

### Colonies

#### ■ OBJECTIVE

Edinburgh's Colony housing developments are important for their architectural interest and place in social history. This guideline is supplementary to local plan conservation and design policies, and provide additional advice on alterations to Colonies housing.

#### ■ POLICY CONTEXT

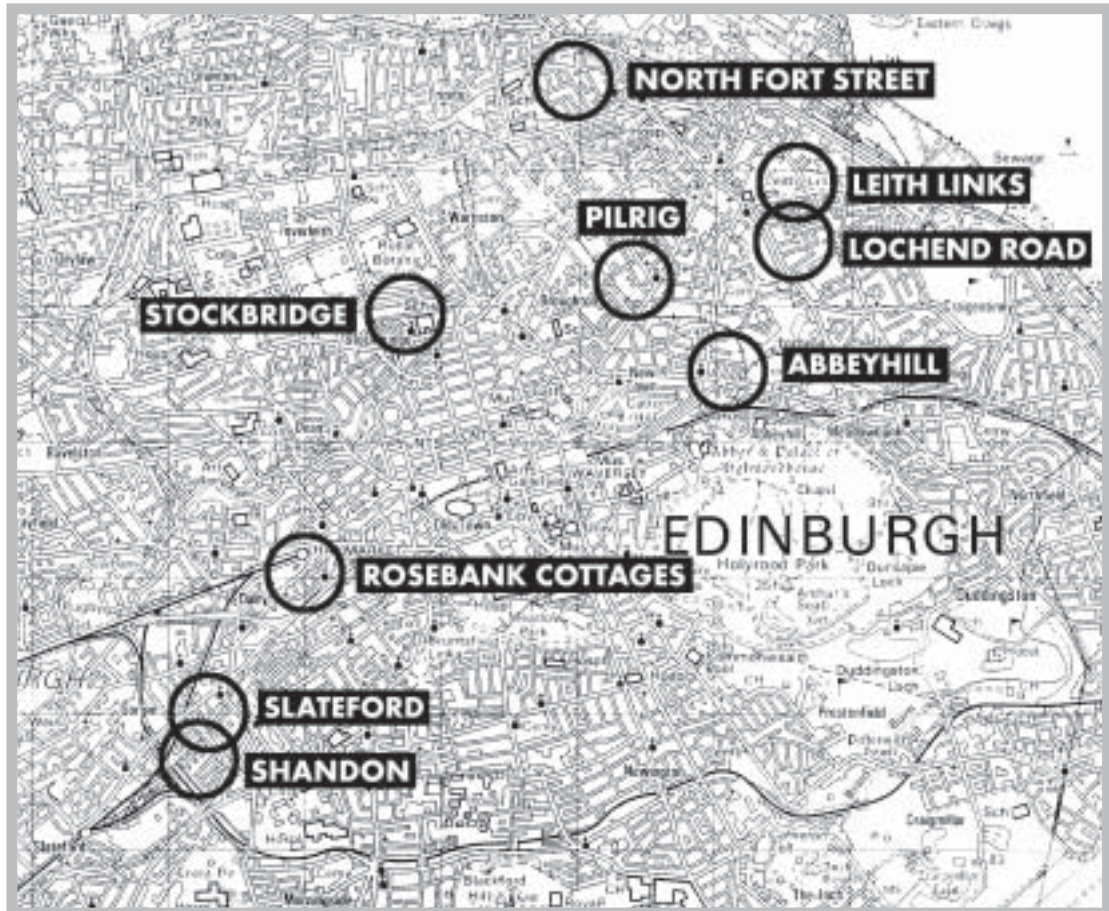
Local plan policies promote high quality new design and protect the character and appearance of listed buildings and conservation areas. For example, policy CD19 of the Central Edinburgh Local Plan states:

“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, will not result in an unreasonable loss of privacy or natural light to neighbouring properties and are not detrimental to neighbourhood amenity and character. Particular attention will be paid to ensuring that such works to listed buildings and non listed buildings in conservation areas do not damage their special architectural character.”

#### ■ SCOPE OF GUIDANCE

These supplementary guidelines apply to the Colony developments at Stockbridge and Dalry, and Rosebank Cottages which are all listed (Category B). The policy guidance relating to dormers, external stairs, doors and gardens will also be applied to the following unlisted Colony developments:

- Abbeyhill
- Leith Links (Industrial Road etc)
- Lochend Road
- North Fort Street (Hawthornbank)
- Pilrig (Shaw's Place, Terrace and Street)
- Shandon (Shaftesbury Park etc) - window guidance also applies.
- Slateford (the “flower” colonies)



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## ■ STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Colony developments at Stockbridge, Dalry and Rosebank Cottages are all listed buildings. In addition to the normal requirements for planning permission and building warrant, alterations which affect the character of a listed building require listed building consent. This may apply to alterations which would be too small to require normal planning permission on an unlisted property. It may apply to the interior as well as the exterior of the building and to the steps, garden walls, railings, new doors and windows and any external painting. With the exception of Shandon, the other colony developments listed above do not lie within conservation areas. However, as all colonies housing is flatted, the permitted development rights applying to houses do not apply.

