

From: planningcomments@highpeak.gov.uk
To: [Planning Comments \(HPBC\)](#)
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Application Reference No. : HPK/2023/0304
Site Address: 1 Clifton Road Buxton Derbyshire SK17 6QL Buxton
Comments by: MR GUY DUNK
From:

Buxton

Phone:
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Submission: Objection

Comments: Replacing the original sash windows will result in the loss of the window glass, which unlike modern float glass has ripples & imperfections, which are part of the character of the building. These windows have already lasted 120 years, it is doubtful that replacement uPVC windows will last anything like as long. The existing windows should be repaired with new hardwood sills (where necessary), replacement staff & parting beads & fitting of internal secondary glazing, which also would be cheaper & less disruptive to the internal décor.

Historic England Advice: Modifying Historic Windows as Part of Retrofitting Energy-Saving Measures | Historic England Although PVCu (unplasticised polyvinyl chloride) rigid plastic replacement windows are popular, their visual character and operational differences make them unsuitable for older buildings, particularly those that are listed or in conservation areas. Because the components used to manufacture PVCu windows are weaker than their timber counterparts, they tend to be much thicker. This, along with different detailing and opening arrangements, can have a significant impact on the appearance and character of older buildings.

For example, in traditional windows the glazing bars (usually wooden or metal) are rigid and separate the panes of glass, whereas in PVCu windows they are often only strips of plastic inserted within the glass sandwich of a double-glazed unit.

The service life of PVCu windows is relatively short (less than 25 years) compared to well-maintained traditional windows (many of which survive for over 100 years). PVCu windows are not maintenance-free, as is commonly believed, and can be difficult to repair. This means they are usually replaced at the end of their service life. Although it is possible to recycle PVCu, this is still not done widely. Therefore, the carbon cost of a PVCu replacement window will be higher than an appropriately upgraded traditional window.

Secondary glazing involves installing a secondary, fully independent internal window on the internal side of your existing primary window.

Installing secondary glazing is a low-risk intervention that can deliver long-term energy and carbon savings. It is also relatively low cost compared to window replacement.

Our research into the thermal performance of traditional windows shows it can reduce heat loss as effectively as double glazing, particularly if low emissivity glass is used, and is even better than double glazing at reducing noise.

Secondary glazing also has the technical advantage over double glazing as there are no seals that erode over time; and it is more effective than replacement windows in reducing thermal bridging between the timber frame and glazing bars. If good quality wood is used and maintenance is continued, the life span of secondary glazing should be as long as the original single glazed windows, which could be 60-100 years or more. In comparison, the service life of slim-profile double glazed units is around 25 years, and the carbon costs of the inert gases used to fill the void between the glass layers is high.

Our guidance Secondary glazing for windows covers the benefits, systems and installation.

A wide range of secondary glazing products is available, including some which can be installed as DIY projects. There are also products available for unusual window shapes and sizes, including curved glass. When selecting a product, we encourage owners to consider its sustainability and how easily it can be recycled at the end of its lifespan.

Installing reversible secondary glazing does not generally need listed building consent. As described on pages 34 to 35 of our Listed Building Consent advice note, installation would only affect the special interest of a listed building if it resulted in damage to the frame of the window, panelling, shutters, or other features.

We strongly encourage owners to conserve significant historic windows wherever possible and not to replace them without good justification. Where owners decide to make changes to any windows, we believe it is in their interests (and of society more generally, the environment and future generations) that they:

- Maintain and repair sympathetically with appropriate materials and techniques

Repair and maintenance are usually more sustainable than replacement. A well-maintained and repaired historic window will last longer than a poor-quality replacement. Many historic windows were made with materials such as old growth timber that are no longer available. Sympathetic repairs will prolong the life of these materials, minimising environmental impact and sustaining the significance of the building for present and future generations to use and enjoy.

- Employ local craftspeople with the relevant skills to carry out repairs and maintenance wherever possible

This supports the local economy and the development of local climate-specific expertise and knowledge of local building traditions. It will also help to reduce environmental costs.

Window improvements should be considered in the context of a whole building approach to energy efficiency as explained in our guidance:

Historic Buildings: How to improve Energy Efficiency and

Historic England Advice Note 14: Energy Efficiency and Traditional Homes

The whole building approach ensures that works are effective and sustainable in the long term and will not inadvertently damage the operation and character of the building or harm the health of occupants. Not all energy efficiency measures that work for new buildings are suitable for older properties because traditional building construction and materials work differently.

Whole-life carbon costs of alterations, not just the potential saving in operational energy and carbon, should be factored in decisions. The whole-life carbon cost is the carbon used throughout the lifespan of a building or building element, including construction, use, maintenance and demolition or reuse. Some alterations can cost more in energy and carbon than they save during their service life.

In older buildings, the amount of heat lost through windows may be a relatively small proportion of the total building, depending on the number and size of the windows. Therefore, improvements beyond repair and draught sealing may not be cost-effective in either financial or carbon terms. This underlines the importance of adopting a whole house approach.

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