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PLANNING STATEMENT

PROPOSED REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING WINDOWS WITH TIMBER WINDOWS

**45 Bury New Road
Ramsbottom
Bury
BL0 0AR**

1.0 Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the replacement of the existing windows at 45 Bury New Road, Ramsbottom.

The application proposes the removal of the existing ageing and poorly performing windows and their replacement with high-quality timber windows finished in an appropriate off-white painted colour.

The application property lies within the Ramsbottom Conservation Area and the proposals have consequently been developed with particular regard to the architectural quality of the building and its contribution to the surrounding street scene.

A separate Heritage Statement accompanies the application and provides a detailed assessment of the historical development and heritage significance of the property, Bury New Road and the Ramsbottom Conservation Area. It is not the purpose of this Planning Statement to repeat that assessment.

Instead, this Statement considers the planning merits of the development and demonstrates that the proposal represents a proportionate, high-quality and sustainable alteration which will preserve the character and appearance of the property and Conservation Area whilst considerably improving the functionality and environmental performance of the dwelling.

2.0 The Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the replacement of the existing windows with new timber windows.

The replacement windows will:

- be manufactured principally from timber;
- be finished in a sympathetic off-white painted finish;
- respect the proportions and established pattern of fenestration;
- be contained within the existing structural window openings;
- provide substantially improved thermal and weather performance;
- improve the operation, security and usability of the windows; and
- maintain an external appearance appropriate to the character of the property.

There is no proposal to extend the dwelling, alter its use, increase its floorspace or materially change its scale, form or massing.

The development is consequently limited to a relatively modest intervention in the external fabric of an existing residential property.

3.0 Reason for the Works

The application has arisen from the practical condition and performance of the existing windows rather than from any intention to materially alter the architectural character of the dwelling.

The existing windows are ageing and have become increasingly difficult to operate. A number are stiff and difficult to open satisfactorily, affecting the ability of the occupants to naturally ventilate the dwelling.

They are predominantly single glazed and provide poor thermal performance compared with modern glazing systems. This inevitably contributes to heat loss, draughts, cold internal surfaces and increased energy demand during colder periods.

Continued occupation and maintenance of an older dwelling necessarily requires periodic intervention in those components which have a finite serviceable life.

Windows are particularly exposed elements of a building. They are subject to repeated opening and closing together with continual exposure to rainfall, wind, sunlight, frost and temperature variation.

The planning system should therefore distinguish between inappropriate alteration which erodes the architectural character of a building and sensitive renewal which allows a building to continue functioning effectively.

The present application clearly falls within the latter category.

4.0 Development Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The relevant development plan includes the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document, adopted in March 2024, together with those policies of the Bury Unitary Development Plan which remain saved.

The principal policies relevant to this modest proposal are:

Bury UDP Policy EN1/2 – Townscape and Built Design

This policy seeks to ensure that development does not have an unacceptable adverse effect upon the particular character and townscape of the Borough's settlements.

Bury UDP Policy EN2/1 – Character of Conservation Areas

This policy seeks the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the Borough's Conservation Areas.

Bury UDP Policy EN2/2 – Conservation Area Control

Development within a Conservation Area is required to preserve or enhance its special character or appearance.

Places for Everyone Policy JP-P1 – Sustainable Places

This policy establishes strategic principles for creating and maintaining sustainable, well-designed and distinctive places.

Places for Everyone Policy JP-P2 – Heritage

This policy establishes the strategic approach towards the positive conservation, management and enhancement of the historic environment and heritage assets.

These policies are mutually supportive in the context of this application. They do not seek to prevent change to existing buildings; rather, they require change to be undertaken in a manner which respects local character and heritage significance.

The proposal satisfies that fundamental requirement.

5.0 Principle of Development

There is no objection in principle to the replacement of building components within an existing dwelling.

The relevant planning consideration is therefore not whether windows may ever be replaced, but whether the particular replacements proposed are appropriate having regard to the architectural character of the building and its location within a Conservation Area.

In this case the replacement of ageing single-glazed windows is entirely reasonable in principle.

Importantly, the applicant has responded to the sensitivity of the location by specifying **timber rather than standard uPVC replacement windows**.

This represents a materially higher-quality response to the site.

The development retains the traditional visual qualities associated with painted timber joinery whilst addressing legitimate shortcomings in the performance and operation of the existing windows.

There is consequently no conflict between the principle of replacement and the objectives of the development plan.

6.0 Design and Visual Impact

The design approach is one of restraint.

The application does not seek to remodel or modernise the external appearance of the property. Instead, the intention is that the replacement windows should continue to read naturally as part of the building.

The use of painted timber is particularly appropriate because it maintains the texture, depth and visual quality traditionally associated with window joinery on buildings of this character.

The proposed off-white finish is similarly appropriate. It provides a softer appearance than a brilliant modern white and will sit comfortably against the traditional external materials of the property.

The existing window openings will be retained.

Consequently, the established solid-to-void relationship of the elevations, vertical and horizontal alignment of openings and overall architectural composition of the dwelling will remain intact.

There will be no increase in the visual prominence of the building and no material change to its scale or relationship with adjoining development.

The proposal therefore complies with UDP Policy EN1/2.

7.0 Conservation Area

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

The proposal satisfies this statutory test.

The character of this part of the Ramsbottom Conservation Area is not dependent upon windows remaining incapable of renewal. What is important in planning terms is that alterations do not cumulatively erode those characteristics which make the area special.

The choice of material is therefore significant.

A proposal involving radically different proportions, conspicuously bulky frames, inappropriate modern materials or substantial alteration of the existing window openings could potentially diminish the character of the building.

That is not what is proposed.

The use of timber, sympathetic proportions, an understated painted finish and retention of the established fenestration pattern provide a coherent conservation response.

