

NOTTINGHAM CONSERVATION AREAS GUIDANCE NOTE 2025+





↑ The Canal Conservation Area was removed from Historic England's At Risk Register in 2024 on account of improvements and good management

NOTTINGHAM CONSERVATION AREAS BASIC GENERAL GUIDANCE 2025+

This document provides basic general guidance for works within Nottingham's Conservation Areas. It has been designed as informal guidance in support of existing Conservation Area Appraisals, The Local Plan and the Design Quality Framework.

It covers many frequently asked questions, outlining acceptable materials, design principles, and best practices.

The following topics have covered:

1. Boundary Walls
2. Bricks
3. Chimney Stacks
4. Demolition
5. Dormers
6. Extensions
7. Insulation (EWI)
8. Ironwork
9. Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing
10. Mortar
11. New Build
12. Render
13. Roofing Materials
14. Solar Panels
15. Shopfronts
16. Stone
17. Windows

For more detailed information please consult:

- The appraisal/management document for each Conservation Area (if published)
- The Design Quality Framework
- planning@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Nottingham Conservation Areas

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↑ Good quality boundary wall consisting of a Bulwell Stone plinth, blue brick banding, red brick upper parts and coping bricks

1. Boundary Walls

Boundary walls should be retained where they add to the special character and interest of the conservation area. For example in Nottingham many conservation areas are characterised by their Bulwell Stone walls.

Planning Permission

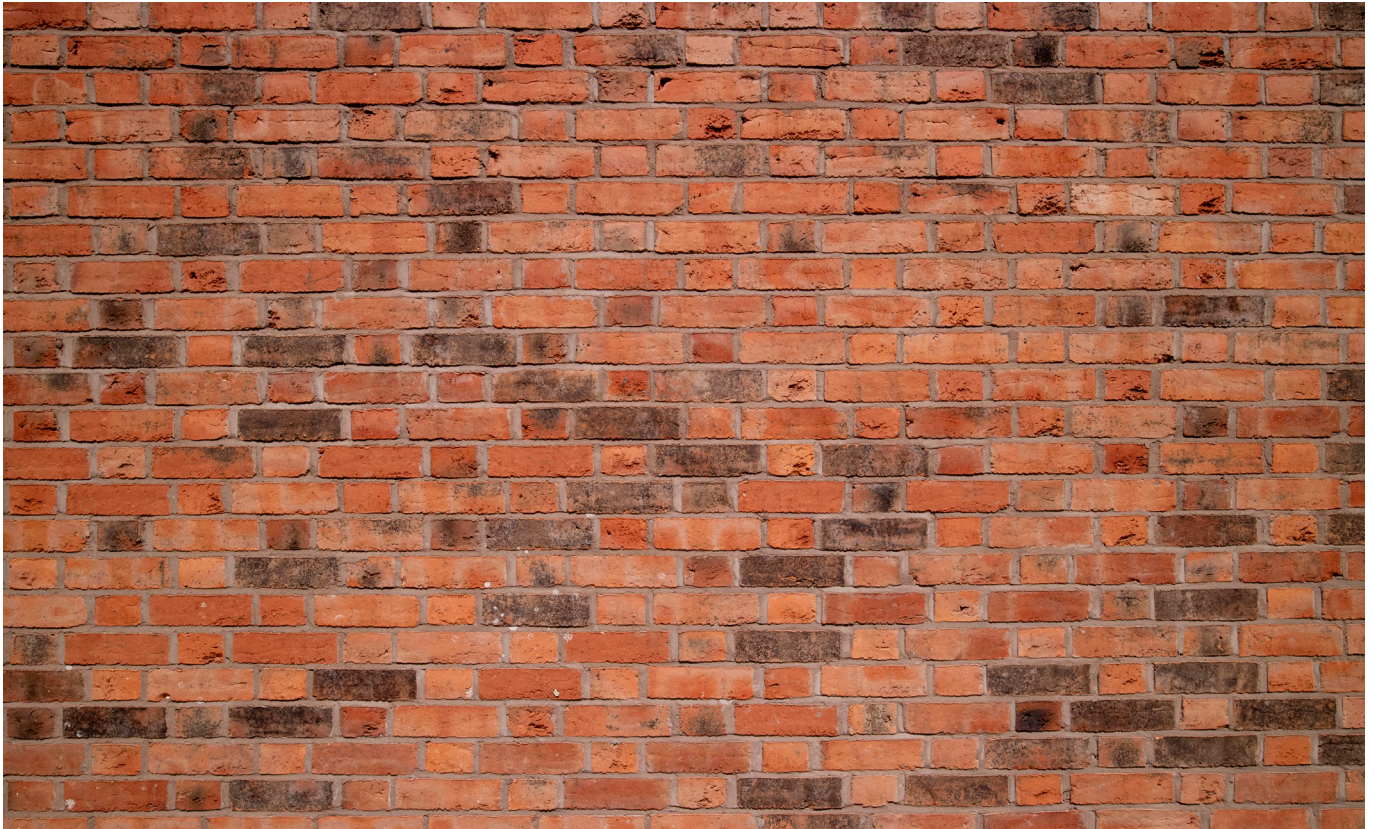
Generally: if a wall exceeds one metre in height next to a highway, or two metres elsewhere, or if the area is subject to an Article 4 Direction, planning permission will be needed. Demolishing a boundary structure in a conservation area may also require consent, especially if it's near a highway.

