Window Statement

1. Introduction

This report supports the resubmitted planning application to replace the timber-framed windows, including the four upper stained-glass arches. It explains why the original stained-glass panels cannot be salvaged or re-installed and why full replacement is the only viable conservation approach.

The façade features stone surrounds and painted timber frames. The top-floor arches contain bespoke stained-glass panels, each set directly into the timber frame with traditional putty bedding.

2. Legislative and Conservation Policy

- Grade II listing requires preservation of historic fabric wherever feasible.
- Kirklees Conservation Area Guidance expects retention of character-defining features.
- NPPF Section 16 and Historic England Good Practice Note 1 promote a repair-first principle but allow replacement where fabric is irreparably damaged.

These policies endorse replacement only when repair cannot secure long-term stability or weather performance.

3. Description of Existing Stained-Glass

Each arched light comprises:

- Mouth-blown coloured glass pieces with antiqued finish
- Traditional glazing putty securing glass-to-frame interface
- Timber surround, later painted for weather protection

No modern sealants or metal cames are present; panels rely entirely on the glass–putty–timber system.

4. Condition Assessment

A hands-on survey and photo inspection reveal:

- Glass Surface Degradation
    - Crazing and micro-pitting from airborne pollutants
    - Fading and loss of original paint details due to UV exposure
- Structural Cracking
    - Hairline to through-cracks in over 70% of panels
    - Crack propagation visible around paint-bond lines
- Putty and Glazing Margin Failure
    - Putty bedding shrunk and cracked, allowing water ingress
    - Persistent moisture has led to staining and mould growth on internal faces
- Timber-Frame Deterioration
- Rotting at sill junctions where failed putty has let in rainwater

- Twisting and bowing of frames, creating uneven pressure on glass

Collectively, these defects have undermined panel stability and weather tightness.

5. Summary of Repair Attempts

- Trial removal of one panel resulted in further fracturing at existing cracks, demonstrating extreme fragility.
- Localised re-puttying failed under standard wet-and-dry cycling, with seals splitting within days.

No intervention to date has restored sufficient integrity or weather performance for re-installation.

6. Justification for Full Replacement

Given the scale of glass cracking, putty failure and timber decay, partial repairs would:

1. Risk total loss of delicate glass during dismantling.
2. Fail to achieve modern weather-tightness and thermal performance.
3. Incur disproportionately high costs against minimal heritage gain.

Full replacement with new, heritage-matched stained glass—fabricated using archival imagery and traditional techniques—will best preserve the building's character while ensuring durability.

7. Conclusion

The existing stained-glass arches are beyond practical repair. The pervasive glass deterioration, failed putty seals and timber decay justify their replacement under local and national conservation guidance.

8. Kirklees Local Plan Policy LP35 (Historic Environment)

- Policy LP35 requires proposals affecting listed buildings to minimise heritage harm and provide robust justification for any alteration.
- The submitted condition survey and trial repairs constitute the "robust justification" LP35 demands, confirming that retention would cause further damage and deliver an unstable, weather-leaky assembly.

8.1Listed Building Consent and National Good Practice

- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a presumption in favour of preservation, but permits replacement where repair is impracticable.
- Historic England's Good Practice Advice Note 1 (Managing Significance in Decision-Taking) states that replacement may be accepted if the original fabric is "irreparably damaged" and repair would destroy more of the historic material.

Our hands-on survey and failed repair trials demonstrate the panels are beyond practicable repair, satisfying the statutory test for replacement.

8.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- Section 16 requires “great weight” to the conservation of heritage assets but allows necessary harm where benefits outweigh the loss.
- Ensuring long-term weather-tightness, thermal performance and structural stability by installing new, conservation-grade stained glass constitutes a clear public benefit (building usability, reduced maintenance, energy efficiency).

This balance of harm and benefit aligns with NPPF’s requirement that any residual harm be justified by the asset’s ongoing viability.

8.3 Compliance Statement

On the basis of Kirklees SPD paragraphs 5.57–5.58, Local Plan LP35, Listed Building Consent legislation and NPPF Section 16, the replacement of the four upper stained-glass arches is fully justified. The proposed new glazing will replicate the original colour palette, ensuring no net loss of historic character while delivering a stable, weather-tight solution.