The proposal will consequently preserve the appearance of the application property and, in turn, preserve the character and appearance of this part of the Ramsbottom Conservation Area.

The development therefore accords with UDP Policies EN2/1 and EN2/2 and PfE Policy JP-P2.

8.0 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework is an important material consideration.

The Framework promotes sustainable development and good design whilst requiring appropriate conservation of the historic environment.

It requires great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, with that weight reflecting their importance.

The proposal is consistent with this approach.

There is no conflict between heritage conservation and appropriately designed improvements to the performance of an existing dwelling.

Indeed, keeping older buildings comfortable, weather-tight, energy efficient and capable of continued beneficial occupation is an important component of their long-term sustainability.

The proposed development does not remove or disguise the architectural identity of the building.

Instead, it adopts an appropriate traditional material and maintains the established visual composition of the elevations.

On this basis, no material harm to the significance of the Conservation Area is identified.

Where no heritage harm arises, there is no requirement to manufacture a heritage balance in order to justify an otherwise acceptable development. The proposal can properly be regarded as preserving the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

9.0 Sustainability and Energy Efficiency

The environmental performance of existing buildings is an increasingly important planning consideration.

A substantial proportion of the buildings which will be occupied in future decades already exist. Improving the performance of existing housing stock is therefore an important component of reducing unnecessary domestic energy consumption.

Single glazing is inherently thermally inefficient.

Replacement of the existing windows with modern appropriately glazed timber units will significantly improve their thermal performance and reduce uncontrolled air leakage and draughts.

This should reduce heat loss through the building envelope and assist in reducing the amount of energy required to maintain comfortable internal temperatures.

There are additional benefits.

Improved window operation will enable effective natural ventilation, whilst modern glazing and improved seals should reduce cold internal surfaces and the associated risk of condensation.

The proposal therefore demonstrates that improved environmental performance does not require the architectural character of an older property to be sacrificed.

The applicant has selected a solution which combines the environmental benefits of improved glazing with the visual and tactile qualities of traditional timber.

This represents precisely the type of balanced approach which should be encouraged when adapting existing buildings for continued long-term use.

10.0 Residential Amenity

The development will have no adverse impact upon the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers.

The replacement windows will occupy existing openings and serve the existing residential accommodation.

No additional windows are proposed which would introduce new overlooking relationships.

There will be no increase in building height, footprint or volume and consequently no effect upon daylight, sunlight or outlook available to neighbouring properties.

The proposal will therefore be neutral in conventional residential amenity terms whilst producing a significant improvement in the amenity of the occupants of No. 45 through improved thermal comfort, natural ventilation, weather resistance and window operation.

11.0 Highway, Parking and Other Planning Considerations

The proposal has no implications for highway safety or parking.

There will be no increase in the intensity of occupation of the dwelling and no change in its access or parking arrangements.

The development similarly raises no material issues in relation to flood risk, drainage, ecology or land contamination.

No additional floorspace is created.

Given the limited nature of the proposal, these matters do not require further detailed assessment.

12.0 Proportionality

The scale of the planning intervention is relevant.

This is not an application for redevelopment, substantial extension or comprehensive alteration of the property.

It concerns the replacement of functional components within an existing dwelling.

Planning control should consequently be exercised proportionately to the nature and extent of the development.

The applicant is nevertheless proposing a notably sensitive specification through the use of purpose-made timber windows and an appropriate painted finish.

The proposals therefore go considerably further in responding to the character of the Conservation Area than a conventional replacement window installation.

Provided the windows are installed substantially in accordance with the submitted drawings and details, there is no planning purpose which would be served by resisting their replacement.

13.0 Overall Planning Balance

The planning balance in this instance is straightforward.

The existing windows are ageing, predominantly single glazed and increasingly difficult to operate.

There is therefore a genuine and reasonable need for their replacement.

Against this requirement, the applicant has selected a high-quality solution specifically intended to respond to the sensitive location of the property.

The proposal provides:

Improved thermal performance through modern glazing and improved weather sealing;

Reduced energy demand arising from lower heat loss;

Improved natural ventilation through properly functioning opening windows;

Improved residential amenity through reduced draughts and increased thermal comfort;

Improved security and weather resistance;

Continued use of timber, maintaining an appropriate traditional material;

A sympathetic off-white painted finish;

Overall fenestration pattern; and

No adverse impact upon neighbouring amenity, highways or other material planning interests.

There is correspondingly no identified material planning harm.

The proposal complies with the design objectives of UDP Policy EN1/2, the conservation requirements of UDP Policies EN2/1 and EN2/2, the sustainable place-making objectives of PfE Policy JP-P1 and the heritage objectives of PfE Policy JP-P2.

It also satisfies the statutory duty imposed by Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

14.0 Conclusion

The proposed replacement windows at 45 Bury New Road represent a modest, necessary and carefully considered improvement to an existing dwelling.

The proposal responds appropriately to the property's location within the Ramsbottom Conservation Area through the specification of timber windows with a sympathetic off-white painted finish and through the retention of the established architectural composition of the elevations.

There will be no alteration to the use, scale, massing or footprint of the dwelling and no adverse effect upon neighbouring residential amenity, highway safety or other material planning interests.

At the same time, the development will deliver tangible benefits through improved thermal efficiency, reduced draughts, better natural ventilation, improved operation, weather resistance and increased comfort for the occupants.

Importantly, these improvements are being achieved without resorting to an inappropriate modern window material or fundamentally changing the architectural appearance of the property.

The proposal demonstrates that the objectives of heritage conservation and environmental improvement need not be competing considerations. Sensitive investment in existing buildings can secure both.

The development is therefore considered to accord with the statutory development plan when read as a whole, the National Planning Policy Framework and the statutory conservation area duty.