Additional Notes

- For informal advice, contact: planning@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

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↑ Good quality contextual modern bricks, for Nottingham College, showing appropriate colour, texture and subtle tonal variation

2. Bricks

Brick selection should reflect the original construction and regional character. Nottingham's historic bricks, from the 17th century until the early 20th century, are generally defined by a warm red-orange colour, typical of the clays from the local Trent Valley region. Sizes vary according to age in which they were made, the earliest bricks were relatively thin by modern standards.

Planning Permission

Required for significant alterations, such as new walls or extensions, not for routine repair.

Brick Bonding Pattern

It is often good practice to respond to existing bonding patterns within the immediate area, such as the following bonds: Stretcher, English, Flemish, Stack, Common, Garden Wall and Soldier.

General Guidance:

- Match colour, texture, patina and size of existing historic brickwork.
- Comparative photographic sample showing existing with proposed, or sample wall is often required during the application.

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↑ Projecting chimneys contribute positively to the Park Estate

3. Chimney Stacks

Chimney stacks are often key architectural features and contribute to the historic silhouette of buildings.

Planning Permission:

Usually required for removal or reduction, especially in conservation areas.

Presumption Against Removal

- Original stacks should be retained wherever possible.
- Their removal can harm the character and historic integrity of the building and character of the conservation area.

Preferred Approach

- Repair or like-for-like rebuilding using matching bricks and mortar.
- Retain original pots and detailing.

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↑ Locally listed building with major structural faults prepared for demolition on High Pavement in the Lace Market

4. Demolition

Demolition of structures will require planning permission.

In cases where the building contributes positively to the Conservation Area, such as a locally listed building, demolition will not be supported unless there is a robust structural survey as well as proposals for redevelopment that will enhance the area via good quality architecture.

Additional Notes:

- Contact planning@nottinghamcity.gov.uk for informal advice
- Consider the impact on views, setting, and neighbouring heritage assets



↑ Appropriately subordinate dormers with contextual style and alignment with existing fenestration

5. Dormers & Roof Lights

Dormers and roof lights can be acceptable where they respect the building's proportions and roof form.

Planning Permission:

Always required in conservation areas.

Guidance

- Small, traditional pitched dormers are generally preferred.
- Flat-roofed or oversized dormers are often inappropriate.
- Placement should respond to existing fenestration and avoid cluttering the roofscape or dominating the overall appearance.

- Dormers are more likely to be acceptable on the rear pitch
- Rooflights should be flush fitted and aligned with existing fenestration.

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↑ Derby Terrace, Park Estate. Front yard extension in buff stone, subordinate to the host building and restoring an original boundary

6. Extensions

Extensions must be sensitive to the scale, form, and character of the host building.

Planning Permission:

In Conservation Areas front extensions are always required while some single storey rear extensions are permitted development.

Design Principles:

Extensions should be subordinate in scale and height. They must either:

- Complement the existing design using matching materials and detailing, or
- Contrast in a neutral and minimal way, using a contemporary design that does not compete with the historic fabric.

