

# Recreating the block improvement scheme:

## A guide to improving your property

Gateshead Council's block improvement scheme has transformed many properties and created some stunning streets across Bensham, Saltwell, Teams and Felling.

This guide explains how we achieved these transformations and will help you to recreate these improvements on your own home. It focuses on some key features and gives technical information about the designs and materials needed to replicate them.

### Walls and railings

New walls and railings can improve property boundaries, and help to coordinate entire streets.

To achieve an authentic look, we used locally sourced bricks in shades that match the mix of colours in the surrounding area. We chose bricks in red and medium/dark tones in Tyrone, Old Colliery; Furness, Old Victorian; and Caradale, Kiln White styles.

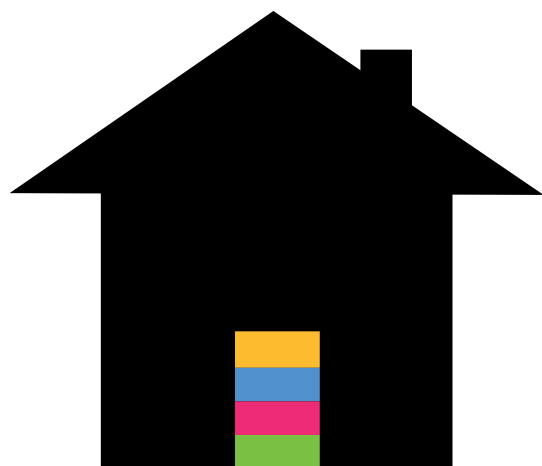
Brickwork can be used to improve front boundaries (including driveways), party boundaries and divisional boundaries.

Coping detail can also add stylish finishings.

**See Plan 1** for details of how each boundary type can be created.

We added railings to complete these new walls and reintroduce the iron features that were removed from the area during World War II.

Unique designs have been used on railheads and railposts. **See Plan 2** for an example of a double-gate and wall railing design.



*Walls and railings have transformed properties on Whitehall Road*

## Garden treatments

Low-maintenance treatments are great for creating colourful gardens all year round. We used a mixture of **shrubs** (both deciduous plants that lose their leaves in winter and evergreens that keep their leaves throughout the year), **perennials** (a plant without woody parts that is herbaceous as it dies down in winter and regrows each spring) and **climbers** (deciduous and evergreen plants that climb or can be used as groundcover). Here are some of the plants that are perfect for garden treatments of this kind:

Shrubs	Perennials	Climbers
Euonymus fortunei 'Emerald 'n Gold' (evergreen)	Helleborus lividus 'Corsicus' (evergreen)	Clematis 'Freda' (deciduous)
Cytisus beanie (deciduous)	Crocsmia 'Tangerine Queen' (herbaceous)	Hedera colchica 'Dentata Variegata' (evergreen)
Potentilla fruticosa 'Elizabeth' (evergreen)	Euphorbia palustris (herbaceous)	Lonicera 'Serotina' (deciduous)
Prunus laurocerasus 'Otto Luyken' (evergreen)	Euphorbia myrsinites (evergreen)	
Cytisus kewensis (deciduous)	Bergenia cordifolia (evergreen)	
Hydrangea macrophylla (deciduous)	Aquilegia stellata 'Barlow series' (herbaceous)	

See **Plan 3** for an example of where these garden treatments can be placed.

If you'd prefer to plant a hedge in your front garden, we found the *Fagus sylvatica* beech hedge to be a good choice. It can provide a natural screen to protect your garden, and has beautiful golden leaves throughout the autumn and winter.

See **Plan 4** as a guide for locating a hedge.

See **Plan 5** for an example of how all of these improvements come together to create a transformed property frontage and garden.



*Mr and Mrs Bazler's home on Westbourne Avenue is a great example of a stunning garden treatment*

## Rainwater pipes

Rainwater pipes can add the finishing touch to a property.

We used sleek, black, aluminium pipes to trim the roof and walls of properties. These prevent water damage, and blend nicely with the classic style of the other improvement features.



*Black rainwater pipes finish off the improvements on Saltwell Road*

## Front doors

Front doors can be a real design feature of any property.

We used front doors with vintage qualities to bring back some classic style to our streets.

See **Plan 6** for a standard door design, which can also accommodate a glazed fanlight.

