



Listed buildings in Medway - a guide for owners and occupiers

November 2002

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There are 780 listed buildings in Medway. They are an important part of the heritage of Medway and the whole country.

This booklet explains what the term 'listed building' means and what listing means for the owners and occupiers of listed buildings.

What is a listed building?

Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, a listed building is a building of special architectural or historic interest that is included on the national list of important buildings. The Government puts together this national list with advice from English Heritage.

Only a very small percentage of this country's buildings are listed. This fact alone makes every listed building special. They form an important part of our heritage which we will maintain for future generations. The purpose of listing is to make sure that the special interest of these buildings is taken into account in decisions affecting their future. In order to protect this country's heritage, special planning controls apply to listed buildings, which are aimed at preserving their character and appearance.



When should a building be listed?

All the buildings considered for listing are judged according to a set of national standards. These are summarised on the next page.

Architectural interest: buildings that are important to the nation because of their architectural design, decoration and craftsmanship. Also, important examples of significant plan forms, particular building types and techniques such as using cast iron, the early use of concrete and early prefabricated buildings.

Historical interest: buildings that have important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural or military history, such as industrial buildings, railway stations, schools, hospitals, theatres, town halls, market buildings, almshouses, mills, granaries, oast houses, barns and dairies.

Close historical associations: buildings that are associated with events or nationally important people such as Charles Dickens.

Group value: buildings which have an important architectural or historical unity or a fine example of planning, such as squares, terraces, model villages and model courtyard farms.

As well as buildings, the list includes other structures of special architectural or historical interest such as monuments, bridges, garden buildings, telephone kiosks, gate piers, walls, fountains, milestones and gravestones.

Generally, all buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original state are included, and most buildings that were built between 1700 and 1840. Between 1840 and 1914 only buildings of definite quality and character are listed. Occasionally, exceptional modern buildings may be listed.

How are the buildings selected?

Most buildings on the list have been selected as a result of national surveys of historic buildings. Sometimes, buildings that may have been overlooked in previous surveys are added to the list as a result of new information. If an unlisted building is under threat, we can serve a building preservation notice. This provides instant protection while the Government is deciding whether the building is worth listing.



What does the grading mean?

Listed buildings are graded according to their architectural or historic value (or both). The list is divided into three categories.

Grade I Buildings or structures of outstanding or exceptional interest, and of national importance. Only about 2% of all listed buildings are this grade. Examples in Medway include Rochester Castle, Manor House Barn (Frindsbury) and the Church of St Margaret (Rainham).

Grade II* Particularly important buildings or structures of more than special interest, often of regional importance. These account for about 4% of all listed buildings. Examples in Medway include the Boilershop (Chatham Dockyard), Royal Victoria and Bull Hotel (Rochester) and The Barracks (Upper Upnor).

Grade II Buildings or structures of special interest. As is the case nationally, most of the listed buildings in Medway are in this category.

What built elements does the listing include?

There is no such thing as a 'listed façade' or a 'listed staircase'. **If a building is listed, this includes the whole of the building and its associated structures.** This applies to all parts of the building both inside and out. Some parts of the listed building may be more important than others and this could be significant if you are thinking of applying for listed building consent (see below) for partial demolition or alteration.

Also, any object or structure that is fixed to a listed building or anything in the grounds which was there before 1948 (even if it is not fixed to the building) is also listed. This includes outbuildings, boundary and garden walls, gates and statues. Our Design and Conservation Section should be able to help you with any problems of identification or interpretation in particular cases.



How do I know if my building is listed?

You can look at a copy of the list for the Medway area that is held by our Design and Conservation Section. When you buy a property, a property search will tell you whether it is listed.

The list gives the address of each property and a description of the known features or history that led to it being listed.

The Design and Conservation Section welcomes any other architectural or historical information which owners, members of the public, or local societies may be able to provide on particular listed buildings.



Can listed buildings be altered?

You must get **listed building consent** before carrying out **any** work which affects the character or appearance of a listed building, inside or out, including work in its grounds or to its boundary. This does not mean that all alterations are forbidden. It means that proposed alterations are judged by whether they will **preserve or enhance** (improve) the existing character of the listed building.

Listed building consent

You may need this even if you do not need planning permission. For example:

- **All demolition work** – including demolishing or altering inside walls, or removing doors, windows, parapets and chimney pots. You should assume that you cannot demolish or remove anything, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Altering or removing features of interest inside the building – such as doors, fireplace surrounds, overmantles, staircases, cornices, panelling, ironmongery or flagstones.

