

## Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are generally buildings or structures which are considered to be of great importance in terms of architectural or historic interest. When a building is listed, there is greater control on what can be achieved in terms of alterations and extensions to a property and the construction method used; the process is designed to protect significant buildings.

Listed buildings are classified into three grades, the majority of which fall into the Grade II category:

- Grade I - buildings of exceptional interest.
- Grade II\* - particularly important buildings of more than special interest.



- Grade II - buildings of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them.

Whilst any building can be listed, in the rural environment these commonly tend to be traditional farmhouses and associated buildings. Along with legislation in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Planning Policy Statement 5 Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5), released March 2010, provides the current national governmental guidance on planning relating to listed buildings.

Policy HE7 of PPS 5 states that:

*“In considering the impact of a proposal on any heritage asset, local planning authorities should take into account the particular nature of the significance of the heritage asset and the value that it holds for this and future generations. This understanding should be used by the local planning authority to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposals.”*

Listed building status may appear as a burden to many people however, in many cases, it can represent an opportunity. This factor is especially relevant in the case of redundant traditional farm buildings. Provided a proposal can be shown to be

sympathetic, the fact that the property is listed can be used as a key justification for its conversion as it is a means to ensure its preservation. This fact is supported by Policy HE9 of PPS 5 which states that:

*“There should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets and the more significant the designated heritage asset, the greater the presumption in favour of its conservation should be. Once lost, heritage assets cannot be replaced and their loss has a cultural, environmental, economic and social impact.”*

In the case of existing listed residential properties domestic changes are often small scale in nature and have little difficulty in gaining approval.

Of course, many people wish to extend or significantly alter their listed property. In such cases listing should not necessarily be a barrier to extension and conservation officers should take a pragmatic view and permit extensions that either match the existing architectural style or those of a more modern design that reflect the design rationale of the building and its surroundings. In all cases a high quality of design is of paramount importance.

Significant alterations are unlikely to gain approval if they depart from the character of the building although, in certain cases, where unsympathetic past development

can be shown to being remedied relatively major alterations may be allowed.

Without a well thought out design and a robust planning and heritage asset justification proposals relating to listed properties are likely to stand little chance of success. Acorus having both in house design and planning teams experienced in dealing with listed buildings are able to assist with developing your proposals.



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