

Advice Note

Window Design for Conservation Areas & Listed Buildings



NORTH AYRSHIRE
COUNCIL

Advice Note - Window Design for Conservation Areas & Listed Buildings

Introduction

Windows make a significant contribution to the character of most historic buildings. They can help us understand the history of a property as well as give an attractive appearance to historic buildings and streets. Replacing original single glazed timber windows with modern window systems using materials such as aluminium or uPVC can significantly harm a building's appearance. This is especially true where the property is either semi-detached or forms part of a terrace or block of flats.

This note explains when consent is required for window replacement and what styles of windows may be appropriate to conservation areas and listed buildings. The note can also be used as general advice for the window design of proposed new buildings, extensions or alterations to existing properties.

The conservation areas in North Ayrshire are:

Lamlash, High Corrie, Corrie, West Kilbride, Millport, Skelmorlie, Beith, Irvine Harbourside, Irvine Town Centre, Perceton, Dreghorn, Dalry and Kilbirnie.

Maps of conservation area boundaries are available to view on [our website](#), as is the most up-to-date list of listed buildings in North Ayrshire.

Do I need permission for new windows?

Where the property is a listed building, any proposed window alteration that alters the character of the property as a building of special architectural or historic interest will require Listed Building Consent. If such a property is within a Conservation Area, planning permission will also be required.

Planning Permission is required to alter the windows of an unlisted building if it is within a Conservation Area.

Window alterations to flats outwith Conservation Areas will only require permission where the dimensions of the window openings are altered. For commercial properties you are advised to contact Planning Services for more advice.

Planning Permission or Listed Building Consent will not be required for 'like for like' repairs or for replacement windows that are not materially different to the original windows.

If you propose to install new windows and believe these will constitute 'permitted development', you may wish to consider submitting an application for a Certificate of Lawfulness.

Replacement or repair?

We will always suggest that you consider repairing your existing traditional timber/sash windows. This is because in most cases windows can usually be repaired and/or upgraded. Repair could be a more practical, appropriate and cost-effective long-term option than replacement.

'Wood rot' can often be found in the bottom rails and sills of timber windows, especially if they have not been regularly maintained. However, repair of damaged timber can give windows and the property a new lease of life. Detailed repair advice can be found in Historic Environment Scotland's Inform Guide: Maintaining Sash & Case Windows, available from [Historic Environment Scotland](#)



Draughty sash windows are a common issue for owners. It may be possible to upgrade the energy efficiency of windows with the introduction of discreet draught proofing brushes around the sashes and by the use of well-fitted shutters/curtains at night. Further improvements may be achieved by appropriately designed internal secondary glazing.

Some windows may have been replaced in the past, using inappropriate materials and designs. New replacement windows can improve the situation through materials and designs in keeping with the character of the building.

If you still believe there is no alternative to replacing your windows, it is essential that you carefully consider what type of window that you would like to install.

Traditional Designs

Window designs, below, are examples of traditional timber sash and case windows commonly found on listed buildings and within conservations areas.

Georgian Windows with glazing bars



Victorian and early 20th Century Windows



Other traditional windows

Your property may have other types of traditional windows e.g. timber casement or early modern metal framed windows. These are relatively rare, and it is therefore advised their retention should be sought, if possible.

The broad guidelines as follows should aid your consideration on window design in addition to other factors such as costs, practicality, maintenance and energy efficiency.

If you are in any doubt as to what is appropriate, contact North Ayrshire Council using the details provided on page 5.

Listed Buildings

If new windows can be justified, it is recommended these should be designed to replicate the original windows in materials, design and opening methods, if practical.

Ventilators which cut through the glass or are visible on the window frames may not be appropriate. Ventilators, if necessary, should be located unobtrusively in the meeting rail.

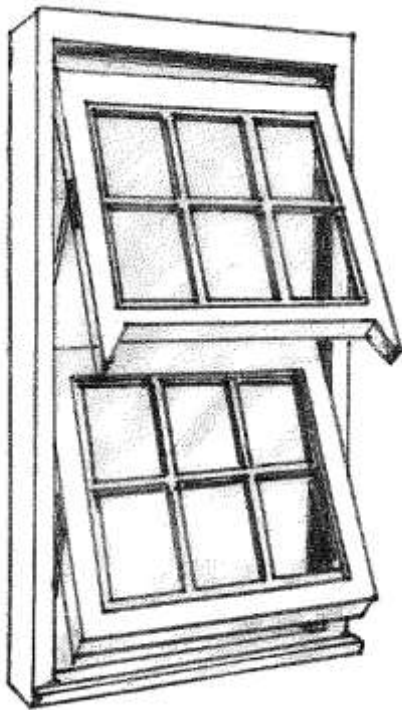
As all listed buildings are different in character, proposals to alter the window design of a listed building will be considered by North Ayrshire Council on a case-by-case basis.

Unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas

For elevations fronting a road or path, it is advised that new windows should replicate the design and opening of the original windows and, if the original windows are timber sash and case, open in a traditional sash manner or use a modern tilting sash method e.g. as below. uPVC may be acceptable as a finishing for windows on elevations fronting a road or path, provided they are of an appropriate heritage design and appearance.

Modern designs (such as casement, tilt & turn etc.) that are commonly found in manufacturer brochures may be appropriate for other elevations, provided these would not significantly detract the character of the property and the surrounding area. However, it is best to check with us first to see whether or not such designs are appropriate.

Modern Tilting Sash Method



Most modern tilting sash windows are reversible to allow cleaning from inside.

Information needed with your application

Application forms and details of application fees can be found at [Eplanning Scotland](https://www.eplanning.scotland.gov/). You can make applications online or by post.

With your application form(s), please provide the following:

- Photographs showing the existing and proposed windows as well as their opening style and finishing;
- A manufacturer's brochure extract if the replacement windows are not purpose-made for your property. The extract should show the dimensions of the replacement windows in millimetres;
- Plans specifically requested by the application form(s).

If the replacement windows are for a listed building, a professional survey may be requested.

Our Contact details

If you require further advice, please contact us using one of the following methods:

By post: Development Management
 North Ayrshire Council
 Cunninghame House
 Irvine KA12 8EE

By email: eplanning@north-ayrshire.gov.uk

By phone: 01294 324319