

English Historic  
Towns Forum

# MAKING BETTER APPLICATIONS FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

## ENGLISH HISTORIC TOWNS FORUM

**The importance of Listed Buildings to our culture has long been recognised; they are a finite resource and an irreplaceable asset, and great care is needed when proposing changes to them. Listed Building consent is required from the local planning authority for any alterations, including internal alterations, or extensions that would effect the character of the building.**

Due to the specialist nature of works to Listed Buildings, it is recommended that you seek the services of a qualified architect or surveyor, who has experience in historic building work. Ask to see examples of their work to ascertain their suitability.

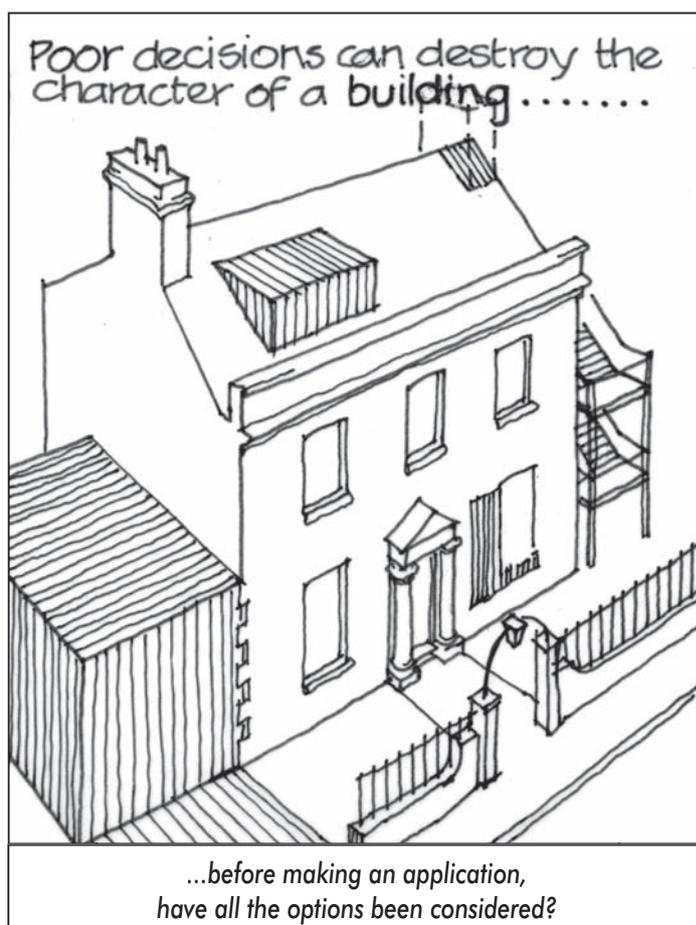
The procedure for gaining Listed Building consent is similar to that for gaining planning permission, except that no fee is required. In some instances both Listed Building consent and planning permission will be required for the same work, and in such circumstances it will be necessary to gain both, before work commences.

Applicants for Listed Building consent must be able to justify their proposals. They will need to show why works, which would effect the character of a Listed Building, are desirable or necessary.

The following advice applies to all types of Listed Buildings and should help you, or your agent, to avoid common mistakes and omissions, which can result in delay or misunderstanding details in your application.

would be far cheaper and less detrimental to the character of the building.

### Step 2 Research



### Step 1 Consider all the options

We are only custodians of historic buildings, for a relatively short period of time in the life of a building. Any alterations we make to them should respect their special character and seek to retain as much historic fabric as possible. The more period features a building retains the more it will retain its value.

Before you make a Listed Building application you need to consider all the options. Clearly some proposals will have far more serious consequences for the building than others. Identify what you need, rather than just what may be desirable. The way you use a building can often be more flexible than the nature of the building itself. For example, it may be possible to achieve your needs by re-ordering the use of rooms rather than extending the building; this

The work carried out before a formal application is made is invaluable. Investigate the following before you contact a Conservation Officer, who is normally the person with responsibility for Listed Buildings in a local authority.

- 1 The 'Grade' of your Listed Building i.e.; Grade 1, 2\* or 2, together with the list description; whilst more recent list descriptions will give you some detailed information about the building, most earlier listings give very little information and merely serve to clearly identify the property.
- 2 Leaflets or guidance notes on Listed Buildings or other relevant issues, such as shopfronts, produced by your local authority will be a good source of information as to what will require Listed Building consent and the issues that you will need to consider.

