

Speaking for Scotland's Buildings



Service Manager - Planning
East Lothian Council
John Muir House
Haddington EH41 3HA

15 March 2017
Your Ref: 17 /00096/P
My Ref: 17.07 [EH42 1AH]

Dear Sir or Madam

Thank you for giving the Society the opportunity to comment on the following planning application.

17/00096/P 3B Church Street, Dunbar, EH42 1AH OBJECTION
Proposal: Replacement windows

The Society objects to the proposed replacement (by uPVC-framed windows with primitively-thick double-glazing and stuck-on false glazing-bars,) of the 4 no. original, surviving painted wood-framed, tall, sash-and-case windows, with 6-over-6 small single-thickness glass panes, on the 1st floor of the rear, seaward-facing elevation of this 3-storeys flatted, late 18th century, prominent unlisted building in the designated Dunbar Conservation Area. The 3-storeys building is part of a group of traditional buildings beside the east side of Church Street, at its junction with Woodbush Brae, and is entered at 1st floor level from the street. No.3 has 3 flats, above one-another, the top floor being 3a. On visiting, a close view of the rear elevation can be had from the passage at the south end of Woodbush Place, beside No.20, at the west end of the 2-storeys terrace. This is a public place.

The rear elevation has an unusual designed symmetrical pattern of fenestration, with domestic scale windows to the ground floor (4 no. 6-over-6 panes sash and case wood windows), and a quite different spacing to the three, domestic scale windows of the top floor. At the middle floor (ie. at flat 3b) however, there are 2 pairs of much wider and taller sash windows, each pair separated by a stone mullion. The middle floor appears to have been built as a high-ceilinged place of public assembly, at street level with Church Street, lighted from the seaward side by the still surviving over-sized twin sash windows. A similar building type exists in the early 19th century Assembly Rooms, a Listed Building, further north on the same side of Church Street, which is of 3 storeys, with the main space lit by large sash windows, from the seaward side. The smaller building at 3 Church Street, may have been supplanted by the Assembly Rooms, and converted to 3 flats, with 19th century additions on the Church Street frontage. If brought to the attention of the 'Designations' branch of HES, the building at no.3, may be considered appropriate for statutory listing. In the meantime it is important that it's surviving wood-framed, great sash windows are not replaced by uPVC-framed substitutes, merely to get the benefits of double glazing. The existing single glass panes can be replaced by slim-profile individual double-glazed units, fixed by traditional putty fillets, within the existing painted wood window frames, and the weights adjusted accordingly. This should be suggested to the owner, as an alternative to the present proposed works, which would harm the character of the building and would fail to preserve the character and amenity of the conservation area.

One disturbing recent alteration to the top floor windows at the rear, is that all three have been replaced by uPVC-framed 'tilt-and-turn' windows in white, with all the panes in the same plane (instead of the bottom sash being inset from the top sash as original) and the outside frame is much fatter than the original sash windows, so that the replacement windows are visibly different from existing sash windows due to the different opening method and contrasting frame material. These top floor windows are contrary to the requirements of Policy DP8 of the 2008 Local Plan, and having checked the Planning Portal for this postal zone, which extends back to 1997, it appears that no permission exists for 3a Church Street, to do any works or to replace its rear windows with inappropriate uPVC tilt and turn windows. The LPA should enforce against this disfiguring clandestine change to the character of the conservation area, and have wood-framed sash and case windows reinstated at this important historic house. These are no precedent for more uPVC windows.

Yours

Bill Dodd
On behalf of the East Lothian Cases Panel