Additional Notes:

- Contact planning@nottinghamcity.gov.uk for informal advice

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↑ Interwar council housing with modern EWI, respecting the original design with defined lintels and quoins

7. Insulation (EWI)

Listed Buildings:

- External wall insulation is generally unacceptable for listed buildings, as it almost always alters the historic character, detailing, and proportions of the external façade.
- Listed Building Consent is required and is unlikely to be granted except in exceptional circumstances.

Conservation Areas:

- External insulation may be acceptable on elevations of low significance or visibility, such as rear or side walls not visible from public viewpoints. Planning permission is required.
- Proposals must demonstrate that the insulation will not harm the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Type of Insulation

- For all historic buildings, natural fibre insulation (such as wood fibre, hemp, or sheep's wool) is strongly recommended
- Avoid modern, impermeable insulation systems as they are likely to trap moisture or harm the building fabric.

Qualities of Natural Fibre

- It is breathable, allowing moisture to pass through the wall structure and reducing the risk of condensation and damp.
- It is also hygroscopic, helping to regulate internal humidity.
- More compatible with traditional solid wall construction than synthetic or impermeable alternatives.



↑ Good quality ironwork used for the gutters, downpipes and brackets, Lace Market, Nottingham.

8. Ironwork

Traditional ironwork contributes to the character of historic buildings and streetscapes.

Guidance:

- Retain original railings, gates, gutters and fixings where possible.
- Repairs should use traditional forging techniques and compatible materials

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↑ Cable runs hidden via a return on the rear elevation of a listed building.

9. Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing

External cable and piping runs can contribute or harm the special character of a conservation area.

Planning Permission:

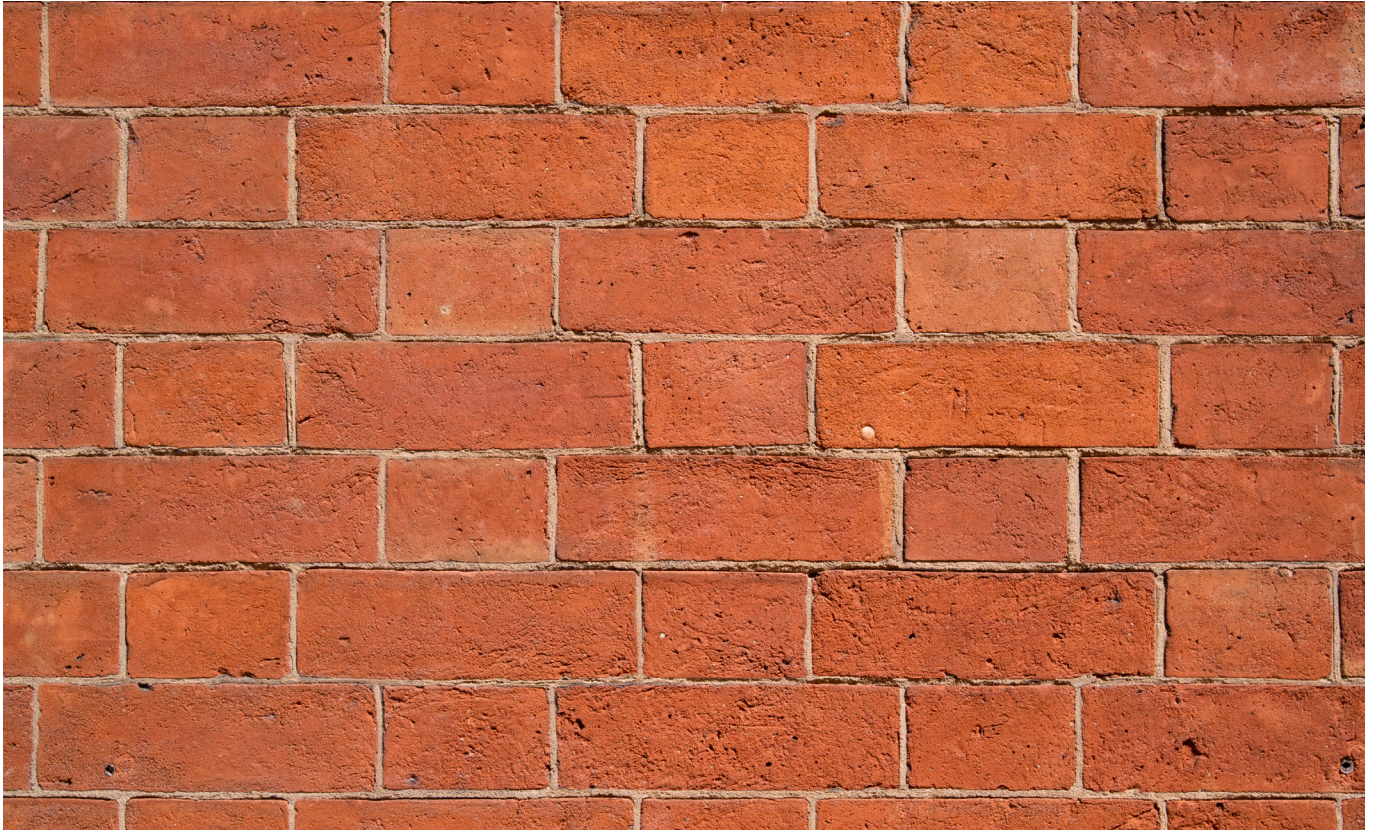
New external runs or replacements will require permission in conservation areas.

