

Duddingston Village

Maintenance & Repair Guide

■ OBJECTIVE

This guideline is supplementary to the conservation and design policies of the North East Edinburgh Local Plan and Central Edinburgh Local Plan, and provides additional design guidance for repair work in Duddingston Conservation Area.

■ POLICY CONTEXT

Local plan policies promote high quality new design and protect the character and appearance of listed buildings and conservation areas. Policy E21 of the North East Edinburgh Local Plan states:

“In relation to development proposed in a conservation area the Council will require the retention of all features which contribute to its character and appearance, including unlisted buildings of townscape interest, boundary walls and railings, historic gardens, trees and landscape features, traditional and natural paving materials, street furniture, and the historic pattern of streets and spaces.”

■ SCOPE OF GUIDANCE

This guideline applies within the Duddingston Conservation Area.

■ STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Repairs that match the original materials and form will not require formal consent. Alterations that have a material effect on the external appearance of buildings will require planning permission. Listed building consent is required for alterations that affect the architectural character of the interior or exterior of listed buildings. Proposals to fell or severely lop trees (as specified in the guideline on Tree Protection) must be notified to the Head of Planning.



POLICYGUIDANCE

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1. STONWORK

- a) Stone is a long life material, which can suffer much weathering before repair is needed. In its weathered state it can look attractive and add character to a building. Repair work, therefore, should only be undertaken when absolutely necessary and when failing to do so will damage the building. Where repairs are to be carried out, natural stone indents should be used rather than cement based methods, which have a deleterious effect on adjacent stonework. Indents should match the characteristics of the original stone as well as its scale and jointing pattern. Small scale 'piecing in' should be avoided.
- b) Much decay is caused by a failure to carry out simple maintenance such as cleaning out gutters and removing vegetation growth.

2. STONECLEANING

Much of the character of Duddingston Conservation Area derives from the colour of its weathered stone buildings. There is a general presumption against stonecleaning of listed buildings and buildings in conservation areas.

3. MORTAR JOINTS

Care should be taken over mortar repairs to ensure a suitable mix is used. Fast-setting hard cement should be avoided as it accelerates weathering in adjacent stone.

4. ROOFS

- a) Although clay pantiles have survived on some buildings, the predominant traditional roofing material is Scots slate. These are durable and effective and should not be substituted by modern alternatives.
- b) Lead flat roofs should give at least 100 years protection. Asphalt, felt and other modern substitutes have an effective life of 10-15 years. Flashings, piends and ridges were normally originally constructed in lead and should not be replaced using inferior materials.
- c) Chimneys should be retained as they form an important element of the skyline. Sandstone chimneystacks deteriorate through use and should be regularly checked.

5. WINDOWS

Where possible windows should be repaired rather than replaced. Replacement windows should match the original in materials, proportions and appearance. They should open in the traditional manner and should have a white painted finish.

6. RAINWATER GOODS

The usual method of rainwater collection from roofs is by lead lintel parapet gutters or cast iron rhones and downpipes. These will normally have a long life but regular maintenance is required. Cast iron requires painting at 5-year intervals. It is important to inspect both in spring and autumn to prevent blockage by leaves and other debris, which can lead to more serious problems.

7. EXTERNAL WORKS

- a) Railings and gates will usually be constructed from cast iron, wrought iron or mild steel. All require regular painting to prevent rust.
- b) Boundary walls should only be repointed to prevent damage to stonework. Repointing in lime mortar will help prevent accelerated stone decay.

8. EXTERNAL PAINTWORK

Where it is necessary to repaint stone and harl, care should be taken to choose the most appropriate coating. Many modern paints form skins over the substrate and allow the build up of trapped moisture. This not only causes dampness but also leads to flaking after a short time. Treatments should have a high level of permeability to be successful. Lime wash is easily applied and inexpensive, and some silicate-based paints provide durable alternatives.

9. TREES

- a) Trees contribute a great deal to the character of the Duddingston Conservation Area. It is recognised that large trees can cause problems in small gardens such as shading of gardens and rooms, blockage of drains by leaves, falling limbs, branches overhanging roads and adjacent property, structural damage to walls or buildings by tree roots, or physical damage to the trees which can lead to decay and instability.
- b) Skillful tree surgery may be able to reduce these problems dependent upon the age, size, appearance and location of the tree. Such work may be done for reasons of safety, the health of the tree and its contribution to the local amenity. The aim of judicious pruning is to retain the overall natural shape and appearance of the tree while alleviating any nuisance the tree may be causing.

10. MAINTENANCE PROGRAMMES

- a) Every building requires regular maintenance to keep the fabric in good order and to protect the internal fabric from damage. It is advisable to set aside an annual sum for repairs. Carrying out regular inspections of the buildings can save a great deal of time and money.
- b) Slipped slates, blocked rhones and downpipes and any leaks can be checked on a day-to-day basis. In late autumn and spring the roof and rainwater disposal system should be checked and all vegetation removed from the roof. Care should be taken not to damage slates or gutters and to take appropriate safety.
- c) On an annual basis a more thorough inspection of the whole property is appropriate. Particular attention should be paid to timber for signs of fungal attack. Drains and services should be inspected annually.
- d) Every five years it is useful to have an architect's report on the condition of the building. From this a schedule of repairs should be outlined. All external woodwork should be repainted.

This is not an exhaustive programme and particular buildings may have specific requirements not mentioned here.

■ REASONED JUSTIFICATION

This guideline provides advice on repairs to ensure that the original character of the Duddingston Conservation Area is retained and not eroded through unsympathetic alterations or injudicious use of unsuitable materials.

Duddingston Village claims a unique setting within Edinburgh. Situated on a shelf of land between the volcanic outcrop of Arthur's Seat and the nature reserve of Duddingston Loch, the village is a blend of stone built houses and matures trees. Dating back to the twelfth century when the Kirk was founded, the village has retained its character over the years. It was designated an Outstanding Conservation Area in 1975.

The essential form of the village with its two streets, kirk and inn is one of enclosure to the streets through stone walls and hedges and, in the case of the Causeway, buildings fronting directly onto the footpath. Traditional materials: stone, slate harling, and cast iron railings create a harmony and durability, while mature trees in gardens and along the boundary with the Park emphasise the village character. Over the years many of these elements have been repaired and replaced in a traditional manner but there is now concern that the character of the conservation area could be eroded through unsympathetic alterations and use of non-traditional materials.



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