

HERITAGE, PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Change of use for existing detached annexe to detached independent dwelling house, Annexe at Mill Corner, 22 Charlton Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 2AE

HERITAGE

Charlton is mentioned in the Domesday Book as a small settlement including a mill. It centres on two linear features:

- Charlton Road, which runs roughly north to south
- The Mill Stream which runs from a spring at Wellhead Farm into Hitchin

At Charlton's centre lies Mill Farm, a listed building which still contains an over-shot mill wheel (now in a dilapidated state). Charlton therefore reflects its milling and farming heritage and has been largely preserved by its green belt and conservation area status, the latter of which came into being in 1977.

Charlton has a strong connection to Henry Bessemer, the inventor of the Bessemer steel production process, who was born in the village, his family ran Charlton's central milling operation. Charlton House is a listed building which now bears a blue commemorative plaque for Henry Bessemer.

Architecturally, Charlton retains a mixture of historic red brick residential buildings and dispersed, largely timber, farm buildings, some of which (Mill Farm Barns) have been converted into residential use, which preserve the rural feel of this small settlement.

DESIGN

This application is for the change of use of the existing detached Annexe at Mill Corner, 22 Charlton Road, to an independent dwelling house. The annexe is situated on land to the rear of Mill Corner; the site is known as 24 Charlton Road, SG5 2AE where a former substantial property stood as early as 1787. This original property fell into disuse around 1966 according to UDC Rating Records; it is shown in the aerial photograph below, circa 1962.

24 Charlton Road
circa 1962



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The annexe was completed to a high standard in 2022, in accordance with planning approval and building regulation compliance and has since been occupied by the owners who were actively involved in the design and build; both are on the Self Build Register. The property benefits from a number of energy efficient features including an air source heat pump, underfloor heating, triple glazing, battery storage and the high insulation standards required in 2022.

The approved design incorporated features evident within Charlton that ensured the annexe has blended into the surrounding conservation area; these include use of hand-made red brick plinths, black natural wood feather edge cladding and slate roof.

Pre-application advice (25/02181/PRE) determined that due to the annexe's existing status and design there is adequate private amenity space available. The plot meets the definition and criteria of Grey Belt land in the NPPF, it does not affect the conservation area or the special character of Charlton; the application would not be inappropriate development in the green belt.

ACCESS AND PARKING

The annexe has the benefit of two separate points of direct access to the main highway, both of which have adequate site lines in both directions.



1. Planning and HCC Highways approved access directly onto Charlton Road, adjacent to No 22.
2. Retained, private right of vehicular access from Restricted Byway No 42. A Definitive Map Modification Order application resulted in a Sealed Order made 10 March 2022 being confirmed by an Inspector acting for the Secretary of State for the Environment on 4 April 2025 for the immediate upgrade of the 25m section of Footpath No 42 (formerly Mill Lane/Charlton Road) to a Restricted Byway, thus acknowledging the former public vehicular highway status of Mill Lane, which was extinguished by NERCA in 2006.

Mill Corner currently has 3 off street parking spaces, a single garage and its own direct access onto the main highway with adequate site lines in both directions; this amenity would be retained by Mill Corner if the annexe were to become an independent dwelling house and the annexe would retain its current parking amenity.

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MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The annexe has been erected on the footprint of the former 18th century property and retains the historical distance to the rear elevation of Mill Corner; the annexe roof was designed to sit lower than that of Mill Corner. The properties are distinctly separated from each other by the pre-existing 7ft brick garden wall which marks the boundary between the two properties. Shielding with evergreen tree planting as well as obscured frosted glazing to the front dormer windowpanes have been added to maximise privacy between the properties.

The annexe has its own bins, brown, purple, black and blue lid, which are collected for emptying within 15m of the highway at the corner/commencement of RB 42 (against the wall on the LHS, next to the street lamp post where the Track meets Charlton Road); the bins for Mill Corner and Treetops are also collected from this point.

Summary

The following are specific to the annexe:

- Building Regulation Completion Certificate
- EPC certificate with rating of 86B
- SAP Certificate and Air Permeability Rating of 4.41 [m3.h⁻¹.m⁻²@50Pa](#)
Target <=7.00 [m3.h⁻¹.m⁻²@50Pa](#)
- Independent electricity supply
- Air Source Heat Pump
- Underfloor Heating
- Triple glazing
- Private Borehole/Water Supply
- Battery storage facility supporting the efficiency of the highly insulated and sustainable south facing dwelling
- EV Charger
- Independent and private vehicular access from the highway in addition to public access from the highway on foot
- Approved: Living, Kitchen, Bathroom and Bedroom facilities
- Off street parking for 5+ cars