

Historic Scotland Guidance Notes: Managing Change in the Historic Environment - Consultation Response

Planning Committee
3 December 2009

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To inform Committee of the publication by Historic Scotland on *Historic Scotland Guidance Notes – Managing Change in the Historic Environment* and to recommend the Council's response to the consultation.

2 Summary

- 2.1 This report makes recommendations on the Council's response to the consultation *Historic Scotland Guidance Notes – Managing Change in the Historic Environment*. The consultation seeks views on the form and content of a series of guidance notes to support the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) and Scottish Planning Policy SPP23: Planning and the Historic Environment. The initial series of 14 notes replaces guidance previously provided by the Memorandum of Guidance (1998). The consultation closes on 8 December 2009.

3 Main report

- 3.1 The Memorandum of Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas has been the principal source of advice on built heritage policy and practice since 1998. The policy sections of the Memorandum have been replaced by the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP). This consultation is on the form and content of guidance notes on managing change in the historic environment which explain how to apply the policies contained in the SHEP and will supersede the technical advice presently provided by the Memorandum.
- 3.2 The guidance notes are available in the Group Rooms. They set out principles applying to works on listed buildings and in conservation areas and cover the following subjects:
 - **Accessibility** - promotes equality of access to, and enjoyment of, the historic environment. The guidance is intended to encourage the provision

of physical access for everyone in ways that also safeguard the character of historic buildings and places.

- **Boundaries** - alterations to the boundary treatments of listed buildings and unlisted buildings in conservation areas.
 - **Demolition** - the demolition of listed buildings and unlisted buildings in conservation areas.
 - **Doorways** - alterations to the external doorways and associated features of listed buildings.
 - **Extensions** - the extension of listed buildings.
 - **Fixtures** - alterations to historic external fixtures and the installation of new fixtures on listed buildings.
 - **Interiors** - alterations to the interiors of listed buildings.
 - **Micro-renewables** - sets out the general principles on how to approach applications for micro-renewable energy developments affecting historic buildings, monuments and places.
 - **Setting** - developments affecting the setting of historic structures or places including scheduled monuments, listed buildings, parks/gardens/ designed landscapes, World Heritage Sites, and conservation areas.
 - **Shopfronts and Signs** - the alteration of shops in listed buildings and in conservation areas.
 - **Structures** - alterations to structures and works of civil engineering.
 - **Roofs** - the alteration of the roofs of listed buildings.
 - **Walls** - the alteration of the external walls of listed buildings.
 - **Windows** - altering the windows of listed buildings.
- 3.3 The Historic Scotland guidance notes provide generic advice on built heritage issues, which is applicable in the national context. The notes are to be welcomed and do not present any significant conflict with the Council's own planning guidance which provides more detailed local advice on the built heritage. However, there are detailed concerns with several of the guidance notes which are set out in Appendix 1.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 This report does not result in any financial implications for the Council.

5 Environmental Impact

5.1 This report considers issues which protect the historic environment.

6 Conclusions

6.1 The publication of *Historic Scotland Guidance Notes – Managing Change in the Historic Environment* is welcomed. The notes have been designed to offer clear, consistent advice to professionals, developers and applicants, and will be available on-line.

7 Recommendations

7.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the Council's response to the consultation on *Historic Scotland Guidance Notes – Managing Change in the Historic Environment* as set out in Appendix 1.

Dave Anderson
Director of City Development

Appendices	Appendix 1: Response by the City of Edinburgh Council to Historic Scotland Guidance notes – Managing change in the historic environment.
Contact/tel/Email	Jack Gillon 0131 469 3634 Jack.gillon@edinburgh.gov.uk
Wards affected	City Wide
Single Outcome Agreement	Supports National Outcome 12 – We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations. Supports Edinburgh Outcome - Edinburgh's natural and built environment is supported and enhanced.
Background Papers	Historic Scotland Guidance Notes – Managing Change in the Historic Environment http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/currentconsultations

Appendix 1

RESPONSE BY THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL TO HISTORIC SCOTLAND GUIDANCE NOTES - MANAGING CHANGE IN THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

The City of Edinburgh Council welcomes the publication of the Guidance Notes which explain how to apply the Scottish Historic Environment Policy. The Council has a number of detailed comments which are set out below.

Fixtures

This guidance note provides advice on a range of fixtures. The guidance goes into considerable detail on different types of fixtures. If this level of detail is considered desirable then for completeness it would be helpful to also include gas meters, window boxes, air conditioning units, hanging baskets and balconies which are common issues in Edinburgh's experience with listed buildings.

The statement in the guidance that 'Banners can be fixed to listed buildings if the means of attachment does not damage any architectural interest' is not considered appropriate. Banners, though temporary, are a form of advertising and can have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of a listed building. A banner can often be of a low quality materials and the scale and location of banners can impact on the integrity of the building. It is recommended that further consideration is given to this issue.

Shopfronts and Signs

The guidance note provides very limited advice on signage. It is suggested that more detailed guidance on signage on buildings that do not have shopfronts (such as churches) should be included. A statement on the often adverse impact on the appearance of shopfronts by the conversion of shops to other uses could also usefully be included.

Extensions

The guidance indicates that 'most listed buildings can sustain some degree of sensitive alteration or extension to accommodate continuing or new uses.' Whilst this is often the case, it is recommended that it should be acknowledged that there will be cases when extensions are not considered appropriate.

Boundaries

Includes an implication that contemporary railing designs should be used instead of traditional. It is recommended that this should be supported in certain circumstances. A good quality traditional railing is almost always acceptable and may often be preferable to a contemporary design.

Windows

There is a degree of contradiction in the guideline which specifies that double glazing is acceptable where existing windows are beyond repair, but also emphasises the importance of retaining original fabric and historic glass. It would be more appropriate to specify that double glazing **may** be acceptable under certain specified circumstances. The guidance should also make it clear whether ventilation on the meeting rail of sash windows is acceptable. A note on original dummy/blind windows and on the requirement for safety rails could also be usefully added.