



Grounds of Appeal

On behalf of

Mrs M McClenaghan

Proposed replacement uPVC windows

Planning ref – 11/01491/PP

Date of refusal – 10th October 2011

Property History & Introduction

The following is to be read in conjunction with our appeal against the ***refusal of replacement windows at Flat 0/2, 53 James Street, Helensburgh***. The proposals are to replace the existing timber windows with new uPVC windows.

The Planning Department has refused our application to replace the existing timber windows on the grounds that the proposed materials will adversely affect the property by setting an undesirable precedent.

The client's property is a flatted dwelling within a Category C(s) Listed Building. The vast majority of the windows on the property have been replaced with uPVC.

Grounds of Appeal

The main reason for the refusal of the application is for the use of uPVC. There are numerous mentions throughout the report of uPVC being inappropriate for the property and also the surrounding area.

Looking at the building, the majority of the windows have been replaced with non-traditional uPVC windows. As shown in the photograph below, only 2 flats still have all of their traditional timber windows. Although we were trying to keep a sash and case look with our proposed windows, we would be willing to change of our proposals to the same style as the other 4 blocks if this would help to obtain a favourable decision.

Building as existing:



The neighbouring block of flats has also had numerous uPVC replacements, as shown from the below photographs.

Neighbouring blocks:





Grounds of appeal statement – Refused planning application for replacement windows at Flat 0/2, 53 James Street, Helensburgh 4

As shown from the above photographs, the precedent for uPVC has been set and is now by far the most common window frame material for the listed building.

We appreciate that as a window framing material; timber can have a certain presence and appeal if specified correctly. However, timber windows are much more expensive than uPVC options, are not draught proof and do not perform as well as uPVC under the current U-value or WER (Window Energy Ratings) system. Furthermore, adding double-glazing to timber frames will result in a price increase of around 200% when compared with a uPVC product of the same proportions.

Mrs McClenaghan's decision to choose uPVC was a holistic approach taking into account:

- Sustainability
- Current & future energy costs
- Desire to restore a traditional appearance
- Actual window performance - U Value
- Cost of ongoing maintenance
- Practicality of cleaning

Another positive aspect of uPVC is its contribution to sustainable development. The environment no longer has to deal with the effects of heavy metal (lead, barium, cadmium) which were once component factors in the production of uPVC. In our case this ceased in 2005. Our factory in Cowdenbeath has been recycling uPVC for the past 12 years, by sending all our uPVC off-cuts back to our supplier (*LB Plastics*) for recycling. In doing so, we are adhering to the voluntary European Vinyl 2010 Charter, and can ensure that disposal is carried out with total environmental efficiency. Furthermore, the traditional aluminium and steel reinforcement has now been almost completely replaced with recycled co-extruded cellular materials, made from our original waste. Our virgin uPVC is as easily recycled since it is free from lead, cadmium and barium, all of which are hazardous to human health.

The replacement windows (if accepted) within the client's property will have a minimum life expectancy of 60 years maintenance free, as opposed to timber windows which would have to be sanded down and repainted every 3-5 years (approximate estimation). Timber is also more troublesome when it comes to recycling at end of use, especially when you consider that frames can be contaminated with a vast range of preservatives, fillers, cements, paints and solvents. Additionally, according to CIRIA, 62% of timber from demolition sources goes straight to landfill (*Taken from 'Window of Opportunity' report, published by WWF-UK*).

We believe the proposed replacements are far superior to the previously existing units from a maintenance and energy consumption point of view. Of course, uPVC does not have the same qualities as timber with respect to CO₂ absorption, however the life span of these windows is such that they do not have to be maintained or recycled within short periods of time, unlike timber.

Advances in uPVC window construction have allowed CR Smith to be able to fabricate windows with a centre pane U-Value of 0.8W/m². This will be essential to any zero or low carbon home and is another great example of progress made to the overall efficiency of uPVC as a material. I have attached the LB Plastics 'Sheerframe' - *Guide to Sustainable Windows, Doors & Conservatories* - for your assessment, which states that:

- PVC frames can be easily collected and recycled. Both the end life and manufacturing process waste materials are routinely recycled to eradicate any unnecessary waste.
- The frame material is 100% recyclable.
- Average of 50 years or more durability over timber.
- PVC windows are amongst the most rigorously tested and approved of all construction products, unlike some self-governing approval schemes run by the timber industry. With reference to our products, we currently have certification from BBA, BSI and ISO 14001.
- Co-extruded weather-seals ensure maximum air and water tightness and prevent heat being lost easily through draughts. This is one of the most underrated measures of energy efficiency, but one of the most important to any developer.
- Aluminium reinforcement within the frames is insulated using thermoplastic compound, thus improving the thermal efficiency of the uPVC window further.
- In non-structural areas (*e.g. sash & case*) the reinforcement is made from 100%-recycled material. This also applies to the windows used in the client's property.
- LB Plastics 'Sheerframe' windows were the first UK extruded PVC windows to become heavy metal (lead-free), with the use of lead additives phased out as a precautionary measure and replaced with calcium organic stabilisers.

The proposed replacements are designed to be superior to the existing uPVC units in terms of their safety, security maintenance and energy consumption.

Conclusion

The Planning Department has refused our application on the basis that our uPVC windows adversely affect the Listed Building. However out of 88 windows on the front of the building, 59 are uPVC and 29 are the original timber sash and case windows. This equates to 67% of the windows on the front of the building. The majority of the replacement windows are not of a traditional style.

We believe our proposed replacements not only complement the general aesthetics of the building and will not compromise the character of the building in any way, but they also provide a more sustainable and environmentally friendly option taking account of the condition and performance of the existing window units.

We therefore seek to appeal the decision of the Planning Department.