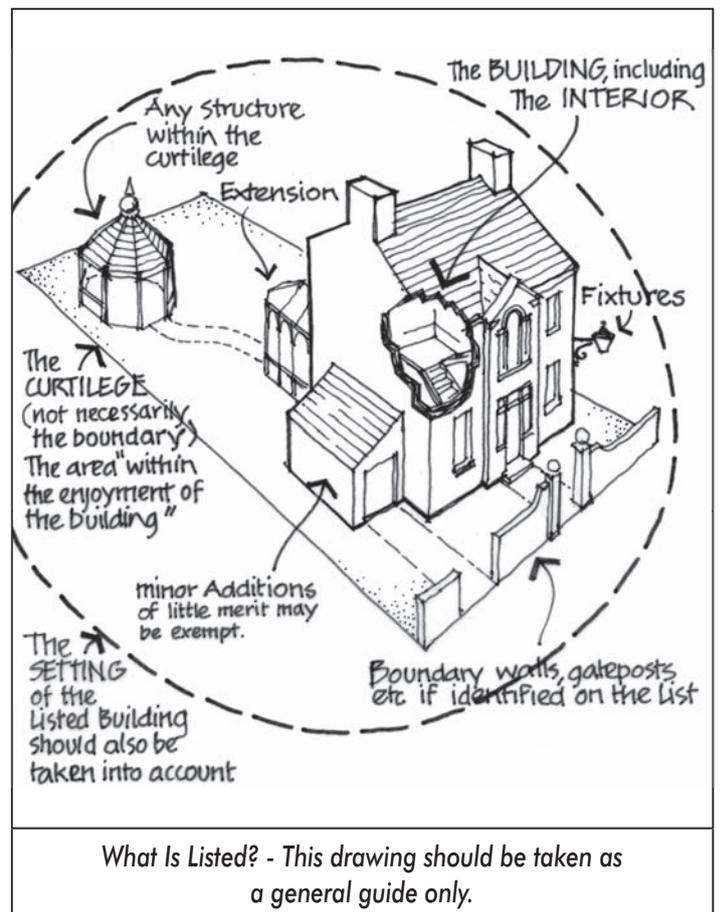
- 3 Any planning history of the building, in terms of previous Listed Building applications or appeals.
- 4 Relevant policies in the local development plan and any Government guidance.

All this information should be available at the planning reception desk of your local authority. Much of it may also be available on their web site.

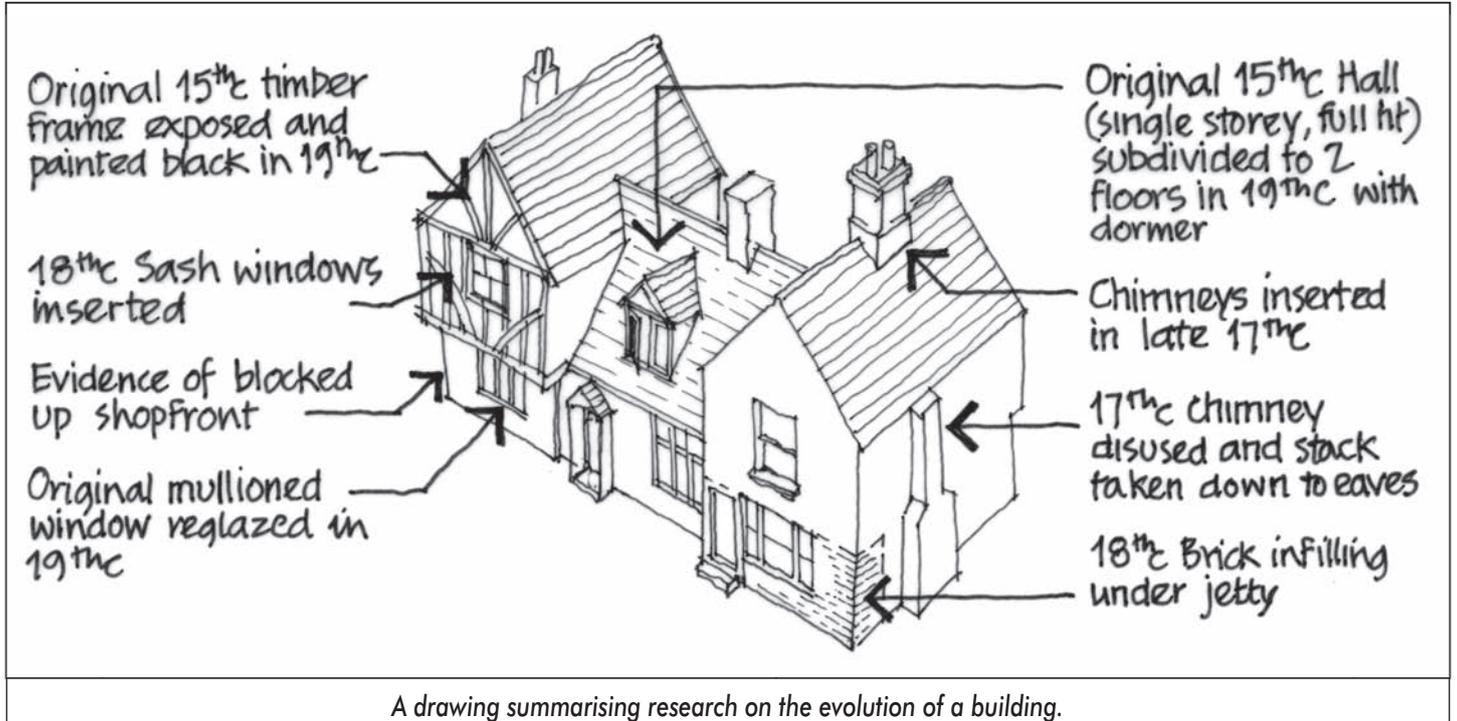
### Step 3 Seek informal advice from the Conservation Officer before submitting an application

