

Belper and Milford Townscape Heritage Initiative

Guide to Eligible Works

General Principles

Grant aided work should be based on a thorough understanding of the building and the problems to be addressed. The requirement, in most cases, will be for a written specification, supported by drawings and photographs which demonstrates an understanding of the nature of the building and provides sufficient information to be sure that the proposals will not have an adverse impact on the building or site.

All work must be undertaken with respect for the character and integrity of the building or structure, and of the area in which it lies, in accordance with the relevant national conservation policies, and following published guidance and advice issued or endorsed by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), English Heritage and Amber Valley Borough Council.

In some cases, additional investigation may be appropriate - such as a report from a building archaeologist, if your building is of early origin and has a complex structural history.

Tenders should only be invited from contractors known to be able to achieve the standards of quality required.

Grant will not be paid for work that, in the reasonable opinion of Amber Valley Borough Council and the HLF, does not meet generally accepted standards of quality in materials or workmanship appropriate to the circumstances, whether in conservation work or new construction.

Eligible Categories Of Work

Building Repair

This includes the structural and external repair of historic buildings which are in use. It can sometimes include internal repairs, but only if these are necessary for structural stability, and redecoration only if the public has access to the building by, virtue of its use.

It does not include routine maintenance, redecoration, or internal repairs alone unless these are needed as a direct result of eligible repair.

The objective is to put into sound repair the structure and external envelope of buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area. Repairs should be comprehensive in scope, using appropriate techniques or methods of construction and high quality natural or traditional materials, normally on a like-for-like basis. Substitute or artificial materials are ineligible and their use generally unacceptable on grant-aided projects.

Repairs may include:

The consolidation or reinforcement of the existing structure

This should use the most conservative approach practicable, although limited reconstruction as existing might be eligible. The survival of vernacular building techniques such as clay wall, wattle and daub, etc (often found in town buildings behind later finishes) is very important, and repair should be in compatible materials.

Roof works

Re-roofing in natural materials traditional to the area normally to match the historic covering, using new materials and/or re-using sound existing materials where possible. Repairs to the roof structure and high level external elements should be undertaken concurrently.

Re-roofing with artificial or alternative materials, such as concrete tiles, fibre cement tiles, reconstructed slates or artificial stone slates are not eligible for grant, nor is the use of roofing felt for flat roofs or lining gutters.

Prior approval shall be required for any associated alterations such as new roof windows or skylights, roof vents, flue terminals, soil and vent pipes, aerials, satellite dishes, solar panels etc., well before tendering and commencement of the work.

Structural timber repairs

Appropriate repairs to timber frames, roof structure, beams, floor joists and other structural timbers, based on a careful and comprehensive survey of the existing structure. In situ reinforced resin repairs are not acceptable unless justified on the grounds of avoiding disturbance of historic fabric.

Dry rot eradication and timber preservative treatments, preferably based on an analysis and specification by an independent consultant (whose fees are also eligible), and using non-destructive techniques and non-toxic applications wherever possible.

Damp proofing

Using traditional methods, but only where damp is causing structural damage to the building.

Damp-eradication measures, such as improved drainage, the introduction of French drains, or the lowering of ground levels, are preferable where practicable. Post-application DPCs are ineligible and often cause further damage or exacerbate damp problems in historic buildings.

Repairs to chimneys

Including lining or rebuilding if structurally essential, provided that the chimney is reinstated accurately to the historic height and profile. Also the replacement/ reinstatement of the historic style of chimney pots/caps. The retention and repair of existing stacks may be a condition of grant offered for other work.

Leadwork

Repair or renewal of existing leadwork, the provision of weatherings, and the re-forming of gutters to adequate falls, fixing new lead flashings at all abutments and chimneys - normally in accordance with the details and weights recommended by the Lead Sheet Association in The Lead Sheet Manual.

Rainwater goods

Repair or replacement, where they are damaged/weathered, to match the historic material and sections. Generally, this will be in cast iron, but occasionally in lead, timber, stone or aluminium where appropriate. Plastic, UPVC or GRP rainwater goods are not eligible.

Masonry repairs

Repair of external stonework and brickwork, including decorative elements, to an appropriate specification. Plastic in situ resin-based mortar repairs to brickwork and stonework are not normally acceptable or eligible.

Selective rebuilding of existing stonework and brickwork, if structurally necessary and to an agreed specification. Generally, this will be using salvaged existing materials and/or new matching materials and should be preceded by a recorded survey of the existing. Only repointing, which is structurally necessary, kept to the absolute minimum required and carried out to an appropriate specification, is eligible. Comprehensive repointing for cosmetic reasons is not eligible.

