

Design and Access Statement

The Old Post Office, Alderton, SN14 6NL

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a householder planning application for alterations to The Old Post Office, Alderton.

The application should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawing package which sets out the proposed development in full.

A previous application (Ref: PL/2025/09381) was refused planning permission. This revised proposal responds directly to the concerns raised, most notably through amendments to the roof design and treatment of the principal elevation.

2. Site and Context

The application property is a detached dwelling located within the Alderton Conservation Area.

The building comprises an original Cotswold stone structure with later side and rear extensions constructed in a mix of materials, including blockwork and imitation stone tiles. The roofscape is currently fragmented, with an offset and asymmetrical form and areas of flat roofing.

The site makes a contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, although its architectural integrity has been diluted by previous unsympathetic alterations.

3. Planning History

Planning Application Ref: PL/2025/09381 proposed similar works, including:

- Reconfiguration of the roof to form a more coherent structure
- Introduction of dormer windows to both rear and front elevations

This application was refused, with key concerns relating to:

- The impact of front-facing dormer windows on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- The visual prominence of the roof alterations in the street scene

4. Design Approach

4.1 Design Principles

The revised 2026 scheme has been developed with the following objectives:

- To simplify and rationalise the existing roof form
- To reduce visual impact on the street-facing elevation
- To better respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- To respond directly to the reasons for refusal of the 2025 scheme

4.2 Proposed Development

The proposed works include:

- Removal of the existing offset and asymmetrical roof structure
- Removal of the flat roof over the landing
- Construction of a new, symmetrical pitched roof form
- Three dormer windows to the rear elevation only
- Two conservation rooflights to the front (street-facing) elevation
- External materials to match or complement the existing dwelling:
- Cotswold stone to the principal elevation
- Painted render to side and rear elevations to unify materials
- Roof tiles to match existing
- Painted timber windows to match existing

4.3 Key Change from Refused Scheme

The critical amendment from the 2025 proposal is the removal of front-facing dormer windows and replacement with low-profile conservation rooflights

This change significantly reduces the visual impact of the development when viewed from the public realm and preserves the simple roofscape typical of buildings within the Conservation Area.

5. Impact on the Conservation Area

The revised proposal has been carefully designed to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Alderton Conservation Area:

- The symmetrical roof form replaces the existing fragmented and visually discordant arrangement, resulting in a more coherent and traditional appearance
- The use of conservation rooflights ensures minimal intervention on the principal elevation
- Rear dormers are positioned on the less visible elevation, limiting public views
- The use of appropriate materials (Cotswold stone, matching tiles, painted timber windows) reinforces local distinctiveness
- Rendering of mixed-material elevations helps visually unify the building

Overall, the proposal represents a clear improvement over both the existing situation and the previously refused scheme.

6. Scale, Appearance and Layout

Scale

The proposal does not materially increase the overall scale of the dwelling but rationalises the roof form to create a balanced and proportionate structure.

Appearance

The development introduces a more consistent architectural language:

- Simplified roof geometry
- Reduced visual clutter
- Improved material coherence

Layout

Internal alterations are limited and relate primarily to improved use of roof space, including the introduction of an ensuite. The general arrangement of the dwelling remains unchanged.

7. Access

The proposal does not alter the existing vehicular access or pedestrian access arrangements

There is no change to parking provision or site circulation.

8. Conclusion

This revised proposal represents a thoughtful and sensitive response to the previously refused scheme.

By removing front dormer windows and introducing conservation rooflights, the development:

- Significantly reduces its impact on the street scene
- Better preserves the character of the Conservation Area
- Delivers a more coherent and architecturally appropriate solution

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with relevant local and national planning policies relating to design quality and heritage conservation.