

Design and Access Statement

Proposed Replacement of Windows and Entrance Doors – Lowther Medical Centre – Whitehaven, Cumbria, CA28 7RG

Dear Planning Department and Control.

Our proposal is to replace the existing timber-framed windows and front entrance doors at Lowther Medical Centre, GP practice with uPVC units on a phased basis over a number of years, subject to available NHS funding and budgets.

The existing timber windows currently in situ have been in the building since it was built. Despite attempted maintenance the windows are in poor condition and are increasingly difficult and costly to maintain.

Many frames now require major repair or full replacement, with some windows showing signs of failure and deterioration despite previous maintenance works. And health and safety becoming a prominent factor in our decision.

Specialist contractors with the skills required to repair and maintain traditional timber windows are limited within the local area, or charge a premium for their skills, resulting in increased costs and difficulties in securing reliable maintenance services.

The proposed replacement uPVC windows will provide a durable, low-maintenance solution that is more cost-effective over the long term. uPVC frames offer improved energy efficiency, reduced heat loss, and lower ongoing maintenance requirements compared with timber alternatives.

The replacement programme will prioritise the windows in the worst condition and will be undertaken progressively in priority order and as funding becomes available.

The proposal also includes replacement of the existing front entrance doors which we have approached NHS England for funding to support us with this change. The current timber doors are reaching the end of their serviceable life and do not meet modern accessibility standards. New uPVC entrance doors will allow the installation of electrically operated opening mechanisms, improving accessibility for wheelchair users and people with disabilities and helping the practice meet its obligations under the Equality Act and DDA principles.

The new doors will also reduce future maintenance requirements and improve the overall functionality, safety, and accessibility of the building.

The proposed works will ensure the continued effective operation of the healthcare facility while improving energy efficiency, accessibility, durability, and long-term value for public funds.

We are very welcoming of the support of the planning team. If a specific UPVC design or colour is required we are happy take advice on the requirement should this be needed.

We were aiming for a look of like for like replacement windows form wooden to UPVC. So from the outside the windows look the same and they will still open outwards. The design of the DDA complaint doors will be darker in colour dark grey.