



## COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR CONSERVATION AREA GRANT SCHEME GUIDANCE NOTES

The built heritage of the Outer Hebrides is an important element in the cultural heritage of the community. There are currently four designated Conservation Areas in the Outer Hebrides: Stornoway, Gearrannan, Ruisgarry and Howmore. This scheme applies to all four. The grant scheme is part of the Comhairle's policies for the historic environment to assist in the preservation of this part of its cultural heritage.

### **Purpose**

The primary purpose of the grant scheme is to bridge the gap between the cost of using traditional materials and methods instead of more modern materials. It is recognised that older buildings may be more expensive to maintain in character than modern buildings. At the same time, the grant is provided to encourage property owners to keep their properties in good repair.

### **Where the grant applies**

The grant scheme is available to all lessees/property owners in the designated Conservation Areas: Stornoway; Gearrannan; Ruisgarry; and Howmore.

### **What the grant will cover**

The grant is designed to either, cover the additional cost of using traditional materials and methods rather than modern materials, or for restoring historical/architectural detail.

Eligible works can include:

- Repairing/re-roofing using traditional materials e.g., natural slate;
- Repairing/replacing traditional renders;
- Repointing traditional stonework;
- Repairing/replacing traditional rainwater goods;
- Repairing/replacing traditional windows\*;
- Re-instatement of original style windows\*;
- Repairing/replacing external fixtures and fittings which are integral to the building;
- Professional fees.

*Note: This list is not definitive or exhaustive*

\*sash and case windows must have traditional opening / closing mechanism to be grant eligible. Alternatives may be considered depending on historical evidence/technical solutions and can be assessed on a case by case basis.

The preferred details for each area are contained in the relevant Conservation Area Management Plan at:

<https://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/media/12603/sg-camps-final-for-adoption-web-version.pdf>

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### **What the grant will not cover**

- Internal works (consideration may be given to remedying structural problems where they threaten the integrity of the building);
- Improvement works which are not repair/restoration. For instance, adding a new dormer or window;
- Applications solely for painting works;
- Works of a temporary nature;
- Works that are eligible for Thatching grant.

### **Rate of grant**

Grant will be paid at 50% (to a maximum of £3,000) of the costs of eligible works. There is a limit of one grant per property address per financial year (April to March).

### **Essential Requirements**

Any proposed works must follow good conservation practice in accordance with standards set by Historic Environment Scotland. Historic Environment Scotland provides technical information on its website at:

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/about-us/what-we-do/conservation/conservation-advice/>

and many of the Inform Guides can be downloaded free from the website at:

[https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/?publication\\_type=5](https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/?publication_type=5)

Where complex issues arise, potential applicants would be expected to engage the services of an architect, engineer, or surveyor who either have relevant experience and/or conservation accreditation.

All necessary statutory consents normally required for the works have to be obtained before grant applications are considered. Evidence of the consents must be provided.

All works will be expected to comply fully with Health & Safety requirements as set out in the C.D.M. Regulations 2015. In the event that such requirements are not adhered to, and give rise to public health and safety concerns, grant may be withdrawn.

### **Grant Applications**

Grant applications must comprise of the following:

- a) A completed application form;
- b) Drawings and where relevant, specifications;
- c) Plans/photos to sufficiently describe the proposals;
- d) At least TWO valid competitive quotes.



Applications are determined by the Director of Development; any decision will be final. The Comhairle will endeavour to make a full determination within 10 working days of receipt of a completed application.

Works shall not commence before a grant application is determined unless exceptional circumstances prevail. Where works contravene this requirement grant may be refused or withdrawn.

### **Conditions of Grant**

- The grant shall only be used to meet the cost of the approved works, as detailed in the grant offer letter. Additions to, or variations from the approved list of works will require the prior approval of the Comhairle. Any work which has not been approved by the Comhairle, or commenced before an offer of grant was made, will not qualify for grant.
- The applicant will inform the relevant officer (see contact details below) as soon as works commence so that periodic inspections may be made.
- Grant is offered based on submitted estimates. If the actual cost is lower, or the qualifying works are not all carried out, the amount of grant will be reduced proportionately.
- If the work to be grant aided has not been completed in 12 months of the formal offer of grant being made, the offer of grant will, unless there are exceptional circumstances, be withdrawn.
- Grants are payable on the Value Added Tax element of the cost of the works if the applicant is unable to reclaim the Value Added Tax.

### **Payment**

Payment of grant is dependent on the prescribed works being fully completed to an acceptable standard. On completion of the works the applicant is to forward receipted invoices for the full amount of the eligible works to the relevant officer. The works will be inspected to check that they have been satisfactorily completed and photographs taken of the site for record purposes.

For further information please contact:

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