

**Replacement of Windows at
Ajax
Lower Strand
Hugh Town
St.Mary's, Isles of Scilly, TR21 0PS
For
Emma Johnson**

PLANNING STATEMENT

September 2023

This statement supports a new planning application to remove defective timber windows on the rear elevation of Ajax on The Strand and replace them with low maintenance upvc windows. The report should be read in conjunction with application drawings numbers 2038A-P01 to P03 inclusive.

This report sets out the grounds for supporting this planning submission.



1. Existing Building

Ajax is a 2-storey holiday apartment on Lower Strand above Scilly Self Catering. It is marketed as a two-bedroom apartment sleeping 4 persons through the Scilly Self Catering website. As the details explain, the open plan living area has 'stunning, panoramic views right across the bay' where the sunsets can be watched. The end of terrace property is very robustly constructed from natural granite and has a fibre cement slate roof incorporating dormers front

and rear. The dormers are set within the roof and the ridges are lower than the main roof-line. On the back elevation, three windows are combined into one large dormer. Ajax appears to be one of three terraced properties on The Strand constructed at the same time, sharing similar architectural features – such as the ground floor bay windows on the front elevation.

The existing timber windows on the back elevation are unfortunately in a poor state of repair and are showing signs of rotting. Some windows are difficult to open and the hinges are failing. The external sills, in particular, are deteriorating. The windows are clearly at the end of their natural lifespan. Unfortunately, as the windows are at first and second floor levels, they are difficult to reach. Ladders are no longer an acceptable safe means accessing buildings so scaffold would need to be erected in Tom Chudleigh's Yard for timber repairs or re-staining. For this reason, it has not been possible to take close-up photos of the rear elevation windows so the images below are from the inside of the apartment.

The property is not listed but it is, nevertheless, in a prominent location in Hugh Town and is in the island protected AONB.



Above: Internal views of the first-floor rear windows

2. Proposals

The applicant is keen to maintain her building properly in the interests of visiting holidaymakers and the wider community. The neighbouring terraced building has replaced similar rear elevation windows with brown uPVC units, creating something of a precedent. The reason for the installation on the inaccessible rear elevation is clear. UPVC windows are durable, robust and long-lasting (up to 35 years). They are low maintenance and resistant to rot, corrosion and attack by wood boring insects. The more modern windows can be virtually indistinguishable from timber as the section sizes of frames and opening casements are very similar.

At Ajax, the proposal is to replace the two first floor timber windows and three second floor windows with brown uPVC units incorporating uPVC sills. The proportions of the new windows will exactly match the existing ones as the application drawings show. The timber windows will be carefully removed leaving the dormer construction intact and without affecting the first-floor openings. There are no plans to change the more prominent windows on the front elevation overlooking Holgate's Green and The Harbour.



Above: Close-up view of the upper floor timber windows from Tom Chudleigh's Yard. Note the mono-pitch ground floor building below the RH first floor window. Scaffold access to the windows above would clearly be complicated involving a flying scaffold construction from Wellcross to The Yard

3. Impact

The Ajax apartment is clearly visible on the front seaward elevation but less so on the rear where it is seen obliquely from the side street, Wellcross. As the photograph on the following page shows, the upper floor windows are high up within the roof structure, and the first-floor windows are set behind a granite yard wall. The most obvious feature of the building is probably the robust random rubble granite external walls that run seamlessly into the tall stone boundary wall. The south facing windows are relatively small with small glazed panes and a traditional vertical emphasis. The large roof dormer is clearly not an original feature of the building and has been added at some point. The pitched section of the dormer roof hides the flat roof behind.

From street level it is possible to see the poor condition of the existing windows and the discolouration of the staining if one was to scrutinise the building. Good quality uPVC windows with a consistent colour and finish would arguably be less noticeable and would not warrant a second glance. There would certainly be no detrimental visual impact on public vantage points. It is nevertheless important to get the detailing right and use high quality units with a guaranteed life-span. Windows will be double glazed and would incorporate thermal breaks in the framing.



Top: View from the Church Street end of Wellcross

Bottom: Front elevation. Note the identical three roof dormers and matching bay windows of Scilly Self Catering and the Bike Hire shop

4. Sustainability

Waste Management: The existing timber windows would be carefully removed, taking the sashes out first and then cutting out the frames. The glazed sealed units would be removed and taken to the Moorwell recycling centre where the glass would be crushed for re-use. The timber would be disposed of separately.

Long Life: The fact that uPVC does not rot, rust, blister or flake and is not affected by salt corrosion makes this product longer lasting than timber or aluminium alternatives. It will

therefore be many years before quality uPVC units will need to be replaced. The appearance of the windows will also be preserved.

Thermal Insulation: The U Value of uPVC windows will be in the region of 1.2Wm²K, complying with current Building Regulations. Casements will be tight fitting to avoid draughts. Poorly fitted windows and doors can account for around 20% of a property's heat loss so energy efficient new windows will reduce energy costs and create better internal living conditions. Condensation is not an issue with uPVC windows.

Sound Insulation: High levels of sound insulation can be achieved with uPVC windows. This may not be a major concern but Holgates Green at the front of Ajax does attract social gatherings especially during Gig week.

Recycling: When it does come to the end of the window's life span uPVC can be recycled up to 10 times. Although this form of recycling does not take place on Scilly at the moment, improved measures could be put in place in the future.

5. Summary

This is a modest planning application to replace tired timber windows on the back elevation of The Strand. There will be very little visual impact as a result of this application. The replacement uPVC units will be consistent with the windows in the neighbouring property – but using the latest manufacturing techniques and technologies to ensure that the best quality products are used. As the back of the building is so inaccessible, the specification of virtually maintenance free windows is the obvious way forward for this particular property.

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