Front doors have been painted in the following Dulux colours to complement the tones and style of surrounding architecture:

- Black RAL 9011
- Blue BS 20 C 40
- Blue, Victorian (Deep Ultramarine)
- Green, Victorian (DP Brunswick Green)
- Green (light) BS 14 C 35
- Green (dark) RAL 6011
- Red BS 04 D 45
- Red, Rich (Red Stallion 1)

We used brass door furniture - including letterboxes, knockers, door handles and numbers - to complete the vintage look.



*Stylish front doors on Saltwell Road*

## Stonework

Stonework around doors and windows can be painted to freshen the look of a property.

We used specialist masonry paints that matched the tones of the local environment and provided a hard-wearing surface to protect properties. The paints we picked were Johnstone's Stormsheild Masonry Paint in Honeysuckle (BS 08 C 31) and Mould Growth Consultants' Biocheck allweather system and Pliolite© resin-based masonry paint in cream.



*The stonework on Sunderland Road complements local tones and the improved stairway*

## Windows

New uPVC windows can make properties more energy efficient without compromising on traditional design.

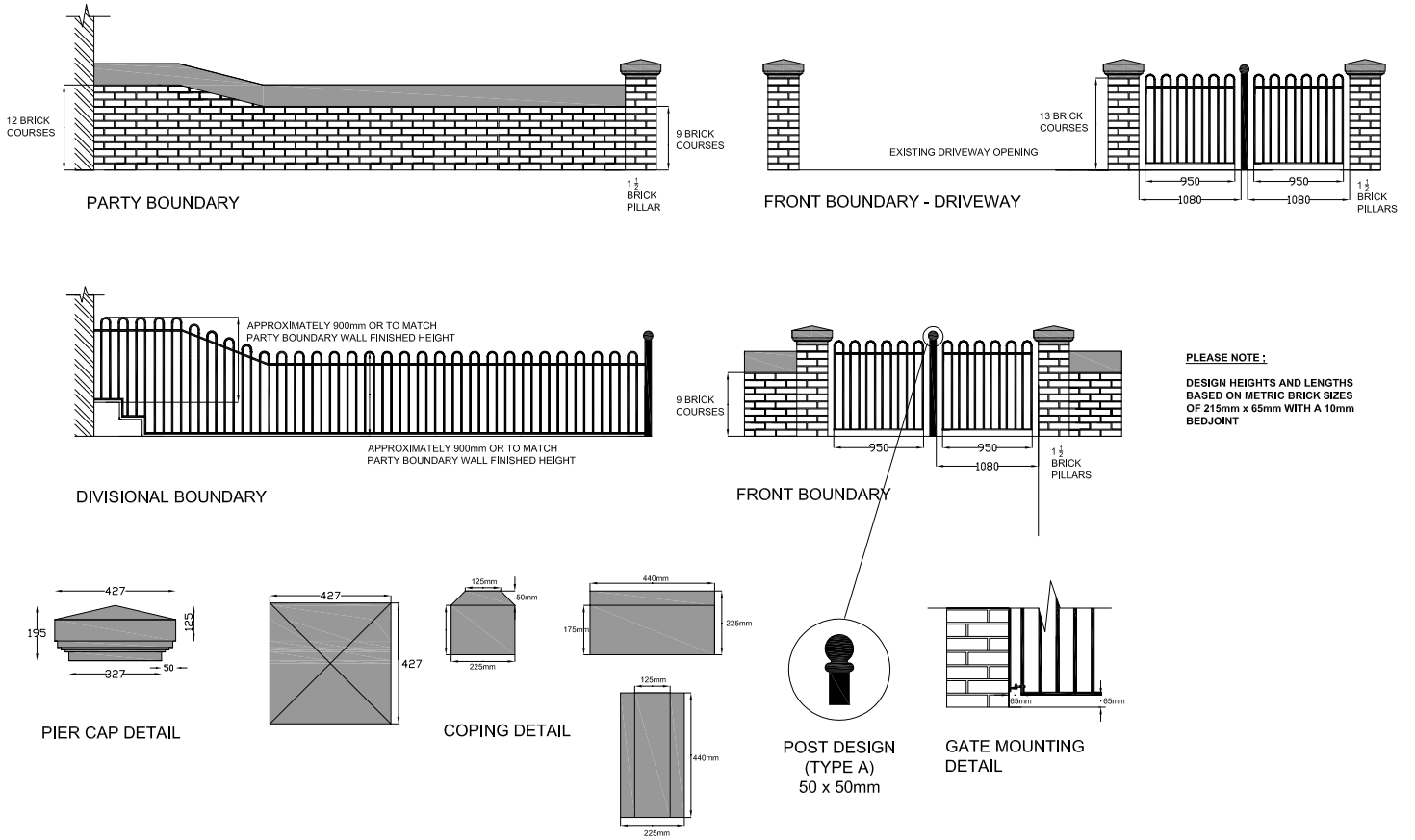
We used windows with a 'hung window' design to replicate some of the original features of this type of architecture.

