



ABBOTSFORD THORVERTON, DEVON

WINDOW AUDIT
September 2023

Adrienne Ridler-Lee MSc
Nick Pagett

The Heritage Consultancy
www.theheritageconsultancy.co.uk

CONTENTS	PAGE
1.0 Introduction	1
2.0 Window Audit – Front Elevation	1
3.0 Window Audit – Rear Elevation	9
4.0 Window Audit – Southern Elevation	20
5.0 Discussion	22
Appendix 1 – Table of Window Description	23
Appendix 2 – List Detail	26

1.0 WINDOW AUDIT - INTRODUCTION

This window audit has been produced in order to assess and report on the significance, design and condition of the window openings in Abbotsford, Thorverton, Devon in order to accompany other documents submitted as part of a Listed Building Consent (LBC) and planning application for improvements.

Abbotsford was designated listed status in 1966, and the detail comments 'Asymmetrical 4 window front with a front door to left of centre. First floor window right is a 4-light casement with glazing bars; the other windows have been re-glazed in the last 12 years but preserving earlier embrasures'.

It is evident that over the past 57 years, since the list description of 1966, there have been alterations and additional openings created. All of the windows set within the front elevation have layers of dark coloured paint which make full assessment without damaging the frames difficult. It is obvious that very little maintenance has been carried out over the past 30 years during the previous ownership of the building.

2.0 WINDOW AUDIT - FRONT ELEVATION

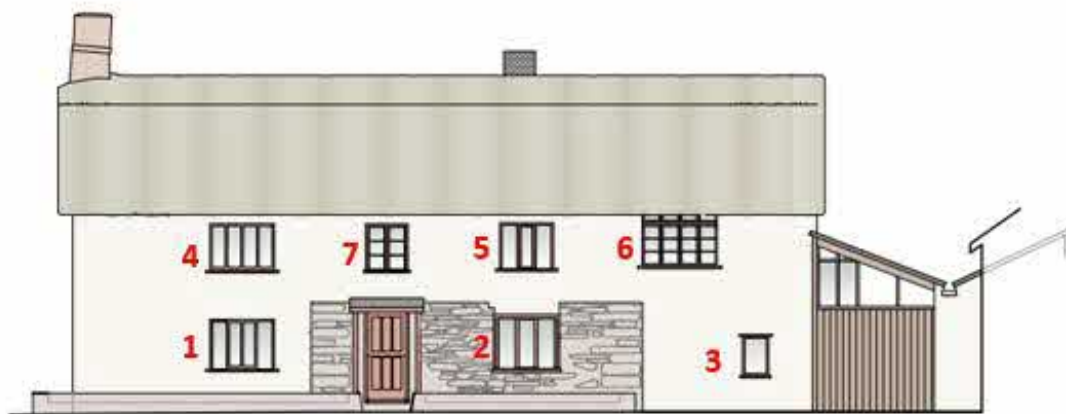


Figure 1. Front elevation – Identification of windows 1-7



Figure 2. Front elevation of Abbotsford

Window 1 - Sitting Room

The sitting room window is a simple, and economic replacement, comprising a soft wood frame of 4 lights with central opening casements (2 lights). The opening is operated by a simple swivel catch and stay. The window features an earlier embrasure as commented upon in the list description. The window frame is not historic, although the opening is likely to be of original proportion. Internally the timber frame appears to be in fair condition, although under thick layers of paint. Externally, cracked paint conceals the extent of weathering/damage, although 'soft' areas indicate rot underneath.



