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DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposal:

Erection of a single-storey rear orangery extension with a flat roof and glazed roof lantern, together with associated first-floor external alterations comprising:

- Installation of a low-profile conservation-style rooflight within the eastern roof slope;
- Enlargement of an existing dormer window to match the design and appearance of the existing fenestration;
- A modest extension to the southern eaves of the principal gable roof to provide passive solar shading to the first-floor accommodation, structurally integrated with the proposed orangery extension.

Site Address: 24 Charlton Road, Charlton, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 2AE

Applicant: Helen Jarvis

Date: July 2026

1. Introduction and Site Context

1.1

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a householder planning application relating to 24 Charlton Road, Charlton, Hitchin.

1.2

The application property is a modern detached dwelling approximately four years old. Whilst recently constructed, it has been designed using traditional architectural forms and materials that reflect the historic agricultural character of the surrounding area. The building incorporates black timber weatherboarding, pitched roof forms and dormer features which respond positively to the nearby farm buildings and converted barns.

1.3

The dwelling is characterised by an informal T-shaped roof arrangement, comprising a principal north-south pitched roof intersected by a secondary roof element containing dormer windows. This varied roofscape reflects the traditional evolution of agricultural buildings and contributes positively to the rural character of the area.

1.4

The site lies within the Charlton Conservation Area. The proposals have therefore been carefully developed to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area whilst responding to the operational and environmental needs of the dwelling.

1.5

The application seeks planning permission for the following elements:

- A single-storey rear orangery extension with a flat roof and glazed roof lantern.
 - Enlargement of an existing south-facing dormer window to improve natural ventilation to Bedroom 2.
 - Installation of a conservation-style rooflight within the eastern roof slope to improve cross-ventilation to Bedroom 1.
 - A modest extension to the southern eaves of the principal roof to provide passive solar shading to first-floor accommodation and improve resilience to summer overheating.
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2. Design Principles – Proposed Orangery Extension

2.1 Use

The proposed orangery will provide additional living accommodation ancillary to the existing dwelling. The space will function as an extension of the main house and will enhance the usability and enjoyment of the property.

2.2 Scale and Amount

The extension has been designed as a modest single-storey addition located on the rear elevation. It remains clearly subordinate to the host dwelling in both scale and height and preserves the established hierarchy of the building.

The proposal maintains substantial private garden space and does not represent overdevelopment of the plot.

2.3 Layout and Siting

The orangery will be attached to the rear elevation adjacent to the existing kitchen. Its position has been selected to ensure a logical relationship with the internal layout of the dwelling whilst limiting visual prominence.

Due to the site's position within a lower part of the surrounding landscape and the presence of established boundary vegetation, the extension will be largely contained within its immediate setting and will have limited visibility from the wider countryside.

2.4 Appearance and Materials

The design adopts a high-quality material palette that complements the existing dwelling.

Brickwork

The extension walls will be constructed using Vandersanden Lithium facing bricks, selected for their compatibility with the existing black timber cladding and the wider vernacular character of the area.

Roof Form

A flat roof design incorporating a central glazed roof lantern is proposed. This approach minimises overall height and visual impact while introducing additional natural daylight into the extension and adjoining kitchen area.

Glazing

Window and door frames will be finished to match the existing property. High-performance glazing will be used throughout to ensure excellent thermal efficiency and energy performance.

Sustainability

The extension will incorporate contemporary insulation standards and high-quality construction detailing to ensure energy efficiency, thermal comfort and long-term durability. The roof lantern has been proportioned to maximise daylight penetration while avoiding excessive illumination and unnecessary light spill into the surrounding rural environment.

3. Ventilation, Overheating and Climate Adaptation

3.1

The dwelling was constructed to modern energy-efficiency standards and benefits from a highly insulated and airtight building envelope. Whilst delivering environmental benefits, such dwellings can be susceptible to summer overheating if adequate ventilation and solar-shading measures are not incorporated.

3.2

Previous planning restrictions requiring modifications to the north-facing dormer windows have reduced opportunities for natural ventilation within the upper floor accommodation. The current proposals are intended to address these issues through carefully designed and proportionate interventions.