Early dialogue with your local Conservation Officer will help to identify any issues with your particular building, such as building regulation implications, which were not revealed in your initial research and may influence the viability of your scheme. Following this you may also need to speak to a Building Control Officer to clarify certain points that may have been raised.

These discussions can also establish the type of supporting information that will help the council and other groups, such as the Town or Parish Council, to assess your application.



### Step 4 Statement of Justification for the proposed works and impact on the Listed Building



When the local authority is considering your application it must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the Listed Building, any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, together with its setting.

In order to assist the local authority in this task, it is important that you include a 'statement of justification'

with your application. Obviously the scope and complexity of such a statement will vary enormously, depending on the extent of the proposals and the importance of the building. However, the following checklist may help to shape your report:

- 1 A brief outline of the history of the building, its importance, how it has evolved and any special

features it may possess.

- 2 A brief explanation of why the proposed changes are desirable and necessary, and are the minimum necessary to meet your needs.
- 3 A statement on exactly what the impact of your proposals will be on the character of the Listed Building.

This should include details of;

- A Loss or changes to any historic fabric such as walls, windows, doors, timber framing or architectural features such as cornices, fireplaces, panelling, historic shopfronts etc.
- B Changes to the shape of rooms and spaces within the building, layout and plan form.
- C The impact of any extension on the appearance, character and setting of the building, including changes to the roofscape.
- D A statement that Building Regulations have been taken into account in formulating the proposals and comply with their requirements. For example, covering issues such as fire protection, means of escape, thermal insulation or improving accessibility for people with disabilities.

The 'statement of justification' can be amended as you develop your proposals and should be submitted in support of your Listed Building application, where it will play an important part in the assessment of your scheme and the decision-making process. It should show clearly that you have considered all the relevant issues and sought to preserve the special character of the building.

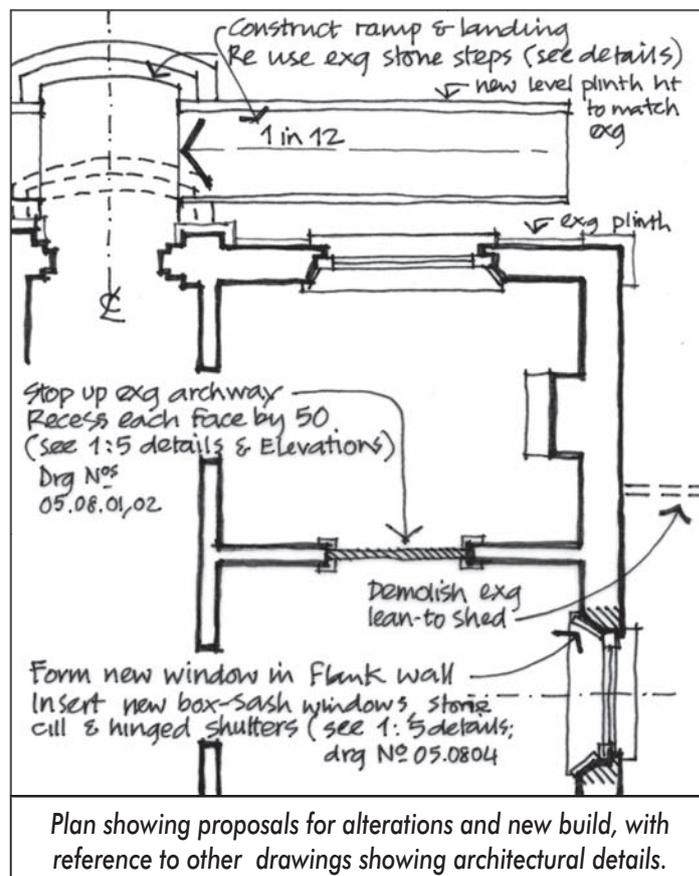
## Step 5 Plans, drawings and supporting information

In order to give yourself the best possible chance of gaining Listed Building consent, it is essential that you present your proposals fully, clearly and accurately. The submission of good quality and accurate drawings is crucial to the determination of your application. They should enable a person who is not familiar with the building to understand the proposals and to assess their impact on the property. All applications will be advertised for a defined period to enable the Town and Parish Councils, residents and amenity groups to comment on the application.

