

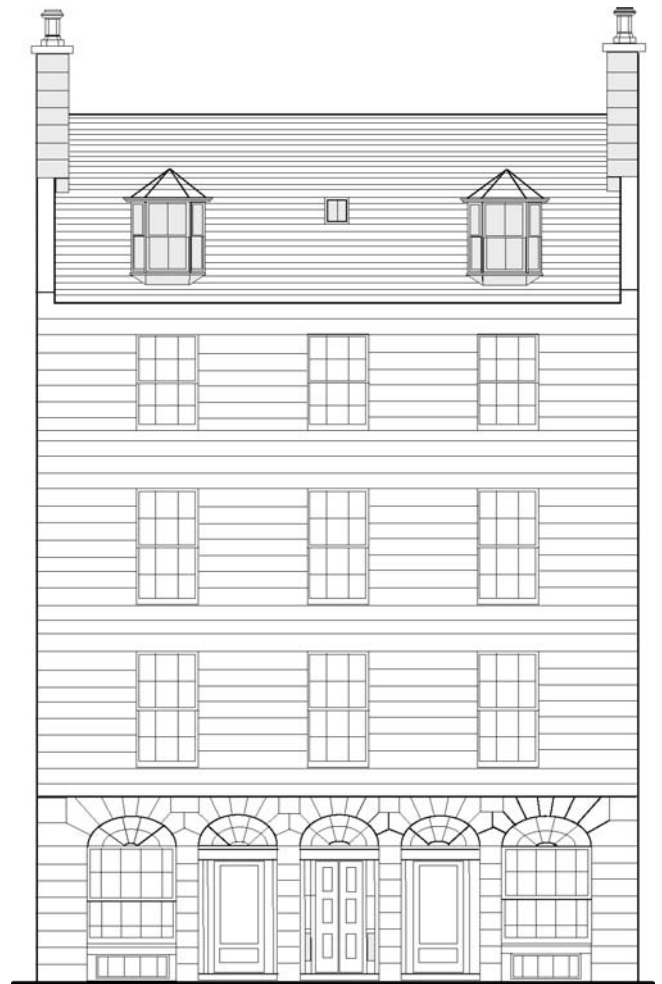
# Replacement Windows and Doors

## When consent is required for alterations and guidance on appropriate replacements

### INTRODUCTION

Windows and doors are important features of a building that contribute greatly to the character of the building and of the street in which the building stands. They are also elements of the building that are increasingly subject to alteration or replacement.

Unless care is taken over such alteration or replacement the appearance of the building can be seriously affected and the character of whole streets will be gradually eroded; a process inevitably reflected in property values. In many instances the replacement of windows and doors is strictly controlled by planning legislation. This leaflet indicates where permission is necessary, the type of permission required and what is likely to be permitted. Failure to obtain the appropriate consents could result in enforcement action being taken to have unauthorised windows or doors replaced, which may entail considerable costs for the building owner.



## LISTED BUILDINGS

The replacement of windows and doors in listed buildings by new windows or doors which are not identical to the originals, requires listed building consent. If, in addition, the listed building is situated in a conservation area or within a block of flats, planning permission will also be required. In most cases consent to replace a window or door, with anything other than a faithful copy of the original, is unlikely to be granted.

## CONSERVATION AREAS

The replacement of windows or doors in buildings in conservation areas in Aberdeen, by new windows or doors which are not identical to the originals, requires planning permission. (This applies to the front, side or rear of the property). Most buildings in conservation areas have sash and case windows and at the front of the property the only alternative to a sash and case window which is likely to be permitted is a sash and case 'lookalike' (this type of window is described elsewhere in this leaflet). In normal circumstances a different type of window may be permitted at the rear of the property provided it is not readily visible from a road or other public space.

## OTHER AREAS OF SPECIAL CONTROL

Within the settlements of Burnbanks and Kingswells which are subject to Article 4 Directions, planning permission is required for the replacement of windows or doors which differ in appearance from the existing arrangement.

## FLATS

For all flats, planning permission is required for the replacement of windows and doors by new windows or doors which differ in appearance from the existing arrangement. There is however a greater flexibility in what may be granted approval if the flat is not a listed building or in a conservation area, but a measure of uniformity is sought throughout the building: a tenement with a variety of window styles can present a somewhat run down appearance.

## HOUSES OUTWITH THE CATEGORIES ABOVE

Houses which are not listed and are outwith conservation areas or areas of special control, do not require planning permission for replacement windows or doors. Planning permission is however always required for adding a new bay window in front of the building line of any property.

## NON-RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

For all non-residential properties, planning permission is required for the replacement of windows or doors by new windows or doors which differ in appearance from the existing arrangement.

