

Design and Access Statement
Replacement Windows and Rear Opening Alteration
4 Birch Glade, Park Place, Ashton Keynes, SN6 6PX

1. Site and Surroundings

The application site comprises a detached dwelling constructed circa 1990, located within a small residential development in Ashton Keynes. The property is situated within the Ashton Keynes Conservation Area but is not listed.

The property is of a modern construction. It is formed of reconstituted stone facings and concrete block cavity walls. The foundations are deep filled concrete trench with block and beam floors. The roof comprises concrete tiles over prefabricated timber trusses.

The dwelling forms part of a group of late 20th-century houses and does not represent historic or heritage fabric typical of the conservation area. The property is set back from the public highway and accessed via a private drive. As such, it is not readily visible from the public realm and makes a limited contribution to the wider street scene.

2. Planning Context

This application has been prepared with regard to the following policies:

- **Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)**
 - Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
 - Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**
 - Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

In accordance with these policies, development within conservation areas should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area.

3. Existing Condition

The property currently has a mixture of timber and later replacement uPVC double-glazed windows. The timber windows are in a deteriorated condition, with evidence of weathering, rot, failed seals, and misted glazing units. They are therefore beyond economical repair and replacement is considered necessary to maintain the building.

The windows are finished in a cream colour and incorporate decorative glazing bars.

Given their condition, ongoing repair is not considered a sustainable long-term solution, and replacement is required to maintain the building.

4. Proposed Development

The proposal comprises:

- Replacement of all existing windows with flush-fit uPVC windows
- Retention of the existing window opening sizes and positions on principal and all second floor elevations
- Minor alterations to opening configurations for improved functionality and to meet fire regulations
- Removal of decorative glazing bars to simplify the appearance
- All windows to be finished in cream to match the existing colour
- No changes are proposed to window opening sizes on the principal (front) elevation.

At the rear ground floor elevation, two distinct elements are proposed:

- The existing lounge opening will retain its current size, with the existing French doors replaced by a three-panel sliding door to improve functionality and maximise glazing within the existing opening.
- A separate alteration is proposed to the dining room elevation, where an existing window will be removed and the opening enlarged and lowered to floor level. This will accommodate a set of French doors with narrow glazed side panels, designed to reflect the proportions of the existing windows

In addition, replacement of the existing front door, side stable door, and garage doors is proposed. These will be replaced with high-quality units in a traditional heritage-style design, finished in agate grey to complement the character of the property and surrounding area. These changes are minor in nature and do not alter the size or position of existing openings.

5. Design Approach

The design approach has been to provide a high-quality, sympathetic upgrade appropriate to the age and character of the property.

The proposed flush-fit uPVC windows have been selected to reflect the proportions and appearance of traditional timber joinery, while offering improved durability and reduced maintenance requirements.

The overall arrangement, proportions, and alignment of window openings on the principal elevations are retained, ensuring that the established visual rhythm of the building is preserved.

The removal of decorative glazing bars simplifies the façade and results in a more consistent and coherent appearance, which is considered appropriate for a modern property of this type.

The use of different door types to the rear elevation reflects the differing constraints and functions of each opening, ensuring a balanced and proportionate design.

6. Impact on the Conservation Area

The property is a modern dwelling and does not make a significant contribution to the historic character of the conservation area.

Due to its position on a private drive and set-back from the public highway, the property is not readily visible from public viewpoints. As a result, the proposed works will have a negligible impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The 3 neighbouring properties sharing the private drive have differing window styles and designs and one house has replaced its timber window frames with cream uPVC. The variation in window styles and materials within the immediate area demonstrates that the proposed changes will remain in keeping with the character of the locality.

The most substantial change, located on the rear elevation, will not be readily visible from the public realm and does not result in harmful visual impact on the surrounding area. It therefore does not affect the wider setting.

The proposal is therefore considered to **preserve the character and appearance of the Ashton Keynes Conservation Area**, in accordance with:

- Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and
 - Section 16 of the NPPF
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7. Impact on Residential Amenity

The proposed rear opening will increase the extent of glazing at ground floor level; however, it does not introduce new overlooking beyond the existing situation.

No adverse impacts in terms of overlooking, loss of privacy, or overbearing impact are anticipated.

8. Conclusion

The proposed development represents a modest and proportionate upgrade to a modern dwelling within a conservation area.

The replacement windows address the poor condition of the existing units while maintaining the overall appearance of the property. The rear alteration improves functionality and natural light without impacting the public realm.

Given the limited visibility of the site, the modern nature of the building, and the sympathetic design approach, the proposal is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and fully accords with local and national planning policy.

Planning permission is therefore respectfully requested.