Design Principles:

- Replacements of existing should be on a like-for-like basis, unless they can be deemed harmful
- New runs must be minimal and neutral in their impact and visibility, such as working with existing fenestration or hidden by architectural features.

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↑ Typical high quality mid-nineteenth century Nottingham red brick with thin lime mortar joints.

10. Mortar

Mortar should be compatible with historic masonry and allow for breathability, otherwise cement render will cause permanent damage to the original brickwork.

Type:

- Use a Natural Hydraulic Lime (NHL) 3.5 mortar.

Mix Ratio

- 1 part NHL 3.5 to 3 parts well-graded sharp sand by volume.

Sand Specification:

- Use clean, well-graded sharp sand (0–4 mm) to match existing mortar in colour and texture.

Mixing & Application:

- Dry mix before adding water.
- Dampen masonry before application and protect during curing.

Curing:

- Keep damp for 5–7 days.
- Avoid cement additives or plasticisers.
- Colour Matching:
 - Prepare trial panels where visual continuity is important.

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↑ Contextual developments either side of a heritage asset in the Station Conservation Area.

11. New Development

New buildings must be sensitive to the area in terms of views, scale, massing, fenestration pattern, materials, motifs or roof forms. Architectural style must either complement the existing buildings or respectfully contrast. Window reveals, with a depth of at least 90mm add form and shade.

Planning Permission:

Always required in conservation areas.

Additional Notes:

- Contact planning@nottinghamcity.gov.uk for informal advise
- Significant new buildings may require a paid pre-app, which will ensure best practice.
- See Nottingham City Council's Design Quality Framework



↑ New build housing responding to scale, mass, fenestration pattern and materials of adjacent heritage asset. Park Estate.

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↑ Good quality lime render within the Canning Circus Conservation Area.

12. Render

Lime render is essential for maintaining the breathability and integrity of historic masonry. Cement render is not acceptable for heritage assets within Conservation Areas.

Type

Use traditional non-hydraulic lime putty render, which allows moisture to evaporate and prevents trapping damp within walls.

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↑ Clay tiled roofscape along Cavendish Crescent North.

13. Roofing Materials

Roofing materials in conservation areas should reflect the traditional character and regional vernacular of the building and its surroundings. Nottingham is generally characterised by a mix of roof materials, such as blue slate, red clay tiles and red clay pantiles.

Preferred Slate Materials

- Natural Blue Slate: Welsh, Canadian, Cornish, Spanish, or Brazilian
- Slate effect tiles may be permissible on roofs of low-medium significance

Preferred Clay Tile Materials

- Rosemary Blend Red Clay Tiles
- Blyth's Clay Pantiles
- Angia Interlocking may be permissible on roofs of low-medium significance

Avoid

- Modern concrete alternatives such as Marley Moderns

Additional Note

- Retain original detailing and reuse materials where possible.

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↑ Good quality restored shopfronts on Carrington Street within the Canal Conservation Area.