## BUILDING WARRANT

Although building warrant is not necessary for replacement windows and doors, the new elements **must** achieve compliance with the Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004 as read with the guidance given in the Scottish Building Standards Technical Handbooks for domestic and non-domestic buildings.

These documents provide important information on the standards to be met for thermal performance, ventilation, safe cleaning of both inside and outside glazed surfaces where windows are above a certain height, the use of safety glass where there is a risk of injury by persons coming into contact with glazing accidentally, and under certain circumstances in dwellings as a means of escape in case of fire due to circulation areas within the dwelling being impassable due to smoke or heat.

It is the responsibility of the owner of the building, or the person on whose behalf the work is being done, to ensure that the work complies with the requirements of the legislation.

Repair work to existing windows, for example the replacement of a defective sash or individual panes of glass, should be of a standard no worse than the existing part being replaced rather than the standard for completely new work.

If you have any doubts in this respect, this can be readily clarified by contacting the Building Standards Section.

## **PROPERTY SEARCHES**

Owners should note that failure to comply with any planning or listed building requirements, or with the Building Standards, may cause difficulty in selling their property at a later date.

## **GRANTS**

If your property is a listed building or is situated within a conservation area, a grant may be available from the City's Conservation Fund, towards the cost of repair or, in exceptional circumstances, reinstatement of sash and case windows.

## **SASH AND CASE WINDOWS**

Sash and case windows have a simple yet elegant appearance, and are still retained in the vast majority of listed buildings and buildings in conservation areas. In contrast many modern replacements, even those supposedly intended to reproduce the appearance of sash and case windows, can look clumsy and fussy with over-thick frame sections, projecting glazing beads, aluminum drip beads and weatherbars, night ventilators etc. Where there is no alternative to replacement, new sash and case windows should be identical in appearance and material to the originals with particular attention paid to the profiles of sash frames and astragals. Faults commonly found on new windows can be avoided if, in their construction, the windows take account of the guidance given in the 'Illustrations' section and the advisory leaflet "Notes on the repair or replacement of timber sash and case windows".

## **REPAIR OF SASH AND CASE WINDOWS**

Older windows were formed from good quality, tightly grained timber from mature trees which is no longer generally available, and it is usually preferable therefore to repair and upgrade an original window rather than replace it.

Quite frequently basically sound windows are discarded and new windows installed merely to allow the fitting of 'double glazing', when minor repairs, and the fitting of proprietary draught stripping systems can greatly improve the air tightness and sound proofing qualities of original windows. The repair and upgrading of original windows is to be encouraged and is therefore eligible for a grant.

## **REPLACEMENT OF SASH AND CASE WINDOWS**

An original sash and case window should be replaced only where it has clearly deteriorated beyond repair, and only in such circumstances might a grant be offered towards the cost of its replacement. A grant may also be offered where it is proposed that an inappropriate modern window is to be replaced. In either case the new window must be a faithful reproduction in timber, of the original sash and case window.

## **REPLACEMENT OF DOORS**

Traditional entrance doors are usually of solid timber framed construction with inset panelling retained by mouldings. Original external doors should be replaced only when repair is impractical, and only then with a joiner-made exact replica. Doors from 'DIY' chain stores and flush plywood doors with mouldings applied to resemble panelling, are not acceptable substitutes.

## **SASH AND CASE 'LOOKALIKE' WINDOWS**

These are generally permitted in conservation areas and in flats, but are not acceptable in any listed building whatever its category of listing.

Lookalike windows will normally be formed in timber and will have upper and lower sashes of the same size as those in the window they are to replace.

It is of vital importance that the upper sash is stepped out in front of the lower sash in profile, with the meeting rails fully overlapping, such that the window when closed, is virtually indistinguishable from a true sash and case window.

The sashes however, may have a simple casement or fully reversible method of operation. Any astragals on the original window must be replicated in the new window. (See illustrated notes on astragals.)

Sash frame sections should also be of a similar size as the originals and upper sashes will in general not have horns. Windows consisting of a single casement with a middle transom, all on the one plane, are not acceptable as 'lookalikes'.

White upvc vertical sliding windows may be acceptable as 'lookalike' replacements for windows which have no astragals, provided they fully replicate the significant features of timber sash and case windows. Such features would include:

- a) no more than 25mm of the outer window frame should be visible at the top and sides, once the window has been fitted into the masonry opening.
- b) the meeting rails must fully overlap.
- c) the bottom rail of the lower sash must be at least 75mm high.
- d) the glass must be recessed from the front face of the sash by at least 10mm.

The advisory leaflet on sash and case windows includes a large scale detail of a upvc vertically sliding window, which shows the features which must be properly replicated in order for the window to be acceptable as a 'lookalike' window.

