

Design and Access Statement

Proposed replacement of timber sash windows with uPVC windows

Property: Abbeyfield Society, 2 Trowbridge Road, Bradford-on-Avon, BA15 1EP

Applicant: Mr Graham Jenkins

Date: 23rd February 2026

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the replacement of existing timber sash windows with new uPVC sash-style windows on the north-west and north-east elevations of the property at Bradford-on-Avon. The building is currently in use as sheltered housing.

2 Trowbridge Road is currently in use as sheltered housing by the Abbeyfield Society and falls within Use Class C2 (Residential Institutions).

The statement describes the site context, design principles and justification for the proposed works, demonstrating that the replacement windows are proportionate, visually appropriate and responsive to the functional needs of the building and its residents while preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area.

2. Site and Surroundings

The property lies within the designated Bradford-on-Avon Conservation Area and occupies a frontage position along Trowbridge Road and Junction Road. The building provides sheltered accommodation for elderly and/or vulnerable residents.

The existing windows comprise traditional painted timber sash units located within the north-west and north-east elevations. These elevations face the street and are partially softened by existing landscape planting.

Within the immediate streetscape and wider conservation area there are numerous examples of buildings where original timber windows have been replaced with uPVC alternatives, including properties of comparable age, scale and character. The surrounding townscape therefore exhibits an established pattern of window replacement and material change over time.

3. Design Approach

The design objective is to retain the established architectural character of the building while improving environmental performance, usability and durability.

The proposed windows have been selected to replicate the appearance and proportions of the existing timber sash units. The replacements will:

- Match the existing sash configuration and glazing pattern
- Replicate opening proportions and frame dimensions
- Be installed within the existing structural openings
- Require no alteration to surrounding masonry or external finishes
- Maintain the scale and visual balance of the elevations

4. Amount and Appearance

The proposal relates solely to the replacement of existing windows on the north-west and north-east elevations. No new openings are proposed and there will be no change to the building's massing, footprint or architectural composition.

In visual terms, the replacement units are designed to closely resemble traditional sash windows when viewed from public vantage points. The building's facade and conservation area streetscape will therefore be preserved.

5. Access and Inclusive Design

The building accommodates elderly and vulnerable residents, and inclusive usability has informed the design approach.

The existing timber sash windows are difficult to operate, draught-prone and inefficient. The proposed uPVC sash-style windows incorporate modern balance and locking mechanisms that improve ease of opening, controllability and safety for occupants with reduced mobility or strength.

Improved thermal and acoustic performance will enhance internal comfort and wellbeing, reducing heat loss and external noise intrusion from the adjacent road.

The proposed works do not alter external access arrangements to the building.

6. Heritage and Conservation Considerations

The building is located within the Bradford-on-Avon Conservation Area. The proposed works are limited to replacement within existing openings using units that replicate the form, proportion and glazing arrangement of the existing sash windows.

The defining characteristics of the elevations — including opening size, alignment and facade will be maintained. There will be no alteration to masonry surrounds or architectural detailing.

The surrounding streetscape includes a substantial number of uPVC window replacements. The proposal therefore reflects an established pattern of incremental change within this part of the conservation area and will not introduce a visually discordant element.

Overall, the character and appearance of both the host building and the conservation area will be preserved.

7. Planning Policy Context

The proposal accords with relevant national and local planning policy:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – supports the sustainable use and improvement of existing buildings while conserving heritage significance.

Wiltshire Core Strategy – Core Policy 57 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping) – requires development to respond positively to local context and maintain visual quality while improving environmental performance and amenity.

Core Policy 58 (Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment) – supports works within conservation areas that preserve or enhance character and appearance.

The proposed window replacements maintain the architectural character of the building and streetscape while improving environmental performance and resident amenity, consistent with these policy objectives.

8. Conclusion

The proposed replacement of existing timber sash windows with high-quality uPVC sash-style units represents a modest and carefully considered alteration that delivers clear functional and environmental benefits while preserving the character and appearance of both the host building and the Bradford-on-Avon Conservation Area.

The justification for replacement is founded on the following considerations:

- The existing timber windows are in poor thermal and operational condition, resulting in heat loss, draughts and difficulty of use for elderly residents.
- Repair alone would not achieve the level of thermal, acoustic and usability improvement necessary for a vulnerable residential use.
- The proposed units replicate the proportions, opening pattern and visual subdivision of the original sash windows, ensuring that the architectural style and facade composition remain unchanged.
- Installation is confined to existing openings with no alteration to masonry surrounds or historic fabric, and the intervention is therefore visually and physically limited.
- The surrounding streetscape already exhibits numerous examples of uPVC window replacement, such that the proposed material change reflects an established pattern of incremental evolution within this part of the conservation area.
- Enhanced thermal performance, acoustic comfort, ease of operation and security represent tangible and ongoing benefits to occupants, supporting health, wellbeing and building sustainability.
- When considered in heritage terms, the proposal results in no material change to form, detailing or elevation hierarchy and therefore preserves the character and appearance of the conservation area. Any perceived material change is limited and is clearly outweighed by the public and occupant benefits arising from improved environmental performance.
- Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with Core Policies 57 and 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the heritage objectives of the NPPF. Planning permission is respectfully sought.

9. Photos



Northeast Elevation (Street View)



Northwest Elevation



Typical example (external)



Typical example of an internal bay window