External cleaning

The external cleaning of stonework and brickwork is not normally grant aided. In special cases this may be considered eligible where a build up of dirt, paint or built-up resin coatings on the surface is substantially damaging the fabric of the building by chemical action or harming its appearance. Any cleaning which is agreed to be eligible must be undertaken to an approved specification and carried out by specialist conservation contractors.

Windows, doors and other external joinery

Repairs(or, if unavoidable, replacement) of windows, external doors and other external joinery compatible with the historic pattern and detail, and in the historic material, which contributes to the character of the building and/or the conservation area.

External render or stucco

Repairs and limited areas of renewal (there should be a presumption against total or substantial renewal, unless this is unavoidable), to an approved specification. If such a coating has been removed in recent years to the detriment of the performance and appearance of the building, its reinstatement may be the most appropriate form of repair. Also eligible is the repair of applied details and features such as cornices, string courses, window architraves, columns, pilasters and rusticated rendering. These should be repaired carefully and accurately to the historic form and profile, and as nearly as possible to the historic composition. Generally, GRP or similar replacement mouldings are not acceptable for grant, nor are proprietary in situ resin-based repair techniques.

The careful removal of later modern render or paint applied to a property to re-instate its original appearance may also be eligible for grant, if it can be removed without damaging the brick or stonework and if the brick or stonework has not been damaged to provide a key to bond the render.

Ironwork

The repair to the historic pattern and detail of distinctive architectural features, for example decorative ironwork such as balconies, canopies and railings; tiling and other historic finishes, and architectural sculpture, using similar materials and techniques as existing.

Other External Works

The repair or reinstatement of retaining walls, boundary walls and/or railings, if they contribute to the stability of the building, enhance its setting, or are of particular interest in the conservation area.

Reinstatement of Architectural Details

These works are only eligible where the building is otherwise in sound repair, or will be repaired as part of the project. The objective is to reinstate (to historic patterns) in whole or part, elements of the exterior fabric of buildings, which are essential to their design and character; such as ornamental brick or stone (including architectural sculpture), stucco and other applied finishes and details, joinery (e.g. windows and external doors), and ornamental metalwork such as balconies, canopies and finials.

This does not include “conjectural restoration” work, that is work for which there is no firm historical evidence, either surviving on the building or recorded in photographs or drawings. Nor does it include works involving the reversal of alterations that are themselves of quality and interest.

Bringing Vacant Historic Floorspace Back into use

This refers to vacant space within partly used or unused historic buildings, such as vacant buildings or unused floors above shops. In this case, the end-user should have been identified and there should be a definite intention and plan for its future use. Proposals for such work must respect the character and interest of the building internally as well as externally.

Since the objective is to bring vacant floorspace back into use, all aspects of the physical work of conversion will be eligible, including necessary alterations both internal and external, provided that they are sympathetic to the character and historic interest concerned. Internal work will normally involve decoration, but furnishings, and services beyond the basic provision of heat, light and power, are not eligible. Grants to bring floorspace into use will only be offered if the building is in sound repair, or will be made so through concurrent repair work.

For projects involving the reuse of upper floorspace, the level of grant will cover the “conservation deficit” i.e. in calculating your grant, any value added to the property as a result of the works will be deducted from the cost of the conversion/repairs, to arrive at a maximum level of grant. Grants cannot contribute to the cost of fitting out space for a specific use.

Proposals to bring vacant historic floor space back into use will require a development appraisal by qualified independent professionals. A reasonable developer’s profit may be included. However, where the value of the property on completion is significantly higher than forecast, we may seek to recover the grant to the extent that the value on completion exceeded the estimate on which the grant was based.

More information on calculating the Conservation Deficit can be obtained from the THI Project Officer.

Other Eligible Costs

Professional Fees

Expenditure on fees for qualified professional advisers is eligible for grant provided they belong to one of the recognised institutions, normally architects (but not architectural technicians) or Chartered Surveyors (members of the RICS) with an appropriate level of specialist experience. The involvement of professional advisers is encouraged. Full professional fees for architectural services are only eligible if the professional adviser inspects the work in progress and is responsible for its certification on completion.

Archaeological Works

The cost of archaeological work in accordance with relevant national and local planning policies is eligible, in the following cases:

- Recording and analysing historic buildings of early origin or complex evolution as a basis for devising repair and conversion works, and monitoring during those works.
- Archaeological assessment, evaluation, excavation and monitoring in connection with alteration, extension or new build projects.
- Publication of the results, if necessitated by works which are themselves eligible within the scheme.

Value Added Tax

VAT may be payable on eligible repair costs and fees and where it cannot be recovered, it is eligible for grant. Guidance on VAT and listed buildings is contained in VAT Notice 708 Buildings and Construction (August 1977) available from the local VAT office.

Notes and Advice

If you would like further information about the Belper & Milford Townscape Heritage Initiative or to find out if your property is eligible for a grant, please contact either:

Further advice and guidance can be obtained from:

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