14. Shopfronts

Traditional shopfronts respond to the original design ethos of the building and can greatly enhance the appearance of the conservation area. Where there is an existing historic shopfront there will be a presumption against its removal. Where there is an existing heritage asset with a harmful shopfront, we will seek to improve the shopfront during the application process.

Planning Permission:

- New shopfronts will always require permission in conservation areas.
- Signage will also need Advert Consent.

Design Principles:

- Traditional shopfronts are often composed with a timber stallriser, pilasters, consols, fascia and recessed entrance.
- Modern shopfronts can work with these same principles using timber or aluminium materials.
- 1:20 drawings and sections of the proposed shopfront by a reputable joiner or architect will help to ensure a suitable design.
- If there are security concerns, recessed shopfronts can be amended with a attractively designed gate.

Additional Notes:

- See Nottingham City Council's Design Quality Framework for more comprehensive advice.

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↑ Symmetrical and organised layout of solar panels within the Old Sneinton Conservation Area

15. Solar Panels

Planning Permission:

- Required for buildings of high significance and roof slopes of high visibility
- Not required for buildings of low significance or roof slopes of low visibility.

Principles:

- Panels should be arranged in a neat, symmetrical, and compact formation that does not clutter the overall appearance of the building.
- Use indented panels or panels appropriate to the colour of the roof material.

Listed Buildings:

- Listed Building Consent is required.
- Preferred locations: rear slopes, inner valleys, flat roofs with parapets, or outbuildings.

Supporting Information:

- Include drawings, photographs, and a heritage impact assessment.

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↑ Former lace warehouse, dressed with 'White' Mansfield Stone.

16. Stone

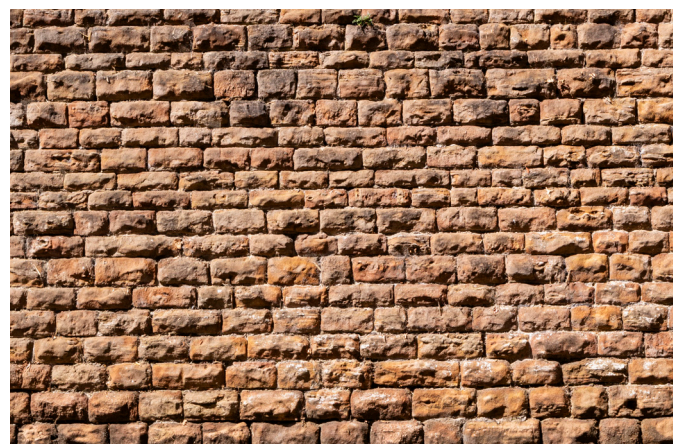
Stone types vary across Nottingham and should be matched to the original material where possible.

Common Stone Materials:

- Slabs: York
- Residential: Bulwell, 'White' Mansfield
- Commercial & Civic: Portland, 'White' Mansfield, Ancaster, Darley Dale

Note:

- Bulwell and Mansfield stones are now exhausted; either use reclaimed, or else as an alternative the Steetley variety of Cadeby Magnesian Limestone



↑ A typical Bulwell Stone wall, a strong local characteristic.

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↑ Good quality sliding sash replacements with duplex glazing bars upon a locally listed building.

17. Windows

Windows are integral to the overall appearance of historic buildings. Replacing original windows with poor alternatives can harm the character and appearance. Where there is an existing heritage asset with harmful windows, we will seek to improve the windows during the application process.

Conservation Area Principles

- Replacement of original windows should be like-for-like in design and material.
- Sash windows should replace existing sash
- Materials may be timber hardwood, timber softwood, or timber-effect UPVC.
- Submit 1:20 scale drawings/sections with dimensions and a window schedule.
- Glazing bars must be true/Georgian or astragal/duplex.

Listed Buildings

- Only timber will be accepted for replacing existing timber
- Glazing bars must be True/Georgian, matching the existing.
- Submit detailed 1:20 drawings/sections and a window schedule.

Timber Windows

Durable and cost-effective options include:

- Hardwoods: e.g., Sapele
- Softwoods: e.g., Accoya, Scandinavian Pitch Pine

Avoid

Acrylic/plastic-based paints (they blister and require frequent repainting).

Use

Linseed oil-based paints, as recommended by Historic England

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