

Supporting Statement – Proposed Replacement of Existing Windows and Doors

3 Bankfoot lane
Armitage Bridge
HD4 7NW



Background

Alan and Julia have lived at 3 Bank Foot Lane for approximately six years, having purchased the property in 2021. During their ownership they have demonstrated a clear commitment to maintaining the property, and particularly its external joinery.

The existing windows and doors have been subject to regular inspection, maintenance, repair and repainting. This has not been a case of joinery being allowed to deteriorate through a lack of maintenance. Considerable effort and expense have been put into retaining the existing windows and prolonging their serviceable life.

Collins & Hall were approached to provide a second professional opinion regarding the condition of the existing windows and doors and the most appropriate way forward. As part of this process, we have undertaken a thorough inspection of the property and its external joinery, looking in detail at the condition of the existing windows and doors, the previous repairs that have been carried out, the problems currently being experienced and the viability of further repair.

Our assessment is therefore based upon a detailed inspection of the existing joinery and our experience of the repair, conservation and replacement of traditional timber windows and doors.

Despite the ongoing maintenance and repeated intervention undertaken by the owners and previous contractors, the condition of the windows has continued to deteriorate.

Experience of Collins & Hall

Collins & Hall have a long-standing history of working with historic properties, including both listed and non-listed buildings. We regularly undertake the repair, conservation and replacement of traditional timber windows and doors and have worked on numerous projects requiring Listed Building Consent within both the Kirklees and Calderdale local authority areas.

We understand the importance of retaining the character, proportions and detailing of historic joinery. Where replacement is appropriate, our objective is not simply to manufacture a modern window which broadly resembles the original from a distance. We aim to reproduce the appearance and character of traditional joinery as closely as possible while allowing the new windows to provide the performance and longevity expected.

This is particularly important in relation to glazing bars. Collins & Hall have considerable experience in producing windows incorporating very slender, traditionally proportioned Georgian-style glazing bars while accommodating modern double-glazed units. The detailing is designed so that the glazing bars do not simply appear convincing when viewed from a distance; careful consideration is given to the construction, proportions and external appearance so that, on closer inspection, the windows continue to have the appearance and character of traditional thin glazing-bar construction.

The final appearance of our work is extremely important to us, particularly when working on historic and listed properties.

Previous Listed Building Consent Application

We understand that an application for Listed Building Consent was previously submitted approximately three years ago for the replacement of the existing windows at 3 Bank Foot Lane, and that this application was unsuccessful.

Following that decision, Alan and Julia continued to maintain the existing joinery and also sought alternative ways of addressing the problems they were experiencing, including the installation of secondary glazing.

Collins & Hall were subsequently approached to provide a second professional opinion on the condition of the existing windows and doors and to consider whether replacement could be appropriately justified.

As part of this process, we have reviewed the previous application and undertaken our own thorough inspection of the existing joinery. Having done so, we respectfully disagree with elements of the previous assessment, particularly the suggestion that the windows were in generally good condition.

Our inspection has identified significant defects which are not necessarily apparent when the windows are viewed superficially or from a distance. These defects, together with the extent of previous repairs and the continuing problems experienced within the property, are documented within this statement and the accompanying photographic evidence.

This new application should therefore not be regarded simply as a resubmission of the previous proposal. It is supported by a detailed assessment of the existing joinery, further evidence of its condition and deterioration, and consideration of the practical and long-term viability of continuing to repair it.

Condition of the Existing Joinery

Our inspection has identified a combination of defects and deterioration, including:

- Timber decay.
- Previous and ongoing rot and fungal attack
- Distortion, warping and twisting of timber components.
- Water ingress.
- Failure and deterioration of joints within the joinery.
- Opening sashes and doors which no longer meet their frame rebates consistently because of distortion within the frames and sashes.
- Significant draughts and poor airtightness.
- High levels of condensation, particularly during the winter.
- Persistent mould growth to the windows and surrounding areas.

Photographic evidence is provided in support of these observations.

Mould growth, Occurring on every window.



Past repairs.



Timbers have been planted on the face, probably covering decay.





More filler than wood.



Timber decay.







Some areas have previously been repaired by others. Unfortunately, a number of these repairs are visually unsatisfactory and have themselves affected the appearance of the historic joinery.

The difficulty is no longer simply one of cutting out an isolated area of decay and introducing a small timber splice or resin repair. To properly address some of the existing repairs, it would first be necessary to remove previous repair material and then cut back further into the surrounding timber until sound and suitable material was reached. Probability of this is low.

This inevitably means removing still more of the original fabric and reducing the amount and integrity of the existing timber available to receive another repair.

There comes a point at which repeated intervention ceases to represent the most appropriate conservation of the window. Increasing quantities of the original material are removed, while the remaining window continues to contain a combination of original timber, previous repairs, new timber splices and resin repairs of differing ages and condition.