You will need drawings showing the building as existing and as proposed i.e. a 'before and after', both internal and external. It can be helpful to highlight the proposed changes by the use of colour, depending on how obvious they are.

If the proposed works are internal and are confined to a small part of the building, then it may be sufficient to show the floor plan of this part only, rather than

for the whole floor of the building. However, if the proposals have an impact on the external appearance and composition, then elevational drawings must be given. For example a small side extension may create an imbalance in the appearance of the building, and the impact of this can only be assessed if all the effected elevations are shown.



If your proposals have implications for the roof structure, for example with a loft conversion, then your plans must show clearly the full structure of the roof and identify any timbers that may be cut or removed, or any proposed rooflights or dormers, in order to accommodate the proposal. Similarly with timber framed buildings, the drawings must identify any timbers that will be effected by the work.

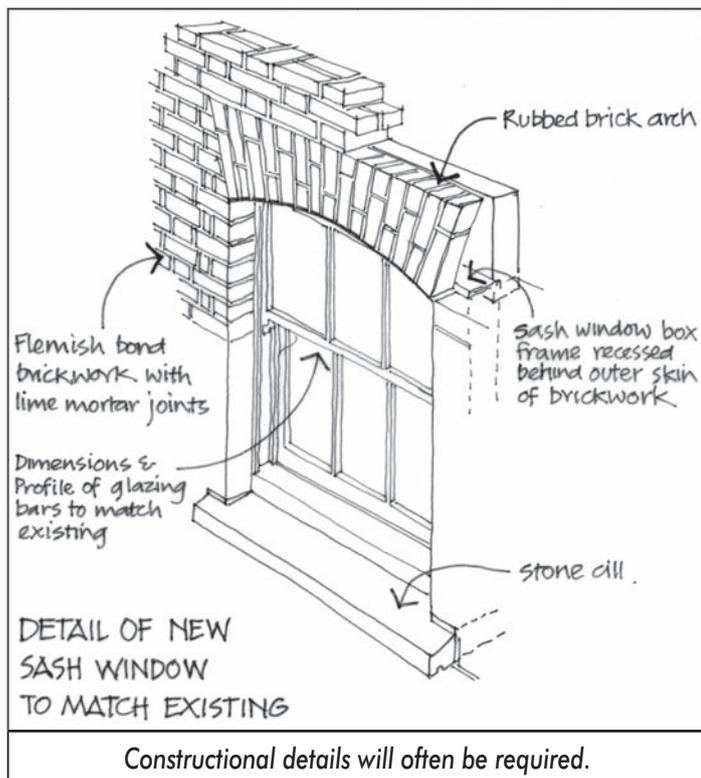
Relatively minor changes such as the provision of vents, flues, meter boxes, air conditioning units and signs, can have a significant impact on the character and appearance of a Listed Building. These should be included on the drawings and must be carefully considered, in order to minimise their impact.

All drawings must be to a recognised metric scale eg, 1:50 or 1:100 for elevations, floor plans and sections, and 1:200 or 1:500 for a layout of the site. Applications must also include a site plan to a scale of either 1:1250 or 1:2500 and all plans must have a north point.

Larger scale drawings showing construction details, such as joinery details for windows, doors, panelling, architraves etc, may also be required. It helps if this

information can be submitted at the initial application stage. However, provided the local authority has sufficient information to assess the application, these details may be provided later, as a condition of any consent.

Depending on the nature of the proposals, it may be helpful to submit additional information, such as an axonometric drawing of a proposed extension, or photographs, both recent and historic. Specification notes for the works, for example details of a mortar or render mix, should also be included.



**Note:**

- A** You will need to check with your local planning department regarding the number of copies of the plans, application forms and supporting documentation which will be required with your application.
- B** The granting of Listed Building consent does not exclude the need to apply for any other consents that may be required, such as planning permission, and compliance with building regulations. **Please check what other consents may be required with your local planning department.**

**Further Information**

Contact telephone numbers of qualified architects and surveyors in your area can be found in Yellow Pages. Further copies of this document are available from the EHTF office, (see address and telephone number below), or available to download from the EHTF website at: [www.ehtf.org.uk/admin/getfile.asp?ID=?](http://www.ehtf.org.uk/admin/getfile.asp?ID=?)

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