Figure 3. Sitting room window exterior

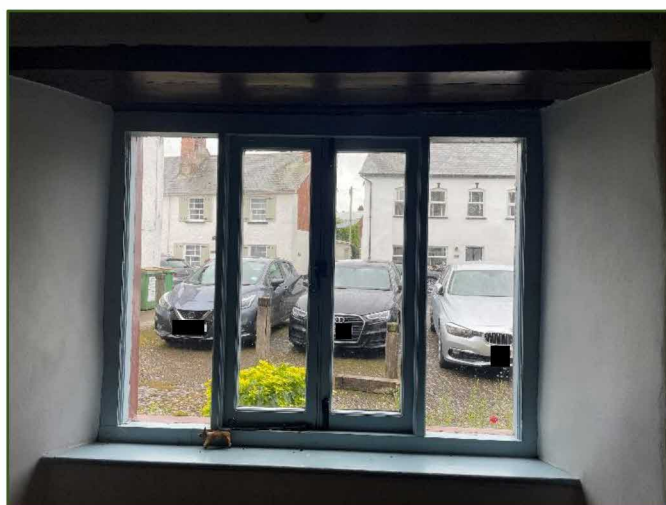


Figure 4. Sitting room window interior

Window 2 - Dining Room

Externally, the dining room window frame and sill are in a parlous condition and are beyond the point of repair. The oak jambs are likely to be historic although it is not possible to state if they are original. It is the intention of the Applicant to investigate the condition of the jambs by the gentle removal of layers of paint, and to restore and maintain if viable, setting a new hard wood frame within. The existing C20 frame and sill are soft wood and have suffered water ingress over a prolonged period of time. Internally the frame is in fair condition. A modest straight latch, and a stay operate the single casement opening which is central within the single glazed, 3-light window. The opening is likely to be of original proportion; corresponding with the sitting room window.

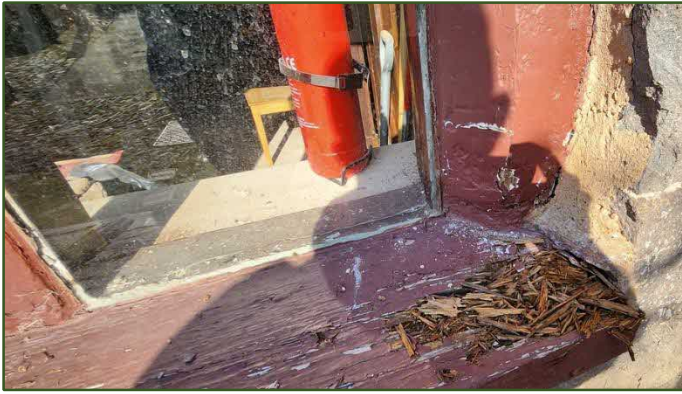


Figure 5. Dining room window – rotted sill



Figure 6. Dining room window exterior



Figure 7. Dining room window interior

Window 3 – Kitchen

The kitchen window opening set within the principal façade is not original and has been crudely installed; no doubt purely to provide light into the room. The C20, single glazed window frame is of poor design and construction, and is unsympathetically located, providing a lack of harmonious symmetry, incongruous to the general design of the front elevation. Currently the window provides no means of ventilation as it is not an opening. The economic timber frame is weathered, the sill and lintel showing signs of rot, all require replacement or alteration to enhance the aesthetic and architectural value of Abbotsford.



Figure 8. Kitchen window interior



Figure 9. Kitchen window exterior

Window 4 - Bedroom 1

The window opening to the front of bedroom 1 comprises a single glazed, 4 light (with one opening) casement. The opening is not entirely consistent in proportion to the corresponding windows, i.e., sitting room, dining room or bedroom 2, and has likely been minimally widened. The frame is constructed of soft wood, and whilst internally the wood appears to be in fair condition, externally the sill is rotted along with the opening casement timber which is swollen due to water ingress and unable to close effectively. The simple swivel latch and stay do not appear to be original.



Figure 10. Bedroom 1 window interior



Figure 11. Bedroom 1 interior



Figure 12. Bedroom 1 exterior

Window 5 - Bedroom 2

Bedroom 2 features a C20 window frame, comprising 3-lights. The opening casement, set centrally appears to be a C21 replacement and hosts economic window furniture. The sill which pre-dates the frame, is warped and rotten. The overall condition of the frame is fair, but the construction and quality are poor and makes for a negative aesthetic experience. This window opening is commented upon individually in the list description as *'First floor window right is a 4-light casement with glazing bars'*, clearly demonstrating its replacement post 1966.