See **Plan 7** and **Plan 8** for examples of how the 'hung window' design can be achieved.

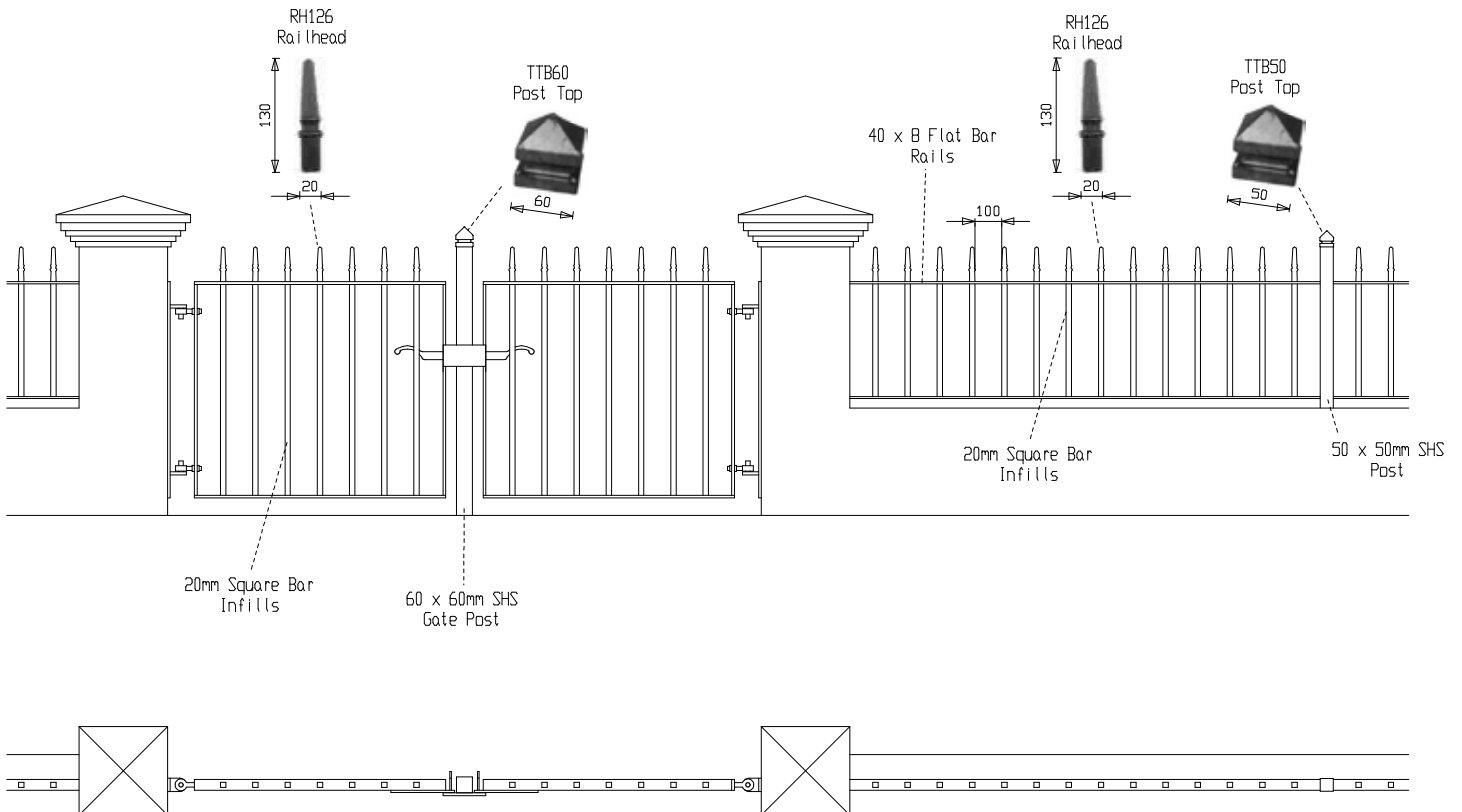


*The 'hung windows' on Windsor Avenue are in keeping with the area's traditional style*

