

LISTED BUILDINGS

An Explanatory Guide



Supplementary Planning Guidance
Note 3

Director of Planning and Technical Services
Torrington District Council
Riverbank House
Bideford
Devon. EX39 2QG

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LISTED BUILDINGS AN EXPLANATORY GUIDE

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTE 3

NOTE: Since the publication of the SPG the referenced Town Scheme Grant Initiative has been discontinued. The District Council is currently (March 2003) pursuing the award, for Bideford, of the Townscape Heritage Initiative.

INTRODUCTION

There is much confusion and misunderstanding about listed buildings. Many people are unaware of the scope and implications of a property's listing and for new owners of listed buildings, information is scarce.

Torrige District Council are concerned at the number of unauthorised alternations and modernisations that have affected many listed buildings within the district many of these due to misunderstanding of the regulations or a general lack of information.

This guide has been prepared for owners or prospective owners of listed buildings. estate agents and other groups and individuals who wish to know more about why buildings are listed, the implications of this, the planning regulations and grants available.

Remember that it is a guide only and should not taken as a comprehensive statement of the law and regulations. If your property is listed and you plan to do work to it however minor, the best and safest advice is to check with us, preferably in writing. Please note that details in this leaflet were correct at the time of going to press.

WHAT IS A LISTED BUILDING?

A listed building is a building/structure or special monument of special architectural or historic interest which is included in a schedule compiled by the Secretary of State for the Environment.

The aim of this list is to protect such buildings/structures or monuments from demolition or any other alterations which would adversely affect the character and appearance without a full consideration by the Local Planning Authority.

The Schedule of Listed Buildings does not only include buildings. For example, in Torrige District, some public phone boxes, iron railings and even grave stones are listed.

WHICH BUILDINGS ARE LISTED?

Generally, four groups of buildings are eligible for listing:

- (a) All buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition.
- (b) Most buildings built between 1700 - 1800 are selected unless significantly altered.
- (c) Between 1840 - 1914, only buildings of definite quality and character.
- (d) Between 1914 and the present day only selected buildings of high quality are selected.

In identifying buildings which are considered worthy of inclusion on the above schedule, consideration is given not only to purely physical characteristics, but also to the social, economic or historical function of the buildings in the past - such as schools, mills, town halls and railway viaducts. This sometimes results in the listing of collections of buildings noted for their technical innovation or association with well-known characters or events are often listed (for example Kipling Terrace, Westward Ho!).

HOW ARE BUILDINGS CLASSED?

- Grade I: Buildings of exceptional interest - these account for only 1.6% of Listed Buildings in the Torridge District - such as St Nectan's Church, Stoke, Weare Giffard Hall and Bideford Bridge.
- Grade II*: Particularly important buildings of more than special interest, eg: St Mary's Church, Bideford and Buckland Filleigh Manor.
- Grade II: Buildings of regional or county importance, which warrant every effort being made for their preservation. This comprises most listed buildings, such as the Town Hall, Bideford and Half Penny Bridge, Weare Giffard.

WHAT DOES THE LISTING MEAN?

If a building is listed, then the **WHOLE BUILDING** is listed - both its exterior and interior. A popular misconception is that only the outside is listed. Another is that only those features mentioned in the listing description are covered. Fireplaces, staircases, plaster decoration and doors would all be considered to be listed regardless of whether the particular feature is referred to in the official description, which is there for identification purposes only. The 'listing' included any structure or object fixed to the building or located within the boundary of the site of which the listed building forms part (ie: the curtilage). For example, if a farmhouse is listed, than any farm buildings and walls within the curtilage of the house would be considered listed as well, provided they were built before 1st July 1948.

WHERE CAN THE 'LIST' BE SEEN?

These are available for public inspection at the Torridge District Council Offices, Riverbank House, Bideford. If you telephone, please ask for David Edwards.

LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

Any works likely to affect the character of appearance of the listed building (this would normally include works to demolish, alter or extend a listed building) **MUST** obtain 'Listed Building Consent' from the Local Planning Authority. Such an application is similar to a normal planning application, except that different forms are necessary and no fee is payable. All applications are advertised in the local press and notice is displayed on or near the site in question. The Local Planning Authority are then obliged to take account of any representations received.

When considering an application for Listed Building Consent, the Local Planning Authority is required to have regard to preserving the building as far as possible. Presumption will always be in favour of preservation except where a strong case can be made for such alteration especially where demolition is involved, when the final decision to approve must be made by the Secretary of State.

... BE WARNED!

It is a criminal offence to carry out works for the demolition or alteration of a Listed Building without first obtaining consent. In some cases the penalty for this may be up to 12 months imprisonment, fine of an unlimited amount or both.

WHAT GRANTS ARE AVAILABLE?

CONSERVATION GRANTS

Grants may be available for listed buildings from English Heritage, Torridge District Council and Devon County Council. These Grants are to assist towards the extra costs involved in the proper repair to historic buildings. Grants from all these sources are discretionary and total budgets are very constrained, and therefore if a grant is offered, the amount is likely to be limited. Grants are not available for general maintenance.

TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Operates a "Conservation Grant Scheme" for the repair and maintenance of listed buildings (as distinct from improvements and routine maintenance). Grants are awarded to help offset the cost of works, thereby preventing such buildings falling into disrepair. An application form should be completed with a description of the works together with a builder's estimate. An inspection of the property will then be made by the Council to assess if all works are eligible and necessary. Only following this can a written confirmation of grant aid be made. NOTE: it is essential that works are not commenced before any grant application is submitted and approved in writing.

ENGLISH HERITAGE

Normally only give grants for the repair/restoration of Grade II* and Grade I listed buildings, however, they do on occasions give grants for repair work to Grade II listed buildings in Conservation Areas. The conditions attached to such grants are stringent and works must conform to specified standards.

DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

In addition to offering grants in conjunction with the above authorities in the Bideford Town Scheme, some grant assistance may be available for repair work to buildings where there was some community interest and where grants are not available from other sources.

TOWN SCHEME GRANTS

Within the historic centre of Bideford, a large number of properties have been identified as being of architectural and historical importance. The Town Scheme allows for joint funding from English Heritage, Devon County Council and Torridge District Council towards the costs of repairs and restoration. Grants of up to 40% of eligible costs can be awarded. Further information and application forms are available for Riverbank House, Bideford.

HOUSING RENOVATION GRANTS

Larger grants are often available from Torridge District Council's Environmental Health Department. These "House Renovation Grants" provide assistance for the owners of property which needs repairs and works to bring it up to modern habitable standards. These grants are subject to stringent conditions and are "means tested". Further information is available from Town Hall, Bideford.

NOTE: Grant aided works of this nature may need Listed Building or Planning Consent or both.

OTHER GRANTS

There may be grants from other sources, for example MAFF sometimes offer grant aid for the repair of farm buildings and some charitable trust occasionally assist repairs to certain types of buildings.

For further enquiries on this leaflet and matters relating to Listed Buildings, the officers from the Planning Department at Torridge District Council will be happy to help.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

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