Viability of Further Repairs

In our professional opinion, a further comprehensive programme of repair would not provide a proportionate or durable long-term solution.

Technically, it is possible to continue removing defective sections and carrying out further localised repairs. However, the fact that a repair can physically be undertaken does not necessarily mean that it represents a sensible or sustainable solution.

To revisit many of the existing repairs properly would involve substantial labour. Previous repair materials would need to be removed, defective and weakened timber cut back and new repair sections introduced. In some locations this would require increasingly extensive intervention into the existing frames.

There is also an inherent difficulty where numerous old and new sections of timber and repair materials meet. Timber naturally expands and contracts in response to changes in moisture and environmental conditions. Different sections and materials can move at different rates, and over time repaired junctions can begin to open, allowing coatings to fail and moisture to penetrate once again.

Consequently, a major further repair programme would be expensive and extremely time-consuming while still leaving Alan and Julia with windows which would require a considerably greater level of ongoing maintenance and which would have a significantly shorter anticipated service life than properly designed replacement joinery.

In some cases, the cost of undertaking such extensive repairs is likely to approach or exceed the cost of manufacturing a new window, without providing the corresponding longevity, performance or quality of finish.

We therefore consider further extensive repair to be **economically disproportionate and technically unsustainable as a long-term solution.**

Secondary Glazing and Living Conditions

Alan and Julia are extremely conscious of the historic appearance of their property and have actively sought solutions which would allow the existing windows to remain.

Approximately three years ago, secondary glazing was installed in an attempt to retain the original windows while improving thermal performance, draught-proofing and condensation.

Unfortunately, the secondary glazing has not provided the solution that was hoped for and has created additional problems.

The enclosed space between the original windows and the secondary glazing has created a relatively stagnant environment in which condensation and mould growth have become particularly problematic. Julia regularly has to clean mould from the windows and surrounding areas, particularly during colder periods.

The anticipated improvement in heat retention has also not resolved the problems experienced within the property. Condensation remains significant during the winter and, during windy conditions, the secondary glazing itself can rattle.

There is also an important practical and security issue. The movement required by the sliding secondary-glazing sashes interferes with the operation of the locks to the original sliding sash windows. Consequently, the existing sash locks cannot be operated resulting in the windows being left unlocked.

This is clearly an issue from both a security and insurance perspective.

Alan and Julia have therefore already made a significant attempt to retain the existing windows and improve their performance without replacement. In practice, that intervention has failed to resolve the underlying problems and has introduced further difficulties.



Proposed Approach

We recognise that the replacement of historic windows within a listed building should not be proposed simply as a means of achieving modern thermal performance or reducing maintenance.

Our recommendation for replacement in this instance follows consideration of the condition of the existing joinery, its history of repeated repair, the extent of further intervention that would now be required, the distortion and failure of components, the problems being experienced by the occupants and the unsuccessful attempt to address those problems through secondary glazing.

Our intention would be to carefully reproduce the important visual characteristics of the existing windows, keeping proportions and opening configuration the same while reproducing mouldings and glazing-bar patterns.

Particular attention would be given to maintaining the slender appearance of the existing glazing bars. The proposed glazing-bar system would be constructed and detailed specifically to replicate the appearance of traditional narrow Georgian glazing bars while accommodating double-glazed units.

The objective is that the replacement joinery should sit naturally within the historic building rather than appearing as an obviously modern replacement.

Conclusion

Alan and Julia have demonstrated their commitment to the conservation of the property through six years of maintenance, repair and repainting, together with the installation of secondary glazing, in an attempt to retain the existing windows.

Replacement is therefore not being proposed as the first or easiest option.

The windows have undergone repeated repair and continue to suffer from decay, further substantial repair would involve removing previous repairs and additional original material, assuming it's even there. introducing yet more repaired sections into already heavily repaired joinery.

Such work would be costly and labour-intensive while providing a comparatively short-term solution and requiring continued intensive maintenance. The issue of draughts, condensation and mould growth would remain.

By comparison, carefully designed and manufactured replacement joinery would allow the architectural appearance and detailing of the existing windows to be reproduced while providing a coherent and durable long-term solution.

Collins & Hall's experience of historic joinery and previous Listed Building Consent projects means that considerable care would be taken over the proportions, mouldings, glazing bars and overall appearance of the replacement windows.

We therefore consider that, in this particular case, sensitive replacement represents a more sustainable long-term approach than continuing a cycle of increasingly extensive repairs to joinery which has already undergone considerable intervention.

Our aim is not to alter the character of 3 Bank Foot Lane, but to preserve that character through replacement joinery which respects and reproduces the appearance of the existing historic windows while providing a sound and maintainable solution for the future.

Manufactured in Accoya wood, our new windows would last the test of time with guarantees against rot for 50 years, and very low maintenance cycles of 10+ yearly cycles.

Example of our last historic job to Wooldale Methodist church – grade 2 . Helen Bowers was our conservation officer.

