

Annan Townscape Heritage Initiative

Eligible Repairs

Introduction

The aims of the Annan THI are to secure a viable economic future for the town centre by investing in the built heritage. It is important that the quality and historic character of Annan is maintained and enhanced. Consideration of the architectural detail of buildings and proper repairs respecting traditional fabric, details and skills will help to achieve these aims.



Eligible Work

Only external repairs and some structural works that are necessary for the preservation of eligible buildings using traditional architectural detailing, techniques and materials are eligible under the Annan THI.

Grants will not be paid towards normal routine maintenance and decoration, internal repairs, unsympathetic alterations, adaptations, modernisation, the installation of services, drainage or other earth works, modern techniques and materials, new buildings and extensions. Some exceptions may apply in the case of work required to bring redundant floor space into use.

This list is not a detailed specification but indicates the general standards and broad criteria that apply. In all cases proposals should be discussed with Solway Heritage and the Planning Officer before an application for grant is made.

Roof, where the use of natural slates is required

Repairs should match the existing traditional finishes, the general weight, sizing and textures being followed. Care should be taken to use matching slates laid to the same gauge as the existing. Re-use is preferable and losses made up with matching second hand slates. Varieties of slates used in Annan include, Scottish, Welsh, Westmorland, and North Lancashire. Any changes from original materials must first be agreed.

Some imported slates may not be acceptable and do not weather well in this climate. Inferior quality and non-matching slates are not grant eligible.

Heritage Lottery Fund



Ridges should normally be retained as found; stone, zinc or lead (except that zinc ridges may be replaced with lead). Decorative fired clay ridges may also be found and should be retained.

All associated lead work should be in accordance with the recommendations of the Lead Development Association.

Cast iron rain-water goods

Repair and replacement of existing cast iron rhones and pipes are generally grant eligible. Profiles should match existing where these are original. Many buildings will have half-round rhones and round rhone drops. Cast iron and lead hoppers should be retained. Plastic or extruded aluminium guttering is not grant eligible.

Where rhones are formed as an integral part of stone cornices these were normally lead lined. Repairs should be on that basis. The use of plastic or extruded aluminium guttering in cornice gutters is not appropriate as water can lie on bare stone work under the gutters and cause damp penetration problems.

Window and door joinery including traditional shop fronts

All original joinery must be kept wherever possible. Repair is nearly always preferable to replacement. All new joinery work should be agreed by drawn details, showing profiles and dimensions etc. Samples of astragals and other mouldings can also be prepared and submitted for approval.

It is important that these details are agreed before the main work is undertaken. Occasionally it will be acceptable to refer to existing, retained, traditional windows to agree details and make comparisons after the work is complete. "Off the shelf joinery" and modern profiles are not grant eligible.

Joinery should normally be painted not stained. The insertion of sealed double glazed units in traditional window designs is likely to lead to an unacceptable increase in the dimensions of astragals etc. that would not be historically accurate and should therefore be avoided.

The insertion of double-glazed units that alter the dimensions and cross-sections of joinery is not grant eligible. Draught-proofing and/or secondary glazing are the appropriate means of upgrading performance of traditional windows, particularly in listed buildings.

As with other architectural joinery the repair of some shop fronts may be grant eligible. Again as much of the original fabric as possible should be retained. Occasionally, where there is good evidence of a lost shop front, grant aid may be offered to help with reinstatement. Speculative or conjectural reconstruction should be avoided; instead a well designed modern style that respects the scale and proportion of the building should be substituted. (This is not grant eligible and will be subject to planning and/or listed building consent).

Specialist stone repairs, repointing and traditional harling

Eroded stonework can sometimes simply be dressed back to sound material and left. If the erosion is likely to affect structural stability or weathering of surrounding stones then proper repairs using matching stone, bedded correctly, should be undertaken. These will either involve the complete replacement of the affected stone or the indentation of new stone, of at least 100mm thickness, onto the dressed back eroded surface.

It is important to preserve as much as possible of any existing tooled faces; including carved work, fine ashlar, or the textured finishes to facing stone. Replacement or dressing back should not be undertaken lightly. It is better to retain damaged and partially eroded original stone than to replace with new. All new stone should be worked and tooled in the same manner as that being replaced.

Cement patching and plastic repairs are not grant eligible and should for the most part be avoided. Occasionally resin repairs and pinning pieces of stone together will be appropriate and will qualify as legitimate conservation work.

Cleaning of stonework should generally be avoided. Any proposals to clean must be fully justified by the inclusion of a detailed report by a stone conservation specialist.

Cleaning is not grant eligible and may need consent.

Repointing

Repointing will be considered for grant aid where required for the consolidation and preservation of the building.

