

# ~~Interim~~ Planning Guidance

## Repairing & Restoring Historic Buildings

## **INTERIM PLANNING GUIDANCE**

As part of the Local Plan process, supplementary planning guidance was prepared to supplement policies and proposals in the Local Plan. The Borough Council consulted the public on the guidance at the draft deposit and revised draft deposit stages of the Local Plan preparation process. Some of the comments on the Draft Deposit Guidance were taken into account in formulating the Revised Draft Guidance.

It was not appropriate for the Borough Council to adopt the guidance as supplementary planning guidance because this can only supplement an adopted local plan and the Tamworth Local Plan 2001-2011 will not be adopted until 2006. Furthermore, under the new development plan system, supplementary planning guidance has been replaced with supplementary planning documents.

This guidance was approved as interim planning guidance by the Borough Council's Cabinet on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2005. Appropriate guidance will be replaced with supplementary planning documents in due course. This is in accordance with the Council's Local Development Scheme that came into effect in March 2005.

August 2005



## **Introduction**

The special character of certain parts of Tamworth is due to the surviving mixture of historic buildings, and the contribution they make to the overall ambience is extremely important. The demolition, extension or insensitive alteration of these historic buildings could result in the loss of the areas special character and this should be remembered when considering any works.

Windows, doors, materials and other architectural features make a considerable contribution to the overall quality of buildings and these must be respected when contemplating any alteration or extension. Traditional details found on the original building should be carefully restored rather than replaced, and such details should be incorporated into any extension. New work should be fitted into the old to ensure the survival of as much of the historic fabric as is practical.

## **Windows**

Windows are one of the most important features of a building. Even small alterations can have a huge impact on the building's overall appearance. Where the original windows exist, they should be repaired rather than replaced. It is often cheaper to employ a specialist craftsman to overhaul the existing rather than insert new ones.

Where replacement is unavoidable, accurate reproductions of the original are

essential. This means not just the same design, materials and method of opening, but also the same mouldings and thickness of glazing bars. Double glazing and the use of non-traditional materials such as UPVC are not acceptable.

Where additional light is needed, it is often more acceptable to add another window proportioned to match the original, rather than try to enlarge the existing opening.

New windows should be fixed in the same position as the original, recessed from the face of the building. Setting windows forward, flush with the outside of the wall is poor constructional practice, and can adversely affect the appearance of the building. These principles should also be employed when designing extensions to historic properties.

## **Materials**

Materials must be carefully selected to match the original as closely as possible. In Tamworth the predominant materials are red brick and slate or clay tiles. Second hand materials will generally blend in better and this is particularly true when considering minor alterations and renovations.

The use of render should be avoided since it obliterates any original features and materials. Its use is particularly unfortunate when applied to a single house in a terrace. Similarly, the use of artificial stone to clad buildings should

never be considered. In addition to being visually disruptive, this application causes irreparable damage to the structure of the property and can lead to problems with water penetration.

When replacing rainwater goods cast iron or cast metal will be insisted on if the building is listed. The use of plastic pipes and guttering is generally unacceptable elsewhere. External plumbing of other types should be kept to a minimum and should not break through any mouldings or decorative features.

### **Architectural Details**

Respect should also be paid to other architectural features, such as decorative brickwork, bargeboards, chimney pots, ridge tiles and cast iron railings. Their contribution to the overall appearance of the building can be considerable and they should be kept intact with the minimum of alterations.

### **External Elevations**

Walls are the main structural fabric of any building and alterations to their surfaces can be extremely damaging to the overall appearance. Every effort should be made to retain or re-use facing bricks, with existing openings left unaltered where possible.

Cleaning of brickwork can have a marked effect on the character of buildings and because of the methods used, can also affect the actual fabric of the building.

Cleaning should only be considered where it can be proven that it is both necessary and worthwhile and in all cases, specialist firms should be used. Works should never proceed without gaining the advice of conservation staff in the Town Planning Service.

### **Conservation Grant Scheme**

The best way to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of historic buildings is to promote pride and awareness in their value. Tamworth Borough Council operates a Conservation Grant designed to assist with the preservation and restoration of historic buildings and conservation areas. Where possible the Borough Council aim to restore historic features such as original style doors and windows. Eligible work is generally limited to external repairs to the historic fabric although repairs that ensure the structural integrity may also be considered. Further details can be obtained from staff in Strategic Partnerships.

Owners and occupiers of historic buildings considering alterations or extensions to their properties are encouraged to approach the Conservation Officer at an early stage to determine whether consents are required. This will depend on the nature of the works proposed, the use to which the building is put and whether or not the building is listed or in a conservation area.

Details of the scheme can be obtained  
from:

The Conservation Officer  
Strategic Partnerships  
Tamworth Borough Council  
Marmion House  
Lichfield Street  
Tamworth  
B79 7BZ

Tel: 01827 709278