



No. 1 Ashley Court, Holt

Mr. M Green

October 2021

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Executive Summary

This report relates to the erection of a garage and domestic storage room with new access gate and posts at No. 1 Ashley Court, Holt. The site is within Holt Conservation Area. It is located on the west side of Green Street, adjacent to a car park. It is in an area that is predominantly residential. It is in the wider vicinity of several heritage assets, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings and other buildings that are considered non-designated heritage assets. Collectively these have group value that contribute to the conservation area's special architectural and historic character and interest.

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been written to identify the significance of the heritage assets and the impact of development upon them. This is in accordance with national planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework on the historic environment.

Holt Conservation Area has many features of interest, including its ruinous castle, bridge, church, and medieval grid iron street pattern. Other architectural styles of note are vernacular farmhouses, and Georgian, Victorian, and Edwardian buildings. The character of the area is defined by both the natural and built environment, with the river, banks and cliffs influencing the topography, which forms a fundamental part of its special interest.

No. 1 Ashley Court is on an historic street but like several pockets of development within the conservation area the building itself forms part of a small modern cul-de-sac. The setting of the building and its location on a corner plot means that it has a relationship with both modern and historic buildings, with its primary frontage facing Green Street, and seen from Cross Street, which both form part of the medieval street pattern. There is a continuity of built form along Cross Street and Green Street, but this is mostly 20th century development, with only a few historic buildings with an architectural appearance that contributes to the character of the conservation area. The spatial aspects and grain of plots, and building lines are also varied, but boundary detailing is consistent, retaining a clear demarcation between the street line and building plot.

Holt conservation area has high evidential, historic, aesthetic and community significance. It has been divided into 4 sub areas. No. 1 Ashley Court is in Sub Area 4. It is a 1970's detached house that does not contribute to Holt's unique character and significance. Its strong plot boundary and associated landscaping which enclose the plot however contributes to the character of the conservation area.

The proposal will retain the strong enclosure of the plot and will contribute and enhance the varied building line that is characteristic of this wider conservation area sub area. The scale, form and mass of the building are appropriate to the plot and the wider street scene. The proposal overall is a minor alteration to the frontage that has a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area thus preserving the area's special architectural and historic interest and significance. The proposals will create a building line that adds variety to the wider street scene. The principal of development has been established elsewhere, both historically and in modern times, and the setting of heritage assets and key views will not be compromised by the development proposal.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This heritage impact assessment has been prepared on behalf of Mr. Mike Green to accompany a planning application for the erection of a garage and domestic storage room with new access gate and posts at No. 1 Ashley Court, Holt.
- 1.2 The purpose of the assessment is to describe the significance of nearby heritage assets and their setting. This information will subsequently highlight any impact of the proposal on the significance of the assets. It will identify mitigating measures, where necessary, to address this impact.
- 1.3 Under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, conservation areas are “areas of special architectural and historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. Section 72 of the same Act states, in the exercising of planning functions in conservation areas special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, when assessing planning applications. Under Section 66 there is a statutory duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed buildings or their settings.
- 1.4 Policies in the **Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (PPW), Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment and local development plans**, set out national and local planning policy in respect to the conservation of the historic environment and local development plans, set out national and local planning policy in respect to the conservation of the historic environment.
- 1.5 The **historic environment** is described in Wales Technical Advice Note 24: Historic Environment, (October 2017) as “All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and deliberately planted or managed.” A historic asset is: “An identifiable component of the historic environment. It may consist or be a combination of an archaeological site, a historic building or area, historic park and garden or a parcel of historic landscape. Nationally important historic assets will normally be designated.”

- 1.6 **Setting** is not a heritage designation. However, “the setting of an historic asset includes the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced, and appreciated embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral. Setting is not a historic asset in its own right but has value derived from how different elements may contribute to the significance of a historic asset”. TAN 24 (paragraph 1.25)
- 1.7 The definition of **significance** in relation to heritage policy is defined in Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales (Cadw, 2011). “To identify the heritage values of an asset, its history, fabric and character must first be understood. The relative significance of the different values then needs to be considered. It will be necessary to compare the values of the asset under consideration with others in the locality, region or even nationally, depending on its importance.”
- 1.8 The application site is located within Holt Conservation Area, which was designated in 1975 and reviewed and amended in 1999. It has a blanket Article 4(2) Direction, which restricts permitted development to protect the special architectural and historic interest of the buildings within the conservation area.
- 1.9 This document has been prepared following a site visit in September and October 2021. It is to be read in conjunction with other associated plans and documents in relation to this planning application.

2.0 The application site and identified heritage assets

- 2.1 The application site is in Holt, which is 5 miles northeast of Wrexham and approximately 9 miles to the south of Chester. It is located on the Welsh / English border on the south-eastern banks of the River Dee on a sandstone outcrop directly rising above and opposite the English village of Farndon.
- 2.2 The application site is located on the west side of Green Street and adjacent to Cross Street. It is located at the entrance to a modern cul-de-sac, Ashley Court, built in 1972/3. It is located on part of the medieval grid iron street pattern with predominantly modern housing. The character of the building is domestic and its roof height and building form reflects the scale of neighbouring properties
- 2.3 The designated heritage assets that are relevant in considering the proposed development are identified below:
- Conservation Area: Holt
- 2.4 Non-designated heritage assets that are relevant in considering the proposed development are identified below:
- No. 4 Cross Street

<u>OWNER</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Mr. M. Green	SEPT. 2021
<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>SCOPE</u>
PROPOSED GARAGE AND STORE AT 1 ASHLEY COURT, HOLT, WREXHAM, LL13 9JZ	1.75 AT A1 1.50 AT A1
<u>DRAWING</u>	<u>DATE DRAWING</u>
PROPOSED PLANS & ELEVATIONS	2021/AC101
<u>DESIGNED</u>	

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Fig 2. Street scene

3.0 Historical context and heritage assets

- 3.1. Holt is a rural village with archaeological and historical significance dating from the Early Bronze Age and Roman period.
- 3.2 The medieval grid iron street pattern, castle and Church of St Chad are tangible evidence of construction dating from the period of Edward I. The impressive bridge between Farndon in England and Holt in Wales dates from 1345. Streets retained from that period include Cross Street and Green Street, which the application site is located on. Later visible developments of note occurred in the Middle Ages and included the rebuilding of the