Joints should be raked out to a depth of at least 35mm, by hand. The mortar is to be well compacted into the joint in layers and brushed back from the face of the stone or brick. It should finish flush with, or slightly set back from, the faces of adjacent stones and not be polished or smeared over weathered areas of stone. Trowelled finishes and strap pointing are not acceptable.

Traditional hydraulic lime mortars should be used. (Please refer to the Council's leaflets on the use of lime mortar). Aggregates used in repointing should match the older existing mortar aggregates for texture and colour. Soft building sand is not appropriate. The strength of the mortar should reflect the strength of the stone or brickwork. The mortar mixes should always be specified and agreed before work starts.

Grants will usually be subject to conditions requiring the approval of a sample area of pointing before the main work starts.

Harling

Harling should only be reapplied where it already exists as a traditional finish. The mortar mixes based on hydraulic lime should always be specified and agreed before work starts. Grants will be subject to conditions requiring the approval of a sample area of harling before the main work starts. Harling based on lime and sand should not be painted but may be limewashed. Dry dash is unacceptable and is not grant eligible.

Special architectural features

Works of repair to external features such as dormers, chimneys, boundary walls and railings may also be grant eligible where these contribute to the character of the conservation area.

The repair of existing traditional dormers and roof lights on principal public elevations may qualify. Cast iron roof lights should be retained wherever possible. New dormers and modern skylights are not grant eligible.

Cast or wrought iron railings and gates should be replaced with cast or wrought iron in all cases as appropriate.

Foundations

Subsidence whether obvious or indicated by cracking of the structure ought to be investigated and necessary remedial works may be grant eligible. Not all cracks are a sign of impending collapse and subsidence so it may be appropriate in some cases to initiate monitoring to determine the probable causes. Structural reports in the case of larger projects or severe defects will be required.

Dry Rot/Wet Rot

The eradication of dry-rot and wet rot will only be grant eligible if it is part of a larger scheme involving the repair of external eligible items to which the rot outbreak can be attributed, for example faulty roof valleys. Associated internal work is not eligible.

Wood Boring Insects

The elimination of an infestation of wood boring beetles and other insect attack will only be grant eligible if it is part of a larger scheme involving the repair of external eligible items and if structural problems directly affecting the external appearance of the building have been caused by the attack. Associated internal work is not eligible.

Ancillary Items

Some ancillary items may be counted as grant eligible where they are necessary for the proper execution of the work such as scaffolding and preliminary work. Professional fees directly attributable to the grant eligible work can usually be included. VAT, where payable and not recoverable, may be included in the grant calculation and must be shown separately. Applicants will be asked to sign a declaration indicating whether or not they are able to recover VAT or if the work will be zero rated.

Conclusion

The main purpose of the property repair grants scheme should always be borne in mind when considering work to be undertaken, which is to secure a viable economic future for Annan town centre by investing in the built heritage and so helping to preserve and enhance the historic character of the town.

Some building elements and materials require specialist conservation techniques. The property repair grant scheme is designed to help to promote such work and care should be taken to ensure that contractors are seeking appropriate advice and using skilled craftsmen in those cases. All conservation work needs to be done sympathetically and with an understanding of traditional materials and techniques.

It is suggested that principles by which work to older buildings should be guided might include:

- Repair is preferable to restoration and only do what is essential;*
- Do not experiment with new methods and materials on old buildings;*
- Show respect for the old – do not try to hide or remove signs of ageing;*
- Use good traditional workmanship and materials which are matched to the existing fabric;*

*Do not destroy or undertake work which cannot be undone;
Complement the old do not copy or make a parody of it;
Appreciate and understand the buildings of the past – they have lasted a
long time and can be made fit to serve future generations.*

The value of what we do is not how we feel about it but how our grandchildren will feel about the environment we leave for them.

As special planning controls apply within the conservation area you are advised to contact the Area Planning Officer, Kenny Green, at the Lockerbie Office (Tel. 01576 205023) to determine what consents may be required before you apply for a grant.

Repair is better than replacement and buildings should be regularly maintained. Repairs should respect the fabric, form and technology of the original and not be experimental or innovative.

Further information and an application form can be obtained from:
Solway Heritage, Campbell House, The Crichton, Bankend Road,
Dumfries, DG1 4ZB

Completed applications should be returned to Solway Heritage.

For further guidance on the grants available see the Leaflet:
"Annan Townscape Heritage Initiative - **The Grants Scheme**"

Contacts:

The Council Offices; High Street, Annan, 01461 203311

Solway Heritage, - Tel. 01387 247543

Volkmar Nix - Conservation Officer, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Newall Terrace, Dumfries, DG1 1LW – Tel. 01387 260189

Please contact Catriona Fitzsimon at Solway Heritage if you would like to arrange a meeting on site or in the Council Offices in Annan.

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