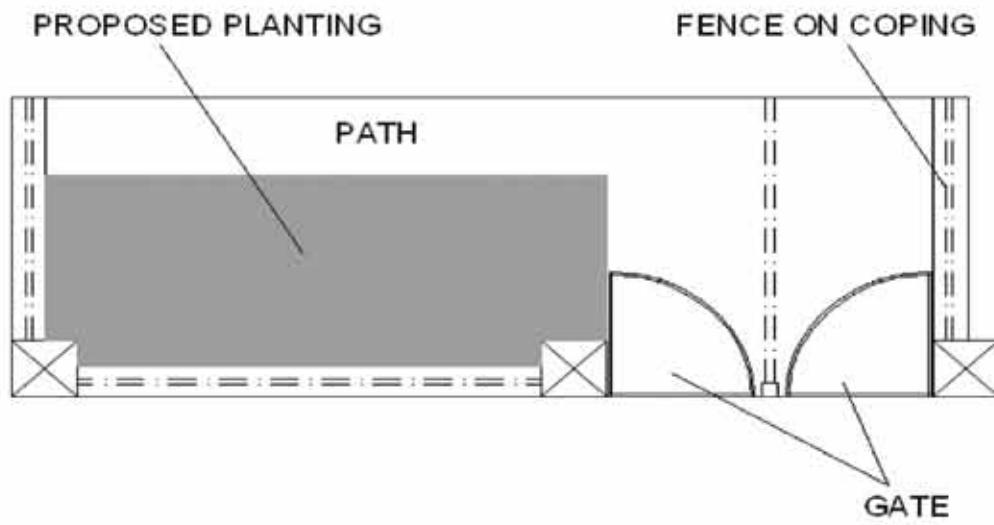
# Plan 1: Boundary walls



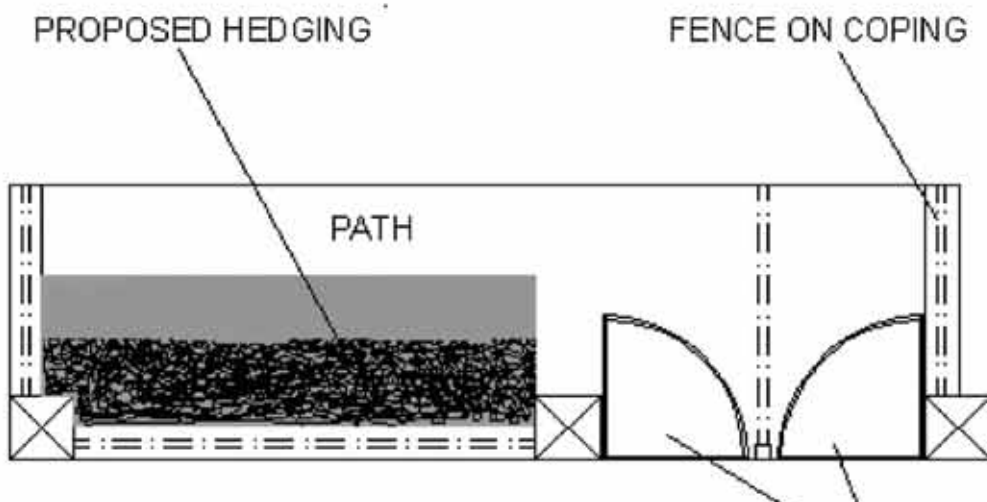
# Plan 2: Gates and railings



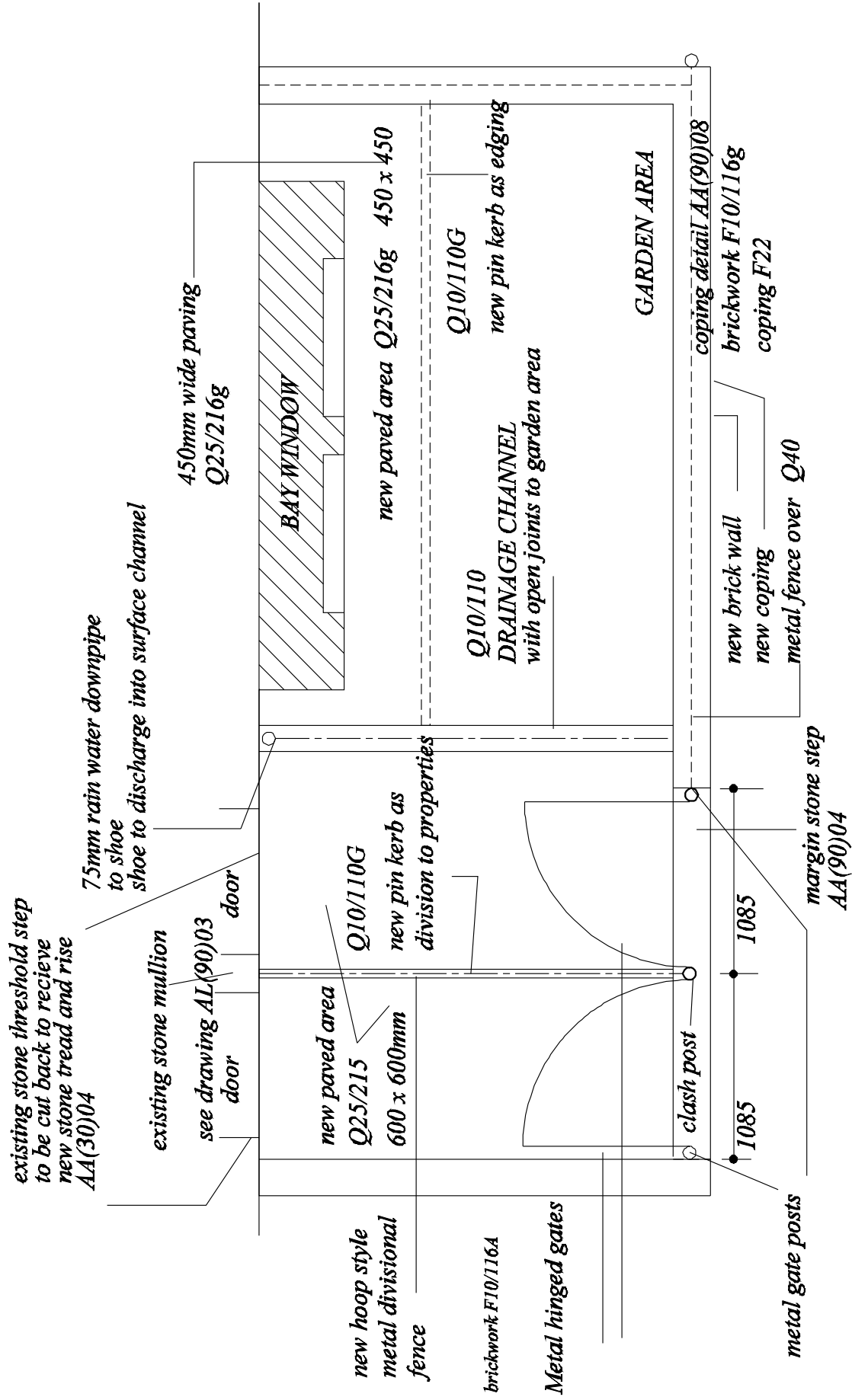
### Plan 3: Garden treatments



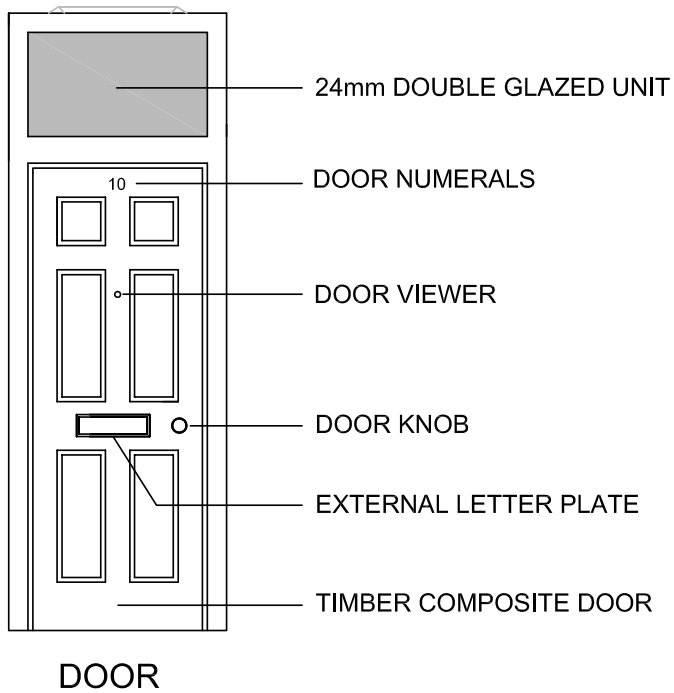
