

Bexhill Heritage

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Caring for Bexhill's past,
present and future.

13th July 2020

Proposed replacement of timber windows with new UPVC heritage type, 1A Devonshire Square, Flats 1-4 RR/2020/485

Dear Mr Hickling

We did not comment on this application as being unfamiliar with the product originally intended we could not be certain it met the high standard necessary in the conservation area. In any event as the Council has carefully considered and approved UPVC products on the sea front and in Western Road we were content to leave the matter in your hands.

However, we write now for two reasons firstly on the matter of the principle of the use of UPVC in the conservation area and secondly the product intended has changed to one we can see, close by in Western Road, thus we feel we can make observations upon it.

On the matter of principle, the officer's report implies that you are asking the Council to adopt a change of stance to the effect that UPVC windows are unacceptable in the conservation area. We found this surprising to say the least as the recent advent of more sympathetic products gives cause for optimism, and indeed has engendered a change of approach here at Bexhill Heritage during 2018. Other recent officer's reports we have read are quite clear in their support for UPVC and led us to think we were on the same page. I refer in particular to the following:-

Readily visible at ground and first floor level, 11 Marina was approved in December 2018 (RR/2018/2779) and the work carried out in spring 2019. It involved the use of the Roseview Ultimate Rose type, based on the manufacturer Rehau components and followed a refusal for a less satisfactory type which Bexhill Heritage opposed. We are entirely happy with the result. The officer's report stated *"it is the Council's view that the replacement of timber sliding sash windows in UPVC can be supported"*.

Not readily visible because of current shrouding of the whole façade in scaffolding, Number 12a Marina was the subject of permission for replacement by Roseview ultimate Rose type also in December 2018 (RR/2018/2468). Again, the officer's report (different officer) stated *"it is the Council's view that the replacement of timber sliding sash windows in UPVC can be supported"*. Both reports merit reading in full.

In another recent application, in Western Road (No. 61 RR/2017/2562) proposing the use of Rehau Heritage replacement windows, the same type as in the current application, the officer's report states *"the use of Rehau Heritage replacement windows for the sash windows is considered acceptable appropriate for the conservation area and therefore the application can be supported as it complies with policies"*

The present application relates almost entirely to the Western Road and Devonshire Square frontages where 16 timber windows are to be replaced by UVPC at first and second floor level. The largest of these, two bay windows on the Devonshire Square frontage are incorrectly identified on the plans as UVPC. They incorporate top hung lights totally unsuited to the façade. Their replacement would be of benefit. Adjoining them on the same façade two of the adjacent sliding sash windows have been crudely modified and their replacement would also be welcomed. No doubt the living conditions for the occupants will be greatly improved, a consequence reported directly to us by the owners of the ground floor flat at No. 11 Marina.

Nearby buildings carry a mixture of timber, aluminium and plastic windows with no predominant theme.

We conclude that the replacement windows will not damage the character of the conservation area and will improve its appearance, the key words in the legislation.

The only caution we now have is to ensure that the replacement windows correctly fit the existing window reveals, a detail which we are sure your officers can resolve. It also might be wise to seek a sample to ensure the frame details depicted on the application drawings are "proved".

Please excuse the late submission of these observations but the matter only came into full relief when reading the recently published officer's report and we have had to liaise and site visit again. This letter has been copied to Planning Committee members. It is worth mentioning that the public notice was posted on the wrong side of the road ignoring the several opportunities to place it directly outside the building, where it should have been to meet legislative requirements.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Beales".

David Beales BSc. Dip.T.P

Planning Consultant to Bexhill Heritage