# POLICYGUIDANCE

## 1. Roofs

Re-slating should be carried out using second hand slate. It is important to ensure consistency in the texture and grading and that the slates match the colour, size, thickness and surface texture of the original materials as closely as possible. Concrete tiles or artificial slate should never be used in conjunction with, or as a replacement for real slate. The introduction of slate vents is not appropriate.

## 2. Dormer Windows

New dormers are only acceptable when in the style of the traditional bay type, usually with dimensions, windows and other details to match those already existing on a particular terrace.

Where a new dormer is to be set on a roof which already has several of the original type, it should line through, and follow as closely as possible the established spacing of those existing. New dormers should always match the original style on the terrace.

Dormer windows are not acceptable for historic, architectural and technical reasons in Rosebank Cottages, or in other Colony developments which were originally built without dormers.



## 3. Roof Lights

Traditional roof-lights are preferable to the building of any new dormer window. Traditional style cast iron roof-lights which do not project above the level of the slates are required. They should be longer vertically than in breadth and should not normally exceed 1000mm x 800mm.

## 4. Stonework

The external walls should be retained in stone and any repairs carried out in natural stone to match. They should not be painted, cleaned or faced as this is not traditional and is damaging to the stonework, allowing moisture to build up between the outer material and the existing stonework underneath. Re-pointing should be carried out carefully. The mortar mix used should never be hard cement based and should be softer than the stonework so that the moisture evaporates through the joints rather than the stonework. An ideal mortar would be hydraulic lime and sand in a 2:5 ratio, mixed with a little water. A cement: non-hydraulic lime: sandmix can also be used in a 1:2:8 ratio. Specialist advice should be taken on best practice.

## 5. External Stairs

Stair railings should be retained or repaired to match the original design and painted black.

Stair-treads should be repaired in natural stone to match existing.



## 6. Doors

Original doors should be retained and repaired if possible, or replaced to match the original type exactly. Flush panelled doors, flush doors with planted mouldings to suggest panelling or modern 'stock' panelled doors are not acceptable. New doors made specially to match the original doors should be used where possible. Second hand salvaged doors are cheaper than new and can be used if they are of the correct type.

A wide range of colours is permitted for the painting of doors. Advice on appropriate colours is available from the Head of Planning.

## 7. Windows

The retention of traditional windows is important to preserve the character of all historic buildings. The original timber and glass are part of the historic fabric of the building and should be retained if possible. The windows in the Colonies are of the timber sash-and-case type. The historic and architectural character of buildings is diminished when these windows are replaced with modern types. In addition the loss of original astragals which divide windows into small panes has a detrimental effect on the Colonies' historic character. The addition of astragals where not original is equally damaging.

Repair of original windows is almost always possible and makes sense, because of the high quality of the original timber and the cost of specially made new windows. Original windows can be overhauled and draught-proofed with comparative ease. If considering replacement windows, these should match exactly the original design in timber, without the use of non-original features such as 'horns' on the sashes, or modern "stock mouldings" for astragals. They should be single glazed.

Windows should always be painted white, for unity.

Modern UPVC or aluminium windows are inappropriate and not acceptable even when of sliding sash type.

## 8. Gardens

To protect the 'village' character of the Colonies, the garden areas should always be retained intact. The original cast-iron clothes poles are a special feature of the Colonies, and should always be kept. Garages or car run-ins will not be allowed in the gardens and no extensions will be allowed to the buildings. Planning permission is required to site a shed in any garden of a Colony. If an application is acceptable, the height would be limited to 1.5 metres and the volume to 2.25 cubic metres.

Walls where they exist must be retained and railing restoration is encouraged: examples of the original railings and balusters remain to copy. In the Stockbridge Colonies, the cope of the Collins Place walls is of a special design and should be retained or copied. Individual railings, walls and cope details vary from Colony to Colony and even terrace to terrace: any repair or restoration should match the design originally found on the particular terrace.



## 9. Interiors (Listed Buildings only)

Some Colony houses retain their original internal plan. Original detailing, such as cornices, doors and architraves, and fire surrounds often survives. These features contribute to the historic and architectural character of the houses, and should be retained.

