

Meeting:	Combined Executive Member Decision Session
Meeting date:	2 December 2025
Report of:	Director of Environment & Regulatory Services
Portfolio of:	Councillor Pavlovic, Executive Member for Housing, Planning & Safer Communities

Decision Report: Historic Windows. Planning, Design and Conservation Guidance Note

Subject of Report

1. To enable the council to publish guidance on caring for historic windows and considering changes.

Benefits and Challenges

2. Traditional windows and their glazing make an important contribution to the significance of historic areas.
3. Owners of any type of building have the challenge of maintaining them but for historic buildings owners they often also have to navigate more controls and requirements. So being able to easily find simple good guidance is important- to encourage desirable actions and minimise the time and expense of pursuing options that might not be supported.
4. The purpose of the proposed guidance is to briefly: better inform owners of how to care for windows; to categorise changes that will likely (or not) require permission; and to suggest some desirable approaches.
5. A key benefit of the recommended decision to publish council guidance is that it would support delivery of local and national policy objectives as briefly described in the *Policy Basis for Decision* section.

6. Another key benefit is that publishing this guidance creates resource efficiency for design and conservation team by minimising the volume of queries for this matter.

Policy Basis for Decision

7. Local policy:

- Publishing this guidance would assist Key Commitments of The Council Plan 2023-27 with examples as follows:
 - “Equalities & Human Rights”: Making it easier for everyone to access council guidance.
 - “Affordability”: Potentially reducing the cost of unnecessary planning applications; helping to effectively maintain significant owner assets to avoid unnecessary replacements; assisting the public to make appropriate adaptations to historic windows to reduce heating bills.
 - “Climate”: Assisting the public to make appropriate adaptations to historic windows to help combat climate change.
 - “Health”: Assisting the public to make improvements that potentially improve thermal comfort and air quality of rooms.
- York Local Plan 2017-2033: The proposal would support policies D1, D4, D5, D7, D11 & D12 on placemaking and heritage. It would also support policies CC2 (part C) on climate change.

8. National Policy:

- Where permissions are required: assisting compliance with *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, special controls in respect of buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest.
- Where permissions are required: assisting considerations made in accordance with *The National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) Section 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Financial Strategy Implications

9. There are no direct financial implications of the publication of this guidance.

Recommendation and Reasons

10. The Executive Member is asked to:

i: Agree to publish the “*Historic Windows. Planning, Design and Conservation Guidance Note*” on the council’s web site.

Reasons: To assist the public and enable efficient delivery of council services.

ii: Agree to delegate to Head of Planning & Development Services the approval of any future review of this guidance, and subsequent editing and re-publication, necessary from time to time to ensure it is kept up to date.

Reasons: To ensure guidance is kept up to date with national policy and enable efficient delivery of council services.

Background

11. Proposed changes to historic windows are a common type of local planning authority enquiry and application.
12. There can also be confusion over what is or is not required and what the council’s likely approach will be when assessing these applications.
13. There is a clear demand to make this process easier and effective for residents. This guidance will hopefully assist. Whilst a specific Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is not prioritised at this stage, this guidance will be linked to the production of SPDs, where relevant, such as those being produced for Housing and Climate Change.

Consultation Analysis

14. This is a simple report and the proposed guidance is brief and it has not been considered necessary to undertake a public consultation.

Options Analysis and Evidential Basis

15. The simple nature of this Decision Report means there is not a range of options to analyse here.

16.

Organisational Impact and Implications

17. The implications are as follows:

- a) Finance: There are no additional costs associated with the recommendations set out in the report.
- b) Legal: No implications.
- c) Environment and climate Action: Repairs and upgrades to windows potentially reduce heat loss and conserve resources.
- d) Human Resources (HR): No implications.
- e) Procurement: No implications.
- f) Health & Wellbeing: Repairs and upgrades to windows potentially improve thermal comfort and air quality.
- g) Affordability: Publication of free guidance potentially reduces unnecessary costs.
- h) Equalities and Human Rights: Publication of free guidance makes access to information more equitable.
- i) Data Protection and Privacy: No implications.
- j) Communications: No implications.
- k) Economy: No implications.

Risks and Mitigations

18. There are no known risks.

Wards Impacted

19. All wards are impacted by the decisions and recommendations contained within the report.

Contact details

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Background papers

Annex 1: Historic Windows. Planning, Design and Conservation Guidance Note, December 2025