Figure 13. Bedroom 2 exterior, note warped/dropped sill



Figure 14. Bedroom 2 interior



Figure 15. Bedroom 2 exterior sill demonstrating overall condition of sills throughout

Window 6 - Bedroom 3

The single glazed window opening in bedroom 3 has been enlarged, raised to the eaves, and is of a design totally incongruous to the historic design and significance of Abbotsford. Consisting of soft wood, the window comprises 16 panes with glazing bars, 2 small openings to the top, and a double casement opening set centrally. The Pre-application Enquiry report understandably drew attention to the window in bedroom 3, commenting upon its unsympathetic alteration and design. Internally the frame is in fair condition, but externally the wood is weathered and rotten in places. The northernmost casement opening has warped and does not close properly. The Applicant intends to reduce this window to its original proportion in order that it is consistent with the corresponding windows.



Figure 16. Bedroom 3 exterior. Note enlargement and proximity to eaves



Figure 17. Bedroom 3 interior

Window 7 - Family Bathroom

The C20 first-floor bathroom casement window is constructed of soft wood, with glazing bars and a single opening. The wood is weathered, and rotten in places, is in general poor condition and requires replacement to adequately serve a family bathroom.



Figure 18. Family bathroom window interior



Figure 19. Family bathroom window exterior

3.0 WINDOW AUDIT - REAR ELEVATION

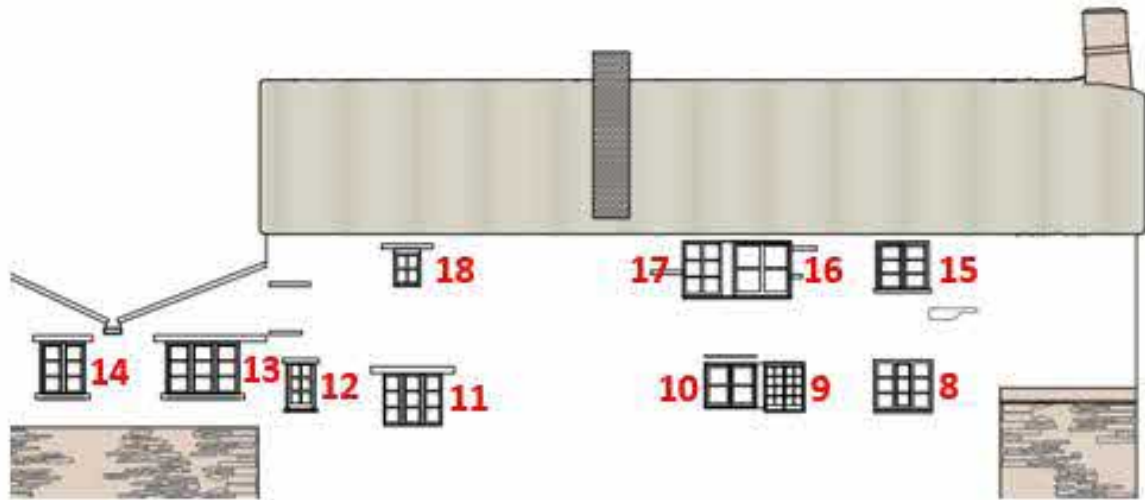


Figure 20. Rear elevation – Identification of windows 8-18



Figure 21. Rear elevation of Abbotsford ©Stags

Window 8 - Sitting Room

The sitting room window comprises a single glazed, 3 light casement window with wooden glazing bars. During spring, summer and autumn, the window is concealed by foliage, which has contributed to the sill and exterior frame rotting; this also makes photographing the frame for the purposes of this audit difficult. The window is set underneath an aged wooden lintel.



Figure 22. Sitting room window exterior (partially concealed by vegetation)



Figure 23. Sitting room window interior

Window 9 - Under stairs space

The area identified as they under stairs space has a window unique to Abbotsford; the design inconsistent with all other windows to the front and rear elevations. The window sits beneath a shallow clay tile canopy with no timber lintel visible and comprises a double casement (single opening) with leaded lights. The sill is constructed on red clay tile as opposed to timber as with other openings. The timber frame is in fair condition internally, but is rotted to the exterior; the nearby foliage a contributing factor.