### Plan 4: Hedge planting



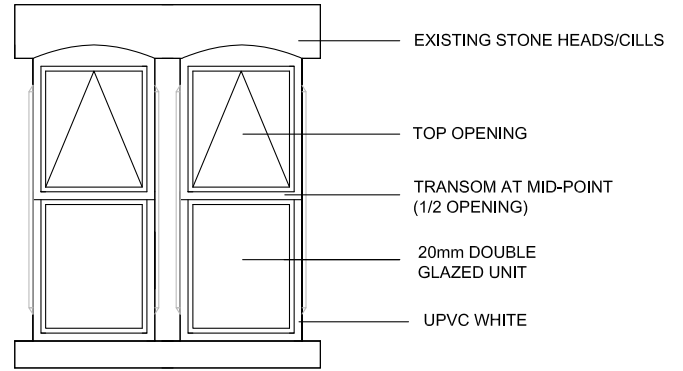
# Plan 5: Complete frontage and garden improvement plan



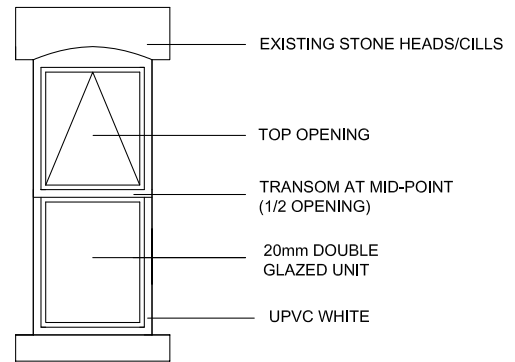
## Plan 6: Front door design



## Plan 7: 'Hung window' details

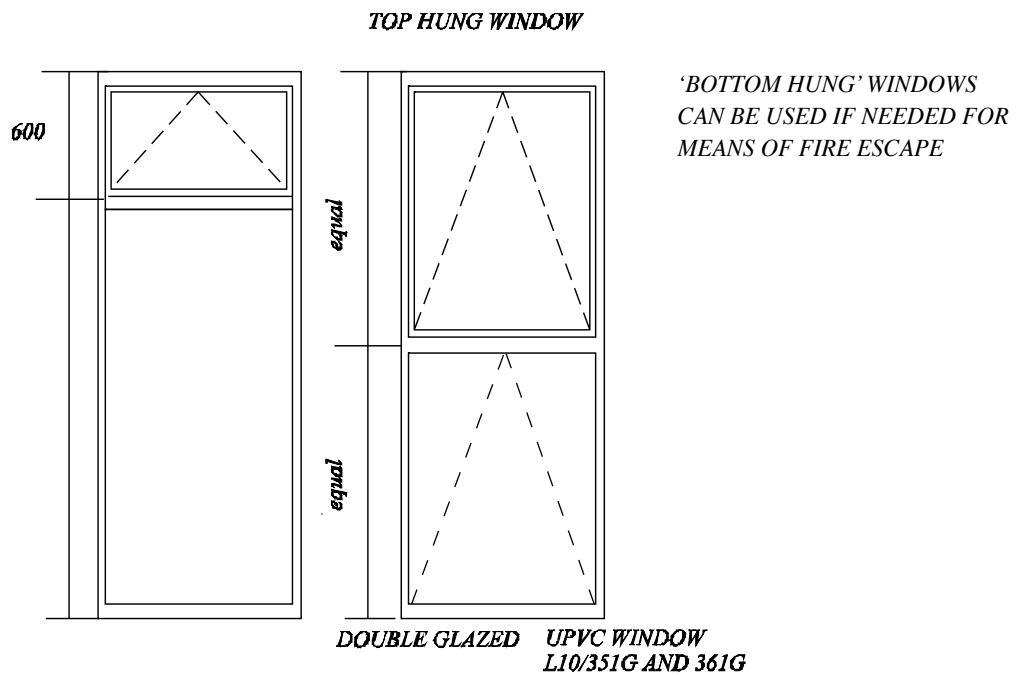


DOUBLE WINDOW



SINGLE WINDOW

## Plan 8: 'Hung window' design



*WINDOW PATTERN DWELLINGS TO BACK OF FOOTPATH*

*WINDOW PATTERN*

**For more information about the block improvement scheme, contact:**

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