## **GRANTS**

Grants may be available towards the cost of the work from Aberdeen City Heritage Trust where a building is listed or in a conservation area. For further information please contact:

**Project Officer**  
**Aberdeen City Heritage Trust**  
**PO Box 10450**  
**Aberdeen AB10 1WS**

**Telephone: 01224 522755**  
**E-Mail: [info@aberdeenheritage.org.uk](mailto:info@aberdeenheritage.org.uk)**  
**Web: [www.aberdeenheritage.org.uk](http://www.aberdeenheritage.org.uk)**

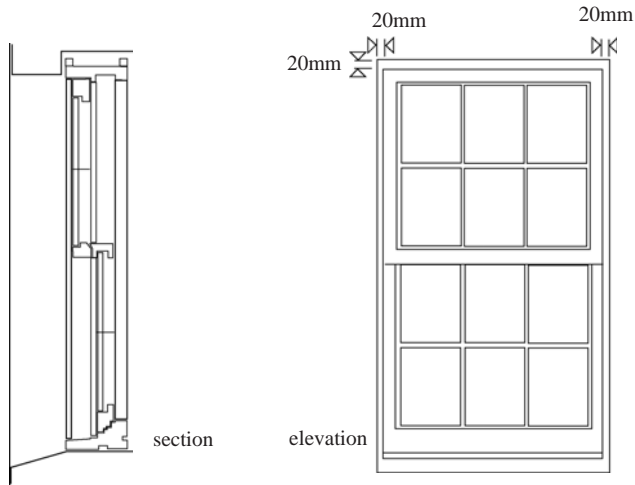
## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

To check if your property is listed or lies within a conservation area, grants and building warrant information please contact:

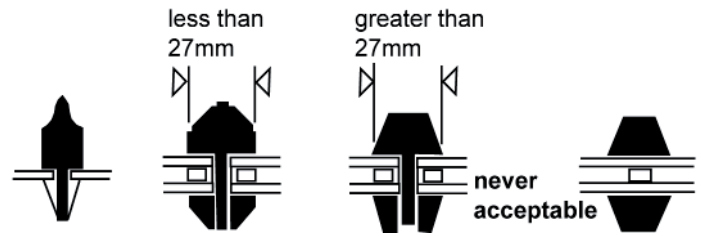
**Masterplanning, Design and Conservation**  
**Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure**  
**Aberdeen City Council**  
**Business Hub 4**  
**Marischal College**  
**Broad Street**  
**Aberdeen AB10 1AB**

**Telephone: 01224 522155**  
**Fax: 01224 523180**  
**E-mail: [pi@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:pi@aberdeencity.gov.uk)**

## ILLUSTRATIONS

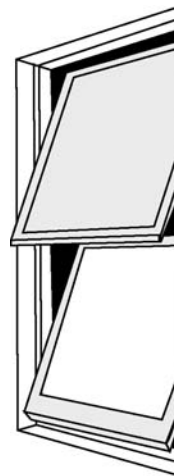


- a) Sashes slide vertically for normal opening with meeting rails fully overlapping. The lower sash may be hinged to open inwards for ease of cleaning.
- b) Visible face of case kept minimal (20mm) on top and sides.
- c) Depth of meeting rail equal to visible depth of stiles and top rail.
- d) Cill bedded directly onto granite (no sub-cill or spacing piece).
- e) Bottom rail of lower sash deeper than others by at least 25mm.
- f) Astragals kept slender. See notes below.
- g) No 'horns' on upper sashes unless present on original windows.
- h) External finish on windows to be white paint or white opaque stain.



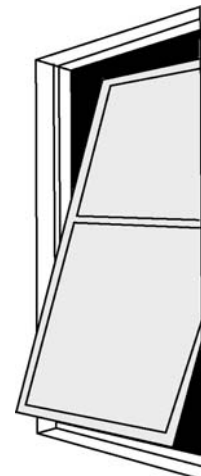
## ASTRAGALS

- a) Detail of typical 18th century astragal.
- b) In some circumstances double glazed astragalled windows may be acceptable. Astragals must still be slender and if timber beads are used they must be tapered to resemble a putty fillet. **This is not necessarily considered to be a 'like for like' replacement for all astragals in single glazed windows, particularly in listed buildings. You should consult us on every occasion such an astragal is to be employed to establish whether listed building consent is required.**
- c) Detail of crude, over-thick astragal with heavy and sometimes projecting beads.
- d) Detail of astragal applied to surface of glass. Alternatively a spacer bar is sandwiched in the glass to imitate an astragal and is often employed in conjunction with an applied astragal. **c) and d) are never acceptable.**



separate sashes with top sash stepped out in front of lower sash

**Acceptable type of 'lookalike'**



single casement with dummy transom

**Not acceptable as a 'lookalike'**