Principal living-rooms should not be sub-divided and the removal of walls which open up views through the house from front to back should be avoided.

## ■ REASONED JUSTIFICATION

These guidelines provide detailed guidance on alterations to the listed Colony developments, as the plain and disciplined architecture of the Colonies means that even minor alterations can affect the appearance of a whole terrace. The Council has operated guidelines for the Stockbridge Colonies since 1978. In order to achieve the same standard of alterations, the guidelines have been extended to apply in all Edinburgh's listed Colonies. Some of the principles set out in the guidance also apply to non-listed Colonies, as indicated above.

# History of Edinburgh's Colony Housing Development

## APPENDIX 1

In the mid-19th century, Scottish housing reformers sought an alternative to the traditional tenement and there was a deliberate movement to find a working-class housing pattern which broke with the tradition and gave every family a front door and its own garden ground.

### ■ **The Pilrig Model Buildings**

This model idea for artisan housing in Scotland was pioneered in Edinburgh with a scheme by Patrick Wilson for the Pilrig Model Dwelling Company. This was the first Colony- type development in Edinburgh, known as The Pilrig Model Buildings until 1896, when they were renamed Shaw's Place, Street and Terrace after James Shaw, house agent. They consist of forty-four dwellings, the first sixteen completed in 1850, the rest the following year. The buildings were arranged in three two-storey blocks built around a central court, and the blocks were arranged to provide separate flats on each floor approached from different sides, those on the ground floor being entered from one side while the stairs to those upstairs went up on the opposite side. The flats were all self-contained with a variety of accommodation but with not fewer than two rooms, a scullery, a closet, gas and water supplies. They all had small gardens outside their own front doors.

### ■ **Rosebank Cottages**

In 1857, James Gowans appointed Alexander MacGregor, an Edinburgh Architect, to design the exterior of Rosebank Cottages, 'flatted cottages for the better class of mechanics', which were developed from the Pilrig system. They consist of 36 two-storey dwellings in three rows each of six blocks, on a compact site. On one side of each block the ground floor units are approached through small gardens and on the other a cast iron stair, at right angles to the terrace, gives access to pairs of dwellings on the first floors. They are constructed of squared rubble with rustic quoins, raised margins to openings, slated roofs and pedimented gables. The principal features are the elegant cast iron stairs in a trellis pattern with a Greek key border. Gowans oversaw the construction of the buildings and the design of the interior. The accommodation within each flat comprised a living room, two bedrooms, a scullery and a water-closet. In 1885, Gowans provided the following comments on Rosebank Cottages: "The idea that I had was to get working men into small self-contained houses, where they would have their own door to go in by, every room being independent of the others, having a door from the lobby for privacy, and having a little green attached to each house."

### ■ **Stockbridge Colonies**

The form and layout of Rosebank Cottages provided a prototype for a number of Colony developments by the Edinburgh Co-operative Building Company. The Company was set up in 1861, partly as a result of a lock-out in the building trade that year, and was formed to promote owner -occupied artisan housing organized by, and for, working people. Over a third of the original shareholders were stonemasons with many other trades represented. Glenogle Park was their first site and work started in 1861. By 1867 the five west most terraces had been completed and the bulk of the remainder were built within the next five years, although some sites were not developed until 1911. By 1875 the company had built over a thousand houses on this and four other sites in the city in one of the most remarkable co-operative housing ventures in Edinburgh's history. The Stockbridge Colonies are the best monument to the movement and one which is recognised in histories of working-class housing in Britain. As well as having an interesting social history, the terraces are of architectural interest. The cottage style of the two storey terraces with high doors reached by outside stairs is quite common in the larger burghs,

although unusual in the Scottish cities. However, the overall scale of the layout and the detailed control of the design of the Stockbridge Colonies cannot be matched anywhere else in Scotland. The original 1861 design was probably by the architect James Sutherland, a director of the company. Slight variations were introduced to both the interiors and exteriors as work progressed-including variations in internal quality for particular purchasers-but the overall effect was of a pleasing consistency. Among the individual details of architectural interest are the commemorative and trade symbol plaques. The picturesque setting by the Water of Leith and its walkway adds to the area's attractiveness.

### ■ **Dalry Colonies**

The /Dalry Colonies were erected by the Edinburgh Co-operative Building Company between 1868 and 1870 by James Colville. They were primarily built to house Caledonian Railway workers and are named after Scottish peers and famous reformers, e.g. Bright and Cobden.

### ■ **Other Colony Developments**

Other Colony developments in Edinburgh include Shaftesbury Park, the Flower Colonies at Slateford, Abbeyhill, Lochend Road, North Fort Street (Hawthorn Bank) and Industrial Road.

**For further details contact:**

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