



Speaking for Scotland's Buildings

This comment was submitted by the AHSS Forth & Borders Cases Panel via an online planning portal

Council: West Lothian

Application reference: 0703/H/21

Address: 47 Main Street Kirknewton West Lothian EH27 8AH

Date AHSS comment submitted: 13th July 2021

The AHSS Forth & Borders Cases Panel has examined this application, and objects to the use of uPVC which will not enhance or maintain the character of the conservation area. While there are many examples of poor window design on this principal street, these pre-date the designation as a conservation area, a status designed to prevent further degradation of this kind.

The standard designs of uPVC windows cannot replicate the slim frames of wooden sashes, and therefore these proposals will neither preserve nor enhance the appearance of this property.

We recommend the Historic Environment Scotland guide on Fabric Improvement for Energy Efficiency in Traditional Buildings (2013, freely downloadable), and note that uPVC windows' short life means they must be replaced long before they ever pay for themselves through heat savings (see Energy Saving Trust figures), in a repeating cycle of expense, damage to building fabric, and substantial negative environmental impact.

We know that many building owners look at replacement doors and windows believing them to be of positive environmental benefit. The opposite is true, alongside their negative aesthetic impact upon the property and wider conservation area, and we therefore object to this proposal.