- Altering or replacing the joinery mouldings of windows or doors, even in the same opening (including double-glazing units and roof lights).
- Repointing, rendering or painting outside walls, or removing render.
- Changing roof materials or repairing the roof structure.
- Fixing or removing bargeboards or replacing cast-iron rainwater goods with different materials.
- Replacing natural materials with concrete, imitation stone, resins, fibre or plastic.
- Fitting solar panels or satellite dishes.
- Fixing advertisement signs or sun blinds.
- Building a conservatory or porch.
- Removing items from the grounds of the listed building.

This list is not complete. If you are not sure whether you need listed building consent, please contact the Design and Conservation Section or the Development Control Section.

It is a criminal offence to demolish, alter or extend a listed building without getting listed building consent. Prosecution in the courts can lead to a prison sentence or an unlimited fine. You may also have to put back any original features that you may have removed.

What happens if I do not maintain my listed building?

Most owners and occupiers recognise listed buildings as an important part of our heritage and are pleased to maintain their properties. In all cases, repairs and alterations will need to be carried out with materials that are in keeping with the original buildings. This may sometimes be more expensive than it would for a modern building, but in most cases their use helps to maintain the value of the building, architecturally and financially.

If you allow your listed building to become run down, we can serve a **repair notice**. This means that you must carry out specific repairs to the building within a certain time limit. However, we usually only use these notices as a last resort.

In the case of unoccupied buildings, we can serve an **urgent works notice** and then carry out work to make a building windproof and weatherproof. We will then charge you for the work.

Can I get any help for my listed building?

You may sometimes be able to get help. You may be able to get grants from English Heritage to repair buildings of outstanding architectural or historic interest – which usually means Grade I and Grade II* buildings, and occasionally others. For more information on possible sources of funding, you should contact the conservation officer.



Listed buildings enjoy ‘VAT zero rating’ for alterations carried out with listed building consent. This is a very complicated issue and you should contact the local Customs and Excise Office for more advice.

Guidelines for repairs and alterations to listed buildings

Wherever possible, it is better to repair than to replace or alter the historic fabric of a listed building. Existing architectural details of the building should be preserved, repaired or, as a last resort, replaced. Replacing features that would have existed on the original building but that are no longer part of the building can lead to over-restoration. Similarly, it is generally unwise to remove later additions to buildings unless they are of no historical value or do not blend in with the overall appearance. Many old buildings have undergone alterations during their lifetime, and these changes are part of the development of a building.

To repair a listed building, or to alter it so you can improve its appearance or bring it up to modern standards, you will need to use specialist design and craft skills and use matching materials. It is a good idea to check your proposals with the Design and Conservation Section first.

Guidelines for repairs

- **Repair rather than replace where possible and avoid over restoration.**
- **Keep as much of the historic fabric of the building as possible.**
- **Where replacements are unavoidable, use matching materials and copy original details exactly.**
- **Use a skilled craftsman or builder. Consider employing an architect or surveyor to organise and supervise any major work.**
- **Major maintenance items such as replacing roof coverings or painting outside walls may need consent.**
- **Contact our Design and Conservation Section for advice.**

Alteration work or extensions should be kept to a minimum and be a small part of the existing historic building. This work must blend in with the old building, for example by using natural materials and maintaining historic features, such as original windows and doors, fireplaces, staircases and ironmongery.

Guidelines for alterations

- **Contact our Development Control Section before you carry out any work – they can tell you whether you need listed building consent.**
- **Keep alterations to a minimum and avoid changes which you cannot put back.**
- **Do not alter existing door and window openings.**
- **Keep all the architectural features inside and outside the building.**

- **Keep the original windows wherever possible.**
- **Only build extensions which are absolutely essential.**
- **You must not normally use uPVC or aluminium windows and doors.**
- **Porches, satellite dishes, advertisements, roof lights and other features may affect the character of a listed building and all need listed building consent.**

The following materials are not usually acceptable for repairs or alterations.

- Unacceptable materials**
- **Concrete tiles and machine-made tiles**
 - **Narrow or uPVC weatherboarding**
 - **Standard ‘period’ windows and doors**
 - **uPVC replacement windows**
 - **Modern softwood posts and rafters instead of oak**
 - **Plastic rainwater gutters and downpipes**
 - **Hard cement renders and mortars**

We will only grant listed building consent if we are satisfied that all the planned work is needed and will not have a negative effect on the special architectural or historic interest of the building. In view of this, we recommend that you appoint a suitably-qualified architect or historic buildings specialist.

Can I build in the grounds of a listed building?

As is the case elsewhere, new development on the site of a listed building may need planning permission. Development control officers can give you advice on whether you need permission. Even outside its grounds, the setting of a listed building is often an essential feature of its character, so is likely to be protected to some extent.

Can I change the use of a listed building?

A change of use of a listed building, for example from a house to an office, may need planning permission. Development control officers can give you advice on whether this is necessary. An important consideration will be whether the proposed change of use will result in the character of the building changing.



