

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

THE OLD POST OFFICE, THE STREET, ALDERTON, SN14 6NL

1. INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement supports a householder planning application for alterations to the first-floor accommodation above the existing garage at The Old Post Office, Alderton. The proposal replaces the existing irregular roof with a modest, unified roof form, introduces dormer windows to the front and rear, improves external materials, and creates a more functional internal layout. No change is proposed to the building footprint.

2. SITE AND HERITAGE CONTEXT

The property is located within the Alderton Conservation Area and forms part of a group of three dwellings: The Old Post Office, Byways and The Gables. These buildings form a coherent group, using traditional materials and similar proportions.

The most important part of The Old Post Office in heritage terms is the front elevation facing the street, which retains traditional detailing. The rear and side elevations have been subject to multiple alterations over time, resulting in mixed materials and forms.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

The proposal has been developed with regard to:

- National Planning Policy Framework (Section 16)
- Wiltshire Core Strategy CP57 (Ensuring High Quality Design)
- Wiltshire Core Strategy CP58 (Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment)
- Wiltshire Design Guide – Appendix D (Householder Extensions)

These policies require extensions to remain subservient to the main building, respect local character, and preserve the appearance of conservation areas.

4. PRE-APPLICATION FEEDBACK AND DESIGN RESPONSE

A pre-application response was issued in November 2024. The main issues raised were:

- The extension must remain clearly subservient.
- The earlier design risked upsetting the visual balance between the group of houses.
- The originally proposed front gable was considered visually prominent.
- The Conservation Area could be harmed.

Design changes made in response:

- Removal of the proposed front gable.
- Addition of two small hipped dormer windows on the front elevation.
- Ridge height kept below the main house.
- Extension remains set back from the main façade.
- Front elevation material improved to Cotswold stone.
- Rear elevation simplified with painted render to unify mixed materials.
- Rear dormers reduced and redesigned in a traditional form.
- Overall roof shape made simpler and more consistent.

5. **THE PROPOSAL**

The proposal includes the following:

- Removal of the existing asymmetrical and partially flat first-floor roof.
- Construction of a modest pitched roof that remains secondary to the main roof.
- Two small hipped dormer windows on the street-facing elevation.
- Three small dormer windows on the rear elevation.
- Matching roof tiles and painted timber windows.
- Cotswold stone used on the front elevation and painted render on secondary elevations.
- No enlargement of the ground-floor footprint.

6. **SCALE, MASSING AND APPEARANCE**

- The extension remains visually subservient due to its reduced height and set-back position.
- The proposed roof form is simple and low-key.
- The dormers are modest in size and traditional in shape.
- Materials complement the existing house.
- The revised design creates a more coherent appearance than the existing arrangement.

7. **IMPACT ON THE CONSERVATION AREA**

The proposal has been designed to preserve the character of the Alderton Conservation Area.

- The main gable of the original house remains dominant.
- The introduction of Cotswold stone to the front elevation improves appearance compared with existing mixed materials.
- The small dormers sit comfortably within the roofscape.
- The rear elevation has already been altered heavily, so impacts there are limited.

Overall, the design reduces visual impact and improves consistency with the surrounding context.

8. **RESIDENTIAL AMENITY**

- The footprint of the building does not change.
- The proposed works face away from the adjoining property.
- The new dormers do not cause additional overlooking.
- There is no expected loss of light or overbearing impact.

Residential amenity is unaffected.

9. **ACCESS**

- No changes are proposed to pedestrian or vehicular access.
- Existing access arrangements are retained.

10. **CONCLUSION**

The revised scheme directly addresses the comments raised at pre-application stage. It keeps the extension clearly secondary to the host building, uses appropriate and improved materials, and respects the character and appearance of the Alderton Conservation Area. It is a modest and well-considered design that achieves the necessary internal improvements with minimal external impact. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable.