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Introduction

The Falkland Islands contain many historic buildings, of which over 50 are currently 'listed' by the Falkland Islands Government as being of 'special architectural or historic interest'.

These buildings cover a wide range of styles, construction methods and historic significance, some with origins dating back to the 18th Century. They include not just dwellings but also stone corrals, water pumps, sheep dips and other structures.

The protection and preservation of such buildings is very important to our local heritage. Good maintenance, repairs and appropriate alterations can ensure they will be enjoyed by future generations.

Owners may have purchased their property for its historic and architectural interest and will share the Government's concern and commitment to protect the Islands heritage through good practice in maintenance and preservation.

The information here provides specific guidance on the types of works that require Listed Building Consent and those works that are inappropriate to a listed building.

Owners are strongly advised to contact the Environmental Planning Department before carrying out any works to such buildings.

Listing of Buildings

A listed building is a building or structure, which has been designated as a building of special architectural or historic interest under the Planning Ordinance 1991.

Buildings are listed by the Governor in Executive Council. It is current Government policy approach not to list buildings without the consent of the owner.

Buildings are 'listed' based on their merits in demonstrating good examples of Falklands architecture from a particular period or as having a strong historical association. The older a building is, and the less altered from its original state, the more likely it is to qualify for listing. Virtually all structures built before the 1850s qualify as will many between 1850 and 1900.

Buildings constructed after 1900 are only likely to be considered if they have particular architectural or social significance and for a building of 30 years or less exceptional circumstances must apply in order for it to be listed.

The 'listing' of a building in the Falklands normally relates only to its exterior and surroundings. But although interiors are not usually listed, if there is a contemporary feature of particular significance it may be included in the designation. As a general rule,

it is desirable if interiors can be kept structurally as close to their original form as possible.

Listed Building Consent

Listed Building Consent from the Government is required for any demolition works or the removal of fixtures from a listed building, including, for example, replacement of cladding, windows or exterior doors. Stone or brick chimneys are a particularly significant feature of most older buildings and should never be altered without prior consultation. Consent is also required for any other external alterations or extensions to a building or surroundings that would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest.

Listed Building consent can be obtained by completing the forms used to obtain planning permission and/or building permits. Forms are obtainable from the Environmental Planning Department and once submitted are considered by the Planning and Building Committee in consultation with the Historic Buildings Committee.

It is an offence to carry out works to a listed building without the required consent and enforcement action may follow in such circumstances.

Approach to Listed Building 'Works'

Owners are advised to give careful consideration to any maintenance or works they wish to undertake on a listed building. Specialist skills are often required, therefore it is very important to contact at an early stage, the Environmental Planning Department who may then advise on assistance available from persons experienced in working with historic buildings.

The character of a listed building can easily be damaged or altered, therefore it is always preferable to make repairs and thus retain the historic fabric of the building as much as possible, rather than replace any features or detailing.

The following points summarise some of the aspects to be considered when undertaking works to listed buildings and whether Listed Building Consent is required.

Windows - are a vital component of an historic building and any alterations can drastically change the character and appearance. The alteration or replacement of a window generally requires consent.

- Matching materials should always be used in repairs or necessary replacement.
- Advice should be sought from the Environmental Planning Office before ordering new windows. The use of UPVC or other modern materials is unacceptable; draught proofing or secondary glazing may be a better option than double glazing.
- Existing profiles and architectural detailing should be followed when repairing or replacing, including window bars, openings and proportions.

Doors and Porches - Consent will always be required for a new porch and usually for a replacement door.

- Repairs should be made in matching materials. Modern substitutes are inappropriate. Always use traditional paint finishes - varnished hardwood is unacceptable.
- Any architectural detailing and historic features should be retained., including decorative porch trims.
- Changes to door glazing will require consent. It is very important that glazing reflects the period of the building.
- Replacement doors, if necessary, should always reflect the age and character of the property in design and materials.
- Avoid using inappropriate 'period' door furniture or decoration.
- New porches will only be allowed on a listed building if appropriate to its period and acceptable in design and scale.

Roofs - as the first line of defence against the elements, should be kept in a good state of repair. Any alteration to the roof line, cladding replacement and significant repairs will require consent.

- Repairs or replacement should match the original materials, with existing materials reused as much as possible. The use of artificial slates or tiles will be unacceptable. Repairs should replicate traditional construction and retain ventilation of roof spaces.
- Do not neglect chimney stacks and pots which may need repointing. They should not be reduced in height nor ornamentation removed. Lime mortar and specialist help with repairs can be provided on application to the Environmental Planning Department.
- Always retain decorative features such as finials, barge boards and gutter supports. If these are in poor condition then they can be replicated. Original drainpipes and gutters should be repaired or replaced with the same materials as the original. Plastic is generally unacceptable.

Other Exterior Works - will require consent if they affect the character of the building as one of special architectural or historic interest - this could include painting. It is always advisable to check first.

- Rendering - will not be acceptable on previously unrendered walls. Original render should be retained or replicated. Avoid waterproof or cement based renders and ensure any paint finishes are porous.
- Repointing - should be confined to the minimum area necessary and carried out in a matching lime based mortar type and colour to the original, with the same style of pointing used. A good mortar will always be weaker than the fabric of the wall and at least as porous, in order to protect the brick or stone itself from cracking. Cement is not normally appropriate and usually only causes further damage.

- Lime putty for making mortar, render and lime-wash suitable for use on older stone buildings is obtainable through the Environmental Planning Department.

Interior Works - The internal features of a listed building may be just as important as the external and although not usually forming part of the listing it is an advisory recommendation that where appropriate they be preserved and protected in the same way. Internal redecoration of a listed property will not normally require consent.

- Original features should not be obscured or removed or altered if it can be avoided including walls, panelling or tongue and groove linings, fireplaces, chimneys, staircases, doors, mouldings, original decoration and flooring. Repairs should be carried out in traditional materials to match existing. Internal alterations should aim to respect the original layout and minimise new partitions and openings.

Extensions - Permission for extensions must be obtained from the local authority. Such proposals need careful design to avoid damaging the setting and character of a listed building

Any proposal must ensure:

- Preservation of existing architectural or historic features.
- Minimal disturbance to the historic fabric.
- Use of appropriate scale, design and materials.
- No harm to the setting of the historic building.

Change of Use - The original use for which the building was designed and built should be continued wherever possible. However, change of use may be permitted where this is the best means of ensuring the preservation of the building. Any new use must not be detrimental to the character, appearance or setting of the building or surrounding area.

Care and Maintenance - The owner of a listed building is responsible for keeping the building in good repair. Where the character of a building is at risk of being lost or diminished through lack of repair the Government will wish to work with the owner to see how the problems can be overcome including the use of grant aid.

Listed Building Grant Aid

The Government runs a Historic Buildings Grant Scheme to assist owners in the repair of historic buildings. The scheme is administered by the Historic Buildings Committee. When considering offers of assistance the Committee will take into account a building's age, architectural and historical merit, contribution to landscape or townscape and degree to which the building remains unaltered. Funds are generally directed at buildings which are listed.

Also taken into account is the commitment of the property owners. Grant aid is often aimed at meeting the cost and delivery of materials with the condition that the owner either undertakes or funds the labour element within a specified time period.

Further advice is available from the Planning Officer on behalf of the Historic Buildings Committee.

More Information

Planning Officer or Team Clerk, Malvina House Gardens, PO Box 611, Stanley.
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