principle listed building is identified by an icon. Whilst this will provide you with the list description for the building be aware that it does not define the extent of listing and which structures are included in the protection.

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:

- Be very cautious if you are considering buying a listed building on the basis that you will be able to extend or alter it to meet your needs, as this may not be possible.
- 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 the benefit of Listed Building Consent: the penalties for this can be heavy, usually in the form of a large fine or even imprisonment.
- There is no time limit on the Council pursuing unauthorised works on a listed building. If you purchase a listed building where unauthorised works have been undertaken you are inheriting the liability for those works and enforcement action may be taken against you.



Listing covers the entire building



Inside and out

Always make sure that your solicitor has ascertained what consents or permissions have been given on the building and that the works have been undertaken in accordance with those consents.

- You may have trouble selling a building where works have been undertaken without listed building consent.
- The District Council has powers to secure the repair of listed buildings that have been neglected or where their condition is adversely affecting the amenity of an area.

It is always sensible to contact us if you are considering carrying out any works to a listed building: it could save you time and money. A pre-application service is offered to owners of listed buildings. Details can be found [on our 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 that affect the special architectural or historic interest of the building then you will normally require Listed Building Consent. This is often in addition to Planning Permission and Building Regulation Approval.

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, updating of kitchen units or bathroom fittings, renewal of concealed services, or routine small scale repairs in matching materials and maintenance works.

There is often a fine line between repair and alteration. Works that affect the special interest of the building and which result in the loss of historic fabric do not constitute repairs and will require Listed Building Consent. If you are using different materials or changing a certain aspect of the detailing of the building even if the works may be desirable you will require listed building consent before you undertake any work. For example if you wish to replace a couple of slipped tiles in a roof with matching tiles; that would constitute a repair but if you were to strip the entire roof then that that would then likely require listed building consent.



Listed Building Consent is required for any works of demolition, alteration or extension of the building in any manner that affects its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest.



How Do I Apply for Listed Building Consent?

Applications for Listed Building Consent are free of charge and are made to the District Council. The application forms can be found on the [Planning Portal](#)

When do I need Planning Permission?

Extensions to listed buildings will always require both Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent. Within the curtilage of a listed building, many forms of development including the erection of outbuildings, summerhouses, sheds and fencing will require Planning Permission. These regulations are different to those that govern development in the gardens or grounds of non-listed buildings. Further details can be found [on our website](#).

Invalid applications

An application will be considered invalid and will not be accepted by the Council for processing if it fails to provide a basic level of information. The level of information required is set out [on our website](#). Once the application has been validated it will be passed to officers for consideration.

Insufficient information

If during the process of the application it becomes clear that insufficient information has been supplied to enable officers to fully understand the proposals and the impact that those works would have on the significance of the building, then you may be asked for further information. If that information is not forthcoming we will not be able to ensure that the proposals will not cause harm to the listed building and the application will therefore be refused.

What information needs to be supplied as part of an application?

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 will 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. Any structural alterations such as the demolition of internal walls or alterations to a timber frame should be fully justified by the submission of a report by a structural engineer.

www.huntingdc.gov.uk
Email: mail@huntingdc.gov.uk
Tel: 01480 388418

Planning Services, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs. PE29 3TN

Huntingdonshire
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Application for listed building consent for alterations, extension or demolition of a listed building.
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

You can complete and submit this form electronically via the Planning Portal by visiting www.planningportal.gov.uk/apply

Publication of applications on planning authority websites
Please note that the information provided on this application form and in supporting documents may be published on the Authority's website. If you require any further clarification, please contact the Authority's planning department.

Please complete using block capitals and black ink.
It is important that you read the accompanying guidance notes as incorrect completion will delay the processing of your application.

1. Applicant Name and Address	2. Agent Name and Address
Title: <input type="text"/> First name: <input type="text"/>	Title: <input type="text"/> First name: <input type="text"/>
Last name: <input type="text"/>	Last name: <input type="text"/>
Company (optional): <input type="text"/>	Company (optional): <input type="text"/>
Unit: <input type="text"/> House number: <input type="text"/> House suffix: <input type="text"/>	Unit: <input type="text"/> House number: <input type="text"/> House suffix: <input type="text"/>
House name: <input type="text"/>	House name: <input type="text"/>
Address 1: <input type="text"/>	Address 1: <input type="text"/>
Address 2: <input type="text"/>	Address 2: <input type="text"/>
Address 3: <input type="text"/>	Address 3: <input type="text"/>
Town: <input type="text"/>	Town: <input type="text"/>
County: <input type="text"/>	County: <input type="text"/>
Country: <input type="text"/>	Country: <input type="text"/>
Postcode: <input type="text"/>	Postcode: <input type="text"/>

3. Description of Proposed Work
Please describe the proposals to alter, extend or demolish the listed building(s):

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The Decision

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. Failure to comply with the conditions is considered to be a criminal offence. Consent is only granted for the works detailed in the listed building consent. You are not allowed to alter or deviate from the approved works without further consent from the Council. If consent is refused you have the right to appeal to the Secretary of State.

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. The appointment of a suitably qualified architect and specialists is recommended. Applications may be refused if the information and details supplied are insufficient.

Best Practice

Most listed buildings date from before the first world war, they are built of local materials and their construction is very different to buildings constructed today. These buildings have a 'breathable construction', moisture from within the building or rain or ground water, is allowed to evaporate freely away from the fabric of the building. Often works using incompatible materials have been undertaken which will affect the moisture balance of the building. These may include the rendering of buildings, the insertion of damp proof courses, the blocking of fireplaces and the repointing of buildings with cement. These works, no matter how well intentioned, can all cause damage to historic buildings. In all instances sensitive repair rather than replacement of historic fabric is required.

Traditional Windows and Their Replacement

Windows are prone to decay, wear and tear but traditional windows are surprisingly resilient if they are regularly maintained. The replacement of traditional windows in listed buildings will almost always require Listed Building Consent and will not be permitted if the window is capable of repair. Many of the problems associated with drafty, ill fitting historic windows can be easily addressed through refurbishing the existing fabric, such as the rehanging, rebalancing and draft proof stripping of sashes and casements windows.

Double glazed windows are not normally suitable alternatives to historic windows but secondary glazing may in certain instances be suitable. Windows incorporating 14mm slim style glazing with structural glazing bars may be appropriate but only in circumstances where the window to be replaced is of no historic or architectural interest and only if authorised by the prior granting of listed building consent. The replacement of windows in a listed building without listed building consent is unauthorised and liable to enforcement action. UPVC windows are wholly inappropriate and will not be supported.



The replacement of traditional windows in listed buildings will almost always require Listed Building Consent



Adding an Extension

Each listed building is different and they will have different capacities to accommodate extensions without harm being caused to their existing special interest. If you are considering an extension then think carefully about the building and its setting. A new extension should not dominate the historic building and this usually means it should be smaller and lower, it should also complement and reflect the special interest of the existing building. Where the loss of historic fabric is unavoidable it should be kept to a minimum and justification should be provided as why this loss is necessary. General guidance on extensions to buildings can be found in our [Design Guide](#).

Further Advice

This leaflet is designed to answer only general queries, further guidance can be found at:

[Historic England](#)

The Conservation & Design Team

The Conservation & Design Team,
Development, Huntingdonshire District Council,
Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN
email: Conservation@huntingdonshire.gov.uk



Any extension to a listed building needs careful thought