Figure 24. Under stairs space window interior



Figure 25. Under stairs space window exterior

Window 10 – Dining Room

The dining room window sits directly to the south of the understairs space window; an upright timber providing support and separation between the 2. The modest, soft wood double casement, with single opening and central glazing bars is rotted and weathered, and is of poor and economic construction. As with the understairs window, a shallow clay tile canopy sits to the top, with no timber lintel visible; the area being rendered. Internally the frame hosts iron stays, a simple scroll latch and C20 locks.



Figure 26. Dining room interior



Figure 27. Dining room window exterior

Window 11 – Kitchen

The kitchen window comprises 3 lights; the outer 2 with 2 glazing bars, the central opening of alternate design. The frame, most notably the central opening, is in parlous condition, the timber evidentially suffering a lack of maintenance over a long period of time which has resulted in a degree of warping and rot; the opening cannot close flush within its frame. The iron hinges are rusted, which have contributed to the degradation of the wood in which they are secured. The window sits underneath a timber lintel, the modest sill made of slate tile. Internally, there is no window furniture to secure the window closed.



Figure 28. Kitchen window interior



Figure 29. Kitchen window exterior

Window 12 - W.C./Shower room

The W.C./Shower room located on the ground floor, features a small window constructed of soft wood timber with 6 panes within glazing bars, the top 2 within the opening which is hinged internally to allow the window to fold back internally. The window frame is an ad hoc insertion which is not consistent with the age or patina of the outer timbers, which are clearly more aged, and of poor condition. The window frame has been painted white, and as with other windows, the lack of maintenance has accommodated water ingress and rot.



Figure 30. W.C./Shower room exterior



Figures 31 above and 32 right. W.C./Shower room interior

Windows 13 & 14 - Workshop/store room

The store/workshops windows are of consistent design to each other, one being a 3-light casement, the other being 2. Both windows have glazing bars, are constructed of soft wood and are of a later installation. Internally both windows are hinged to the base, opening inwards, being restricted by curved supports. Both windows show signs of weathering and rot. Neither window fits flush within the frame, with crude attempts to fill the gaps with material or 'stick on' foam insulation evident, in attempt to minimise draughts or water ingress. Both windows sit beneath timber lintels and have timber sills; the latter being rotted to a similar degree to that of the front dining room window, exacerbated by the presence of moss as seen in figure 33 (left hand side sill).



Figure 33. Workshop/store windows exterior



Figure 34. Workshop/store window (number 13) interior



Figure 35. Workshop/store window (number 14) interior

Window 15 – Bedroom 1

The rear facing window in bedroom 1 is a double opening casement with glazing bars constructed of soft wood. Internally the window is in fair condition, yet externally shrinkage to the top of the northernmost opening is visible (fig.36), which has allowed water ingress. The first-floor window has fared better than the sitting room window below, due to the lack of immediate foliage, but the condition is sadly consistent with all other windows at Abbotsford, being beyond reasonable or viable repair. Internally, 2 iron scrolled latches operate the opening. There are no stays or locks.



Figure 36. Bedroom 1 exterior



Figure 37. Bedroom 1 interior

Window 16 - Landing

The window overlooking the rear situated in the landing, is constructed of soft wood, underneath a slim timber lintel which is inconsistent in proportion to the other lintels throughout the property. The sill is constructed of red clay tile and runs continuously underneath the window to bedroom 5. The double opening casement, with glazing bars is in fair condition internally, but is weathered externally with signs of rot and shrinkage. The window is furnished with 2 scroll latches, and 2 aged, scrolled stays.



Figure 38. Landing window interior



Figure 39. Landing window exterior

Window 17 – Bedroom 5

Bedroom 5 features a soft wood framed, double casement, single opening window, with glazing bars. A single red clay tile sill serves both this window and the landing window to the immediate north. Whilst the design of the neighbouring windows may differ slightly, the condition is the same, in that whilst the frame may be in fair condition internally, externally the wood is weathered and lacking in maintenance which has resulted in the frame being beyond means of reasonable or viable restoration or repair. The window is secured by a simple scrolled iron latch and 2 metal stays, all of which have been painted white.



