

Access Stairs on Listed Buildings

■ **OBJECTIVE**

This guideline is supplementary to local plan conservation and design policies, and provides additional guidance on the formation of access stairs on listed buildings.

■ **POLICY CONTEXT**

Local plan policies promote high quality new design and protect the character and appearance of listed buildings. For example, policy CD19 of the Central Edinburgh Local Plan states:

“The Council will permit alterations and extensions to buildings which in their design and form, choice of materials and positioning are compatible with the character of the original building. Particular attention will be paid to ensuring that such works to listed buildings and non-listed buildings within conservation areas do not damage their special architectural character”.

■ **SCOPE OF GUIDANCE**

This supplementary guideline applies to proposals for access stairs on listed buildings on a city wide basis.

■ **STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

The formation of access stairs on listed buildings will require listed building consent and will normally also require planning permission.

1. The acceptability of new external access stairs will depend on the existence of other authorised stairs within a row or terrace of buildings, the quality of the elevation and public visibility.
2. Where acceptable, the design of the stair should either be based on an original design for the type of building or a lightweight modern addition. They should not be enclosed structures.
3. Metal will be the preferred material.
4. Stairs should be kept close to the building, but should not obstruct daylight from existing windows.
5. Bridges over rear basement areas will not be considered acceptable.
6. Stairs should normally be for access only. Where they include platforms for incidental use, the Council's guidelines on privacy must be complied with.
7. New doors and stairs should be painted appropriate colours, usually white for doors and black for metal work.
8. When buildings are in single occupancy and there is an existing door at either ground floor or basement level, an access stair at upper levels will not normally be permitted. On all other properties, access stairs will be restricted to the floor above the lowest habitable floor level.
9. Entrances associated with access stairs should be in-keeping with the character of the building and conservation area.
10. Other relevant Council guidelines should be complied with - notably the guidelines on Sub-division of Listed Buildings and Daylighting, Privacy and Sunlight.

■ REASONED JUSTIFICATION

Inappropriately designed access stairs can have a seriously adverse affect on the architectural character of listed buildings. This guideline seeks to minimise the adverse effect of access stairs on listed buildings.

For further details contact:

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