



West Lothian
Council

A DEVELOPMENT CONTROL POLICY FOR REPLACEMENT WINDOWS IN CONSERVATION AREAS

INTRODUCTION

Scarcely anything has more effect for good or bad, on the external appearance of a building than altering its window frames. The removal of the original window frames and their replacement with frames of inappropriate design can result in the destruction of much of the essential architectural character of a building. With Listed Buildings and within conservation areas, it is particularly important that window replacements are carefully selected in order that the character of the building and the area is preserved or enhanced, thereby protecting the character of conservation area as a whole.

In some instances, it may be essential that a new window frame is an exact replica of the one which is to be replaced; in others there may be greater flexibility. The Council's policy relating to replacement windows within conservation areas is therefore formulated to ensure that the architectural character of the building and consequently of the conservation areas in which it is located, is protected, whilst permitting owners some choice in certain circumstances in the type of replacement window frames which may be used.

POLICY

Listed Buildings in all Conservation Areas

Traditional timber framed windows, either sash and case or casement as appropriate, shall be used on all elevations. Any change in design, details or material will not be considered acceptable.

Unlisted Buildings in Linlithgow Palace and High Street Outstanding Conservation Area

Traditional timber framed windows, either sash and case or casement as appropriate, shall be used on elevations visible from areas accessible to the public. Any change in design, details or material will not be considered acceptable. Replacement windows on elevations not visible from areas accessible to the public shall be treated as below.

Unlisted Buildings in Single Ownership in all other Conservation Areas

Replacement windows shall match the original windows in proportions and appearance, and shall open in the traditional sash manner (or by means of an approved sliding and tilting mechanism) or be in the form of casements, whichever is appropriate. All windows shall have a white surface finish. Exposed metal frames will not be considered acceptable. All windows on the same elevation shall be treated in a similar manner and be replaced at the same time.

Unlisted Buildings in Multiple Ownership in all other Conservation Areas

Replacement windows shall match the original windows in proportions and appearance, and shall open in the traditional sash manner (or by means of an approved sliding and tilting mechanism) or be in the form of casements, whichever is appropriate. All windows shall have a white surface finish. Exposed metal frames will not be considered acceptable. Every effort shall be made to achieve a co-ordinated scheme of window replacement whereby all windows on the same elevation

are treated in a similar manner and replaced at the same time. The use of windows supplied at by different manufacturers within one building in multiple ownership shall be positively discouraged.

Non-Domestic Property in all Conservation Areas

Replacement windows shall, wherever possible, match traditional examples in the area. In cases where previous alterations to the property have resulted in the installation of architecturally inappropriate fenestration, every effort shall be made to return the facade of the building to its original form by means of carefully designed and detailed windows. Metal entrance screens in commercial property may be acceptable in a limited number of cases but preference will always be given to those using traditional materials and based on traditional proportions and details.

New Buildings in all Conservation Areas

Windows shall be selected to compliment those in adjacent older property. Keep to traditional proportions and avoid any horizontal emphasis.

NOTES

- Timber windows can often be repaired. This is a practical and cheaper alternative to replacement and should be considered wherever possible.
- If the existing timber window is draughty, investigate the use of secondary glazing. Take care however. Secondary glazing attached to the inside of the existing window frame must always be chosen so that it does not affect the external appearance of the window. If in doubt, check with the staff of Development and Building Control. Secondary glazing attached to the outside of an existing window frame never looks satisfactory and should not be used.
- Replacement windows should not have astragals (glazing bars) if there is no evidence in the existing window of their former presence. Under no circumstances should astragals be sandwiched between the two panes of double glazing or stuck directly on to the glass.
- Mullions (separating two windows) are an integral part of the design of the window opening and of the building as a whole. Their removal to enlarge the size of the opening will, in most instances, be positively discouraged.
- Window alterations can often require to be the subject of a Building Warrant. The advice of Development and Building Control should always be sought.

The staff of Development and Building Control are always available to advise on the replacement of windows. In the case of properties which are either listed or within a conservation area, it is strongly recommended that discussions take place at the earliest possible opportunity and certainly before any order for replacement windows is made.