What are conservation areas?

These are areas (as opposed to individual buildings) which we consider to have special architectural or historical interest. Certain regulations apply to buildings (listed and unlisted) in these areas, especially in relation to extensions, satellite dishes, advertising and demolition. We also protect trees in conservation areas. Contact our Design and Conservation Section to find out if your property is in a conservation area.

How do I apply for planning permission and listed building consent?

Planning permission

You can get application forms and explanatory notes from Development Control or from our website. We also need drawings and the relevant fee, as the notes explain. Once you apply for permission, we will put an advertisement in the local press allowing 21 days for the public to comment. We usually decide whether to grant planning permission within about eight weeks for small applications.

Listed building consent

The procedure is similar to that for planning permission (above). However, you do not have to pay a fee. You can get application forms from Development Control or from our website.

Building control and listed buildings

If you are doing building work, you will need to apply for building regulation approval. This is to make sure that you do the work properly. It is important that building work meets the relevant building regulations.

New building regulations (Part L1) were introduced in April 2002 in relation to improving energy efficiency. Building work should always aim to improve the energy efficiency as far as possible. However, in the case of listed buildings and buildings in conservation areas, this work **should not affect the character of the historic building or increase the risk of long-term deterioration to the building fabric or fittings.**



The guidance in this booklet, particularly about needing to fit traditional windows, always applies before part L1 of the building regulations. If in doubt, please contact our Design and Conservation Section.

Other consents

- You may need other consent for development in conservation areas, as explained in our conservation area booklet.
- You need consent to display most types of advertising. You will not usually be allowed to put signs that light up (internally illuminated signs) on listed buildings. Development control officers can give you advise about this.
- You may need more licensing or consent for business premises.

Contacts

Design and Conservation Section
Regeneration and Environment Division
Development and Environment
Medway Council
Compass Centre
Chatham Maritime
Kent ME4 4YH

Phone: 01634 331705

Fax: 01634 331125

Website: www.medway.gov.uk

For advice on alterations and repairing listed buildings, contact our Design and Conservation Section.

For general enquiries on all aspects of planning, contact our Development Control Section on 01634 331700.

For enquiries relating to building regulations, contact our Building Control Section on 01634 331568, 01634 331569 or 01634 331570.

Other useful addresses

Department for Culture, Media and Sport
2-4 Cockspur Street,
London SW1Y 5DH

Phone: 020 7211 6000

E-mail: enquiries@culture.gov.uk

Website: www.culture.gov.uk

The Department is responsible for listing buildings.

English Heritage
South East Office
Eastgate Court

195-205 High Street

Guildford GU1 3LH

Phone: 01483 252000

Website: www.english-heritage.org.uk

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)

The Tower Building

11 York Road

London SE1 7NX

Phone: 020 7960 2400

E-mail: enquiries@cabe.org.uk

Website: www.cabe.org.uk

The Civic Trust

17 Carlton House Terrace

London SW1Y 5AW

Phone: 020 7930 0914

Website: www.civictrust.org.uk

The Georgian Group

6 Fitzroy Square

London W1P 6DX

Phone: 020 7387 1720

Website: www.heritage.co.uk

The Group publishes technical guides and other information on Georgian architecture.

The Victorian Society

1 Priory Gardens

Bedford Park

London W4 1TT

Phone: 020 8994 1019

The Society publishes information and technical guides on Victorian or Edwardian architecture.

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

37 Spital Square

London E1 6DY

Phone: 020 7377 1644

E-mail: info@spab.org.uk

Website: www.spab.org.uk

The Society organises training courses, among other things.

If you have any questions about this leaflet and you want to speak to someone in your own language, please ring **01634 331110**.

এই লিফলেট সম্পর্কে আপনার যদি কোন প্রশ্ন থাকে এবং এ ব্যাপারে আপনার নিজের ভাষায় কারো সাথে আলাপ করতে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে এই নম্বরে টেলিফোন করুন: **331780 (Bengali)**

如果你對這本小冊的內容有任何疑問，且想與會說你的語言的某人談話，請打這個電話號碼 **331781 (Chinese)**

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اگر آپ اس کتابچے کے بارے میں کوئی سوال پوچھنا چاہتے ہیں اور آپ کسی فرد سے اپنی زبان میں بات کرنے کے خواہشمند ہیں تو براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر فون کیجئے۔ **331785 (Urdu)**

Ellinizdeki bu yazılı duyuru ile ilgili herhangi bir sorunuz varsa ve dilinizi bilen birisi ile konuşmak istiyorsanız, lütfen 331786 numaraya telefon edin. **331786 (Turkish)**

If you want a copy of this booklet in larger print, please phone 01634 331705. (minicom: 01634 331300).

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