

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT -

FLAT 5, SILBURY HOUSE

Site Address: Flat 5, Silbury House, 10 The Green, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 1AL

Statutory Listing: Grade II Listed Building (Historic England List Entry No: 1034279)

Conservation Area: Marlborough Conservation Area

Proposal: Proposed new external door (replace window) and associated internal and external alterations.



Figure 1 - Silbury House - Rear Elevation

1. Introduction & Context

This Design & Access statement supports an application for Listed Building Consent (To be read in conjunction with the submitted heritage statement) at Flat 5, Silbury House, 10 The Green. The property comprises part of Silbury House, a significant three-storey building overlooking The Green in Marlborough. The building features an early 19th-century Ashlar Bath stone front superimposed onto an older core structure, displaying prominent Regency architectural elements. This application concerns a non-principal opening located solely on the rear elevation.

“THE GREEN 1. 5407 (East Side) No 10 SU 1969 1/76 18.7.49 II GV 2. Early C19 front to older building. 3 storey. Ashlar bath stone. Projecting plinth, moulded string at 1st floor cill level. Wide boxed caves. Hipped slate roof. 3 windows to upper floors, with moulded cornices to 1st floor and pediment to central 1st floor window. Two ground floor windows with moulded architrave surrounds set in 4 centred arches, springing from plinth. Tall 8 panel central door with rectangular fanlight of oval and curved diamond pattern in deep recess with double panelled

reveal (10 panels to each side and 4 to soffit). Wide stone porch with 4 fluted Greek Doric columns and 4 fluted pilasters on wall face, with Greek Doric entablature. Later C19 rails on top of porch. Good early C19 lampholder fixed to caps of 2 centre columns, 5 moulded stone steps, and plain bar guard rails. Flanking screen walls with panelled piers. South front has a panel on each floor to lefthand - arched stair window and door under with flat hood, earlier building to righthand with 2 storey segmental bay of 3 windows. Nos 8 to 16 (consec) form a group.

Listing NGR: SU1905969306”¹

2. Assessment of Significance

Silbury House is designated at Grade II for its architectural and historical value. Its principal significance lies in its external group value with neighbouring properties and its formal, high-quality front elevation. The rear elevation is highly subordinate and has undergone evolution over time, including conversion into separate residential apartments.

The specific window subject to this application is a white-painted timber sash window located on the ground floor rear elevation. It is a modern replacement rather than a historic survival and is currently in a structurally sound condition. The window directly overlooks Flat 5's private outdoor amenity space (garden/courtyard).



Figure 2 - Flat 5 Garden/Courtyard and Window

¹ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1034279?section=official-list-entry>

3. Design Principles and Concepts

The overarching concept is to create a seamless, high-quality architectural intervention that looks like an intentional, original feature of the property's secondary evolution, rather than a modern afterthought. The concept avoids the introduction of modern, expansive glazing, opting instead to maintain a traditional, cellular division of light that respects the character of Silbury House.

The architectural scale of the development is entirely governed by the existing fabric. The opening will not be widened or heightened. The principle applied is one of vertical extension downward unpicking the masonry beneath the window sill to ground level while strictly keeping the original structural lintel and jamb widths intact. This ensures the extension of the aperture feels balanced and structurally natural.

To avoid any visual clash, the design principle relies on matching existing features found elsewhere in the building. The proposal introduces a multi-pane, 15-panel timber door. This design directly mirrors the established fenestration pattern of the adjacent ground-floor flat. By using matching painted timber joinery and identical pane proportions, the concept delivers immediate visual harmony.

4. Development Context and Access Influence

The immediate context is a private, enclosed rear courtyard/garden space. Because this area is entirely shielded from public view, the design was influenced by the practical need to improve the "liveability" and layout of Flat 5. It transitions the rear elevation from a passive wall into an active, usable connection to private amenity space, supporting sustainable, high-quality residential use without affecting the public realm of the Marlborough Conservation Area.

Silbury House features a formal, grand front entrance facing The Green. Improving modern, inclusive step-free access via the front facade is impossible without causing severe, irreversible harm to the high-significance historic steps and doorcase.

The rear door proposal solves this specific constraint. By lowering the window opening to floor level, it creates a secondary, level access point directly from the flat into the courtyard. This provides the occupant—including anyone with temporary or permanent limited mobility—with direct, step-free access to outdoor space.

The context of a ground-floor flat requires clear fire egress routes. While primary access remains via the communal front areas, this new opening provides a valuable secondary emergency exit route directly into a safe open-air courtyard, significantly improving fire safety parameters without compromising historic fabric.

5. Special Architectural Interest, Physical Features, and Setting

The primary architectural interest of Silbury House lies in its formal, highly ornamented principal facade facing The Green. The proposed work is entirely confined to the rear elevation, which is historically subordinate, functional, and features previous modern alterations. The proposal actively protects the primary asset by leaving all principal rooms, decorative plasterwork, and the historic front elevation entirely untouched.

The key physical feature justifying the designation in this specific location is the surrounding historic masonry. Any exposed brickwork or stone jambs will be made good using matching local materials. The use of slimline heritage double glazing ensures modern thermal efficiency while keeping an ultra-slim profile that preserves the traditional reflections and delicate timber glazing bars typical of the building's historic joinery.

The proposed door will have no adverse impact on the setting of the Grade II building or the character of the Marlborough Conservation Area. The physical context of the site features a rising access road leading to a secure, powered vehicular gate. Consequently, the full extent of the new door is contained within a private, restricted courtyard environment. While the elevated position of the rear elevation means the upper portion of the aperture may be glimpsed from the adjacent rising gradient, it will be viewed entirely in context with the identical, matching 15-panel timber joinery of the neighbouring flats. Because the design introduces an architectural language already established within this private courtyard, it maintains perfect visual cohesion and ensures the character of the conservation area is sustained.

5. Impact Assessment & Justification

The proposed alteration balances modern residential utility with strict heritage preservation guidelines. The impact on the historic fabric is minimised by utilising the exact horizontal boundaries of the existing window opening.

Crucially, the 15-panel multi-glazed timber design explicitly mirrors the established architectural style of the immediately neighbouring flat within the same building. This approach establishes immediate visual continuity, ensuring that the new door will not appear out of place or harm the collective character of the building.

Because the window is a modern replacement situated on a hidden rear elevation overlooking a private garden, its alteration does not result in the loss of original historic fabric. By utilising traditional timber materials, matching profiles, slimline heritage glazing, and replicating existing local joinery styles, the proposal preserves the special architectural interest and character of the Grade II listed asset