Figure 40. Bedroom 5 window exterior



Figure 41. Bedroom 5 interior

Window 18 - Bedroom 4

The rear facing window in bedroom 4 is a small opening, with glazing bars. The window is hinged at the base, opening inwards, supported by curved brackets (as seen below in the workshop/store). The glazing bars have seen basic attempts at maintenance, with the application of putty over the timber underneath. Externally, the surrounding timbers appear to be of an earlier period than that of the window, and features 3 wrought iron fixings. The window and frame are all of different periods and condition, yet are weathered and in need of replacement; gaps to the northernmost mortar/render have allowed water ingress into the surrounding frame, causing rot.



Figure 42. Bedroom 4 exterior



Figure 43. Bedroom 4 interior

4.0 WINDOW AUDIT - SOUTHERN ELEVATION



Figure 44. South elevation of Abbotsford – Identification of windows 19-21

Windows 19, 20 & 21 - Bedroom 4 & Ensuite

The southern elevation comprises 3 small openings of differing proportion, each having the opening fully boarded with economic timber board so that the surrounding stonework cannot be assessed. The windows have not been professionally fitted. Externally, the frames are constructed of timber which has been fitted over the corrugated sheeting attached to the southern elevation.

Bedroom 4 (window 19) has been boarded and an extractor fan fitted. Window 20 in the ensuite is a single opening casement of extremely poor construction and condition, as is window 21 which appears to suggest that a once larger opening has been partially blocked. It is impossible to tell if there has been alteration to the openings, or if they are historic due to the corrugated sheeting on the exterior wall. The 3 openings in the southern elevation require attention/alteration to benefit and compliment the grade II listed house, and to comply with Building Regulations.



Figure 45. Bedroom 4 interior



Figures 46 & 47. Windows 21 left and 20 right; ensuite bathroom interior

5.0 DISCUSSION

This application presents a timely opportunity to sympathetically install appropriate and corresponding windows throughout, restoring Abbotsford's historical and architectural appearance and integrity within the historic setting of the Bury.

The existing single glazed windows are inconsistent in design, demonstrating a long period of ungoverned and unsympathetic change with the installation of poorly constructed and designed frames on what appears to be an ad hoc basis. It is evident that good maintenance has not been carried out during previous ownerships. Many historic features which may have once been present, such as the wooden jambs as seen on the front elevation dining room window, have long gone; economic C20 soft wood frames being inserted in their place for ease of installation and cost.

Many of the windows have been subjected to inappropriate filler, in an attempt to fill cracks or rot, and simply painted over to conceal. None of the windows are original or possess any historical significance and as such do not warrant costly restoration. The timber lintels above the majority of the windows are historic and contribute to the character of the building. The lintels are in poor weathered condition, but are to be treated, and conserved. The internal window furniture demonstrates no corresponding style, and although few items may be historic, they are not fit for modern purpose, are very worn, and are not substantial enough to properly secure the windows.

The building would benefit from hard wood replacements, in a style that corresponds with other heritage assets in the village; this will greatly enhance the significance of both Abbotsford and the Conservation Area, whilst providing improved energy efficiency, ventilation and security for the homeowners.

APPENDIX 1

Window Number.	Location	Material/ description	Original/ Historic	Condition	Replacement required?	Reason for replacement
1	Sitting room	Soft wood, C20, 4 lights. Central opening casement. Single glazed.	No	Poor	Yes	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance & security
2	Dining room	Soft wood, C20, 3 lights. Central opening casement. Single glazed. Historic jambs.	No	Very poor	Yes	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance & security. Investigate conservation timber jambs
3	Kitchen	Soft wood, single glazed later opening. Non opening.	No	Poor	Yes (alteration would be beneficial)	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance, ventilation & security
4	Bedroom 1	Soft wood, single glazed, 4 light, 1 opening set within.	No	Poor	Yes	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance & security
5	Bedroom 2	C20 & C21 soft wood, ad hoc replacement, 3 light, 1 opening, single glazed	No	Fair	Yes	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance & security
6	Bedroom 3	Soft wood frame, single glazed, 16 panes with glazing bars, double opening casement	No	Poor	Yes	To restore opening to original design and proportion. Thermal performance & security

