

THE ALTERATION AND REPLACEMENT OF WINDOWS

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INTRODUCTION

1. This Planning Circular sets down the Department's policies in respect of the alteration or replacement of windows. These policies vary according to the age, merit and location of the building. For ease of use, the Circular divides buildings into several categories, and sets out the policies and reasoning for each category.

NEED FOR PLANNING APPROVAL

2. This Circular should be read in conjunction with the recent Permitted Development Order (S.D. 664/97).

The effect of the Order is that, with certain exceptions, the installation of a window in an existing aperture in a building erected after 1920 does not require planning approval. The exceptions are –

- a) Where the building is a registered building or in a conservation area, or in an area in respect of which the Planning Committee has passed a resolution to the effect that planning approval is required for such work; or
- b) Where the work would be in breach of a condition imposed on the grant of planning approval.

GENERAL REASONING

3. The appearance of any building is strongly influenced by the detailing of its windows. The character and integrity of a building are usually best preserved by the retention and repair of the original windows, or, if this is not possible, the installation of replacements which respond suitably to the original design. In this context, "original" means those windows which were installed in the building at the time of its construction. If you are in doubt as to whether the existing windows are the originals, the staff in the Office of Planning may be able to give advice.

BUILDING CATEGORIES

4. For the purposes of this Circular, buildings have been divided into the following categories:-
 - a) Registered Buildings
 - b) Buildings in Conservation Areas
 - c) Buildings erected before 1921 and not falling within a) or b) which have largely retained their original character
 - d) Other buildings erected before 1921
 - e) Buildings constructed after 1920 which do not fall into category a) or b) and which are not subject to previous planning conditions restricting the installation of replacement windows.

Subsequent paragraphs of this Circular deal with each category in turn.

Category a) REGISTERED BUILDINGS

5. **Policy**

If the original windows are still in place they should preferably be repaired. If repair is impracticable, replacement windows MUST BE THE SAME as the originals in all respects, including the method of opening, materials and detailed design. This policy will be strictly applied other than where the particular circumstances are so exceptional as to justify a relaxation.

Reasons for Policy: Registered Buildings are those buildings which are judged to be of special architectural or historic interest and which are already entered into the Protected Buildings register. Because of their special status, these buildings merit particular care and any work carried out by way of repair or alteration requires Registered Building Consent.

Planning Approval and Registered Building Consent ARE ALWAYS required.

Category b) BUILDINGS IN CONSERVATION AREAS

6. Policy

If the original windows are in place they should preferably be repaired. If repair is impracticable, replacement windows which would be readily visible from a public thoroughfare MUST HAVE THE SAME method of opening as the originals. Whatever the material used in their construction, the windows MUST HAVE THE SAME pattern and section of glazing bars and the same frame sections as the original windows.

Windows not readily visible from a public thoroughfare must have the same or similar pattern of glazing bars as the originals, but not necessarily the original method of opening, whatever the material used in the construction.

Reasons for Policy: The Department has a duty to determine which parts of the Island are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and shall by order designate such areas as Conservation Areas. Planning Approval is required for all external works to properties in Conservation Areas to ensure that any proposals are in keeping with not only the individual building, but the special character and quality of the area as a whole.

Planning Approval IS REQUIRED for alteration or replacement of window in the category of buildings.

Category c) BUILDINGS ERECTED BEFORE 1921 AND NOT FALLING WITHIN CATEGORIES a) OR b) WHICH HAVE LARGELY RETAINED THEIR ORIGINAL CHARACTER

7. For ease of use, this category has been divided into two, based on the location of the building:

i) Buildings in an Urban Setting

Policy

In the individual building, or group of buildings, whose principal elevations are readily visible from a public thoroughfare, if the original windows are in place, it may be possible to repair and renovate them. This can take place without permission, and will be encouraged by the Department. If repair is impracticable, or existing windows are not the originals, the preference will be for replacement windows in the said principal elevations to have the same method of opening as the originals. Whatever the materials used in their construction, the windows MUST HAVE the same or similar pattern and section of glazing bars and the same or similar frame sections as the original windows.

Windows are not part of the principal elevations and which are not readily visible from a public thoroughfare should preferably have the same or similar pattern of glazing bars as the originals, but not necessarily the original method of opening, whatever the material used in their construction.

Reasons for Policy: In many of our towns there are individual and groups of buildings which, although not worthy of Registration and not located in Conservation Areas, make a most important contribution to the local townscape; e.g. prominent corner sites or terraces. Where these buildings remain substantially unaltered, the aim is to encourage their enhancement in response to the original architectural concept.

Planning Approval IS REQUIRED for alterations or replacement windows in this category of buildings.

ii) **Buildings in a rural setting**

Policy

In an individual building, or group of buildings, whose principal elevations are readily visible from a public thoroughfare, if the original windows are in place, it may be possible to repair and renovate them. This can take place without permission, and will be encouraged by the Department. If repair is impracticable or the existing windows are not the originals, the preference will be for replacement windows on the said principal elevations, to have the same method of opening as the originals. Whatever the material used in their construction, the windows MUST HAVE the same or similar pattern and section of glazing bars and the same or similar frame sections as the original windows.

Windows not part of the principal elevations and which are not readily visible from a public thoroughfare should preferably have the same or similar pattern of glazing bars as the originals, but not necessarily the original method of opening, whatever the material use in their construction.

Reasons for Policy: The Island is fortunate in that it still retains a considerable number of unspoilt traditional vernacular buildings which epitomise the quality of the rural landscape. These buildings may not be worthy of Registration, and may not be located in Conservation Areas, but they do make a most important contribution to the traditional character of the rural landscape. Where these buildings remain substantially unaltered, the aim is to encourage their enhancement whilst preserving the original vernacular style.

Planning Approval IS REQUIRED for alteration or replacement of windows in this category of buildings.

Category d) OTHER BUILDINGS ERECTED BEFORE 1921

8. **Policy**

Replacement windows should preferably be the same or as similar to the originals in the pattern of the glazing bars. However, provided that the glazing pattern is retained, a more relaxed approach will be taken to the replacement of windows in such properties.

Reasons for Policy: Many buildings fall within this category and although there is little in the way of restriction, the aim is to encourage simulation of the original glazing pattern and this will apply particularly to buildings which are part of a larger group, such as a terrace, where replacement windows, if carefully designed, may serve to enhance the overall appearance of the group.

Planning Approval IS REQUIRED for alteration or replacement of windows in this category of buildings.

Category e) BUILDINGS CONSTRUCTED AFTER 1920 WHICH DO NOT FALL INTO CATEGORIES a) OR b) AND WHICH ARE NOT SUBJECT TO PREVIOUS PLANNING CONDITIONS RESTRICTING THE INSTALLATION OF REPLACEMENT WINDOWS.

9. The installation of replacement windows in these buildings does not require planning approval. The Department nevertheless recommends that the design of such windows should respect the architectural style of the building.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

10. Attention is drawn to the fact that the repair of **existing** windows or the installation of replacement windows **may** qualify for grant assistance under Financial Assistance Schemes which the Department operates. Further information regarding the availability of Grant Assistance is obtainable from the Finance Section of the Department.

REVOCAATION AND STATUS

11. Planning Circular 2/93 (Replacing External Doors and Windows) is hereby withdrawn.
12. This Circular is issued by the Department in accordance with Article 11 (2)(a)(vi) of the Isle of Man Planning Scheme (Development Plan) Order 1982.
13. Further advice or information is available from:

The Planning Office
Department of Infrastructure
1st Floor
Murray House
Mount Havelock
Douglas
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