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Bedroom 2 – Dormer Window Enlargement

3.3

It is proposed to enlarge the existing south-facing dormer window serving Bedroom 2. The revised opening will improve natural ventilation while retaining the existing architectural character of the dormer. The new window will match the existing frame design, materials and proportions to ensure a consistent appearance.

As the opening faces south, the proposal will not give rise to overlooking or privacy concerns in relation to neighbouring properties.

Bedroom 1 – Conservation Rooflight

3.4

Bedroom 1 currently relies on a single south-facing window as its sole source of natural ventilation. The installation of a conservation-style rooflight within the eastern roof slope will introduce effective cross-ventilation and improve thermal comfort during warmer periods.

The rooflight will be low profile in appearance and finished to match the existing roofscape. Owing to its location and orientation, the proposal will not result in overlooking or loss of privacy.

Bedroom 1 – Juliet Balustrade

3.4A

A slim-profile metal balustrade is proposed externally to the right-hand side first-floor bedroom window. The balustrade will act as a Juliet-style guarding feature, allowing the window to be opened more fully for natural ventilation whilst maintaining occupant safety.

The design has been intentionally simple and unobtrusive, comprising a dark-coloured metal finish that complements the existing fenestration and black weatherboard cladding of the dwelling. The balustrade will be lightweight in appearance and positioned flush to the existing façade, ensuring it does not project significantly beyond the building line.

Given its limited scale and domestic character, the proposed balustrade will have a negligible visual impact on the dwelling and wider Conservation Area. It will not create additional overlooking opportunities beyond those already afforded by the existing bedroom window and will therefore have no adverse effect on neighbouring privacy or amenity.

Passive Solar Shading

3.5

To improve resilience to summer overheating, a modest extension to the southern eaves of the principal roof is proposed.

The extended overhang will provide passive solar shading to the south-facing first-floor window, reducing solar gain during peak summer months whilst allowing lower-angle winter sunlight to continue to reach the accommodation.

The feature has been designed as a natural continuation of the existing architecture, utilising matching black timber cladding and integrating with the proposed orangery structure below. A single oak post will provide support to the open side of the canopy, ensuring the feature remains lightweight and visually recessive.

Solar-Control Glazing

3.6

All new glazing associated with the proposals, including the orangery, roof lantern, rooflight and enlarged dormer window, will utilise high-performance solar-control glass designed to reduce excessive heat gain whilst maintaining high levels of natural daylight and visual clarity.

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4. Heritage and Conservation Area Considerations

4.1

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

4.2

The proposed rooflight, dormer alteration, balustrade and eaves extension are limited in scale and clearly ancillary to the existing building. They have been designed to address functional requirements while respecting the established character of the dwelling and its setting.

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4.4

Although parts of the rear elevation can be viewed from the surrounding countryside and public footpaths, the site benefits from established landscaping, boundary vegetation and a naturally contained setting. Consequently, the proposals will have a limited visual presence within wider views.

4.5

Taken together, the proposed works represent sensitive and proportionate alterations that preserve the character and appearance of both the dwelling and the Charlton Conservation Area. The development is therefore considered to result in no harm to the significance of the heritage asset or its setting.

5. Access

5.1

Access to the proposed orangery will be provided directly from the existing dwelling, creating a seamless and accessible extension of the internal living accommodation.

5.2

The proposals do not alter existing vehicular or pedestrian access arrangements, nor do they affect on-site parking provision or highway safety.

6. Conclusion

The proposed development comprises a modest and well-considered package of alterations that will enhance the functionality, environmental performance and long-term sustainability of the dwelling. Whilst the ground floor orangery remains clearly subordinate, both it and the eaves extension form a high-quality, unified addition to the south elevation. With the eaves extension on the western side and the orangery on the eastern side, the design integrates naturally with the existing roofline, allowing the roof extension to sit neatly atop the new orangery wall where they meet. Together with the associated rooflight, enlarged bedroom window and Juliet-style balustrade, the proposals utilise premium materials which respond positively to the character of the Charlton Conservation Area and preserve the openness of the Green Belt. These coordinated alterations provide essential solar protection to a south-facing bedroom together with improvements to natural ventilation, safety, thermal comfort and climate resilience. Because these schemes provide benefits without giving rise to harmful impacts on the neighbouring amenity, heritage significance or the wider landscape, the proposals represent sustainable development and are respectfully recommended for approval.

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