

Paul Brennecke t/a

ESSENTIAL

RESTORATIONS

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Dear Tom

Report on windows at 33 Hitchin Street, Baldock

1 – Study Window number 11

Bottom and top sashes have extensive repairs required, they are swollen so they do not move up and down, they are missing putties and some putties are cracked. There is broken glass in a few panes. There is already a replacement bottom sash but this does not match the rest of the windows.

Verdict – Replace top and bottom sashes, Box frame can be repaired

2 – Bedroom 3 Window number 12

Three cracked panes, requires extensive repairs to bottom rail, mid rails are bowed so windows do not align. Astrical mouldings are virtually nonexistent through wear and damage.

Verdict – Replace top and bottom sashes, Box frame can be repaired

3 – Bedroom 1 Window number 13

Both top and bottom sashes are swollen shut. Very large repairs are required in both sashes. Mid rails are bowed. There is no definition in Astrical mouldings.

Verdict – Replace top and bottom sashes, Box frame can be repaired

4 – Bathroom Window number 14

Bottom sash is stuck shut, glass will break if this is freed up. Mid rails almost completely hanging off. Glass is cracked. Extensive sash repairs are required.

Verdict – Replace top and bottom sashes, Box frame can be repaired.

5 – Bedroom 2 Window number 8

All glazing bar details virtually gone in both sashes. Glass is cracked, sashes are swollen and freeing up will break the glass.

Most putties are missing or cracked. Extensive sash repairs are required in both sashes

Verdict – Replace top and bottom sashes, Box frame can be repaired

6 – Bedroom 3 Window number 9

All glazing bar details virtually gone in both sashes. Glass is cracked, sashes are swollen and freeing up will break the glass.

Most putties are missing or cracked. Extensive sash repairs are required in both sashes

Verdict – Replace top and bottom sashes, Box frame can be repaired

7 – Bedroom 3 Window number 10

Mid rails are bowed and no strength left in sashes. Glass is broken. No definition in Astrical mouldings on bottom sash. The sashes are swollen and won't open.

Verdict – Replace top and bottom sashes, Box frame can be repaired

8 – Large fixed bay window downstairs

Glass is extremely fragile and will break if sashes are removed for repair. This is very dangerous due to the type of glass in the panes. There is a lot of filler holding the sashes together which will fall apart if they are removed

Verdict – Replace sashes, Box frame can be repaired

Overall assessment -. All sashes should be replaced but as the box frames can be repaired the job would only be classed as repairs.

Conclusion

The sash windows are in a very poor condition. The putty is failing, the joints of the astragal bars are failing, allowing water penetration causing the joints to become rotten and the glass to become unstable. The windows have lost strength and rigidity. The rope for the sash windows needs replacing due to the extent of paint on them making them unsafe and due to the age of the rope. Bottom sections on sash's are rotten. The bottom sections of the lower sash's are rotten as they are a flat section sitting on a flat cill. The rain water sits under the section has caused them to decay of the years. There has been extensive use of filler but poorly installed to the windows to restore the original profile of the timbers.

All the sash windows will have to be removed to allow individual repairs to be carried out. As the joints have opened up and failed, the timbers have split and swollen and are stuck within the frames, the existing 1.8mm thick glass will not survive the removal process. The astragal bars have lost section and their joints have failed over the years leading to a loss of strength and rigidity, which is allowing the glazing to move and crack. It is not practical to expect the existing glazing not to shatter in the process of removing the sash windows.

The sash's will have to be removed in order to install new rope to get them working again.

There is too much work required in repairing the sash's to ensure they are again usable, have the required strength, and are safe to use without fear of the glass breaking. It is not practical or economical and not safe. They are unrepairable. They are also making the house unsafe as you cannot exit through them in the event of a house fire.

Therefore we propose on replacing the existing sash windows with new, matching the existing sections and profiles with new 12mm heritage double glazed units. The failed existing sash windows can be removed and the new ones installed in one process, ensuring the works are completed quickly without compromising security or disrupting the neighbours or the street scene. The DG units will match the ones that have already been installed in various houses in Hitchin Street, Whitehorse street and Sun street.

There will be no visible alteration of the windows as they will look 'like for like', maintaining the character of the grade 2 listed building.