

Design and Access Statement

Chantry House, 31 West End, Ashwell, Hertfordshire, SG7 5PH
Proposed detached garage and workshop.

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement accompanies the application for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for the construction of a new detached garage and workshop within the existing residential curtilage of 31 West End.

The proposal provides secure domestic vehicle storage and has been designed to respond sensitively to the existing site levels, surrounding buildings, the character of the property and its historic setting in Ashwell.

2. Site and surroundings

The proposed garage and workshop is located in the corner within the existing garden and curtilage of 31 West End.

The site has an existing change in level (circa 1m) between the southern part of the site, where the Back Street garages and boundary structures are located, and the lower level at which the proposed garage is positioned.

The existing southern structures are approximately **1.0 m higher than the proposed garage floor level**. The proposed garage is separated from these existing southern structures by approximately **1.5–2.0 m**, with the existing ground falling towards the proposed garage.

Immediately to the north of the proposed garage is an existing gravel driveway. The driveway and the proposed garage floor are at approximately the same level.

The existing access arrangement and gates to West End are retained.

3. Proposed development

The proposed building is a detached domestic garage and workshop with **6.000 m depth**.

The principal dimensions and characteristics are:

- **Garage depth:** 6.000 m
- **Length:** 9.22 m
- **Ridge height:** 6.107 m above proposed garage floor level
- **Eaves height:** approximately 1.820 m
- **Underside of tie beam:** approximately 2.097 m
- **Roof pitch:** 50° to both roof slopes
- **Separation from southern structures:** approximately 1.5–2.0 m
- **Building floor:** 0.000 m proposed datum

The garage will have an **oak structural frame with horizontal oak plank cladding**.

Solar panels are integrated into the **south-facing roof slope**, allowing renewable energy generation to be incorporated within the roof form rather than through separate freestanding equipment. This is a suitable position to add solar panels being invisible from West End, Chantry House and shielded from the residents of Back Street by their garages.

4. Design approach

The design is deliberately simple and traditional in character, reflecting the appearance and proportions of a rural domestic outbuilding rather than seeking to replicate the principal listed house.

The use of an oak frame and horizontal oak plank cladding provides a natural and visually recessive material palette appropriate to the garden setting.

The symmetrical **50° pitched roof** provides a traditional roof form while accommodating the required garage space and integrated solar panels.

The building has been positioned to make use of the existing change in ground levels. The proposed lower floor level reduces the apparent height of the building when viewed from the higher southern part of the site.

The **1.5–2.0 m separation** from the existing southern boundary structures also provides visual separation between the proposed garage and the existing structures (1.6, 1.9 and 3.2m tall on top of the circa 1m earth embankment)

5. Heritage and setting

31 West End, or Chantry House is a Grade II listed property and is located within the historic environment of Ashwell. The proposal has therefore been designed with particular regard to the significance of the listed building and its setting.

The proposed garage is detached from the principal listed house and **does not require alterations to the fabric of the listed building**.

The principal heritage consideration is consequently the effect of the new outbuilding on the setting of the listed house and the character of its surrounding garden/curtilage.

The proposal seeks to minimise this effect through:

- locating the garage/workshop within the existing garden/curtilage;
- positioning it as far away away from the principal house;
- retaining the existing historic boundaries and other established features;
- making use of the existing change in ground level;
- maintaining approximately 1.5–2.0 m separation from the southern structures;
- using a simple traditional outbuilding form;
- using an oak structural frame and horizontal oak boarding;
- using oak barn doors and oak pedestrian door is in keeping with the oak doors on Chantry House;
- incorporating the solar panels into the roof rather than introducing freestanding equipment;

- Locating the PV inverter and battery storage within the existing later circa 1960's brick garage (in the far northeast of the curtilage) avoids the need for any associated equipment to be attached to or installed within Chantry House. The proposed renewable-energy installation therefore allows the property to benefit from on-site renewable electricity without requiring physical alteration to the historic fabric of the listed building.
- retaining the existing access arrangement.

The proposed garage is intended to remain subordinate within the wider setting of the listed house and to avoid competing visually with the principal building but rather complimenting it as suggested in the Ashwell Neighbourhood Plan and Design Statement.

6. Relationship with neighbouring property

The garage is positioned within the existing garden and is orientated to run parallel with the established boundary rather than presenting its principal gable or elevation directly towards No. 27 West End.

The proposed arrangement does not create direct overlooking of No. 27 West End. The existing boundary treatment is retained, and the proposal does not require alteration of the established boundary walls.

The building's position and orientation will also assist in improving the privacy and secluded character of the neighbouring garden.

7. Access

Vehicular access to the proposed garage is provided from the **existing gravel driveway to the north off West End.**

The driveway is already established and is approximately level with the proposed garage floor.

No new vehicular access onto West End is proposed.

The existing gates are retained. The proposed arrangement therefore makes use of the established private access rather than creating an additional highway access.

The garage provides secure parking for domestic vehicles within the existing residential curtilage.

8. Surface water

Rainwater from the proposed garage roof will be collected through gutters and downpipes and directed to **water butts for subsequent reuse in watering the garden.**

This provides on-site collection and reuse of rainwater and reduces the requirement for mains water for garden irrigation.

9. Biodiversity

The application site comprises approximately **730 m² (0.073 hectares)**.

The proposed development does not involve the removal or degradation of onsite priority habitat. Existing established features outside the area required for the garage and associated works will be retained.

The proposal is therefore being submitted on the basis of the applicable **0.2-hectare Biodiversity Net Gain exemption**.

10. Conclusion

The proposed garage has been designed as a modest and traditional detached outbuilding which responds to the existing site levels, surrounding structures, access arrangements and historic setting.

Its **6mx 9.22 m, 50° pitched roof, oak framed and horizontal oak plank cladding** provide a simple and sympathetic architectural response. The lower finished floor level and approximately **1.5–2.0 m separation** from the southern structures help to reduce its visual prominence.

The proposal does not require alterations to the principal listed building, retains the existing boundary treatment and access arrangement, and incorporates the solar panels within the roof design improving the environmental impact of Chantry House.

The development therefore takes point of the Ashwell Neighbourhood Plan and provides a practical domestic facility while responding appropriately to the character, appearance, heritage significance and setting of the site.