		within centre, 2 small openings to top				
7	Family bathroom	Soft wood double casement, glazing bars, single opening	No	Poor	Yes	Provide more sympathetic and consistent design, thermal performance ventilation & security
8	Sitting room	Soft wood frame, 3 lights, wooden glazing bars. Timber lintel and sill	No	Poor	Yes	Current design appropriate, construction material not. Potential to improve thermal performance & security.
9	Understairs Space	Soft wood frame, double casement, single opening, leaded lights. Timber lintel, clay tile sill.	No	Poor	Yes	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance & security
10	Dining room	Soft wood double casement with glazing bars	No	Poor	Yes	To provide more sympathetic and consistent design, thermal performance & security
11	Kitchen	Soft wood, single glazed, 3 casement with glazing bars and central opening. No latch/stay to secure the	No	Parlous	Yes	To provide more sympathetic and consistent design, thermal performance,

		window. Timber lintel, slate sill				ventilation & security
12	W.C./Shower room	Soft wood frame, painted white within earlier timber surround. 6 panes within glazing bars. Top 2 comprise inward opening	No	Poor	Yes	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance, ventilation & security
13	Workshop/ Store – 1	Soft wood frame of 3- lights, glazing bars, timber lintel and sill	No	Poor	Yes	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance & security
14	Workshop/ Store – 2	Soft wood frame of 2- lights, glazing bars, timber lintel and sill	No	Poor	Yes	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance & security
15	Bedroom 1	Soft wood double casement with glazing bars	No	Poor	Yes	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance & security
16	Landing	Soft wood double casement with single glazing bars, red clay tile sill	No	Poor	Yes	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance & security
17	Bedroom 5	Soft wood double casement with glazing bars, red clay tile sill	No	Poor	Yes	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance & security

18	Bedroom 4	Single soft wood opening, opens inwards. Rendered sill	No	Poor	Yes	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance & security
19	Bedroom 4	Single opening, boarded up with extractor. Poor installation.	No	Poor	Yes	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance & security
20	Ensuite 1	Single opening, inappropriate construction and installation.	No	Poor	Yes	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance & security, and comply with Building Regs.
21	Ensuite 2	Single opening, inappropriate construction and installation.	No	Poor	Yes	Provide sympathetic & consistent design, thermal performance & security and comply with Building Regs.

APPENDIX 2

Heritage Category: Listed Building
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1240593
Date first listed: 05-Apr-1966
List Entry Name: ABBOTSFORD
Statutory Address 1: ABBOTSFORD, THE BURY
County: Devon
District: Mid Devon (District Authority)
Parish: Thorverton
National Grid Reference: SS 92528 02168

Details - SS 90 SW THORVERTON THE BURY, Thorverton 8/129 Abbotsford 5.4.66 GV II House, formerly probably Church house. C17, C20 renovations. Local stone rubble, the front elevation

mostly colourwashed and rendered ; thatched roof with plain ridge, gabled at ends; left end stack with brick shaft, rear lateral stack with brick shaft. Plan and Development: Single depth 3 room plan, present entrance to left of centre. The 1814 glebe map indicates that there were formerly external stone steps at the extreme left of the front leading to a first floor entrance. The massive fireplace to the left end stack suggests that the left end room may have been used for baking church bread. Exterior : 2 storeys. Asymmetrical 4 window front with a front door to left of centre. First floor window right is a 4-light casement with glazing bars; the other windows have been re-glazed in the last 12 years but preserving earlier embrasures. Interior : Not inspected but said to have a massive fireplace to ground floor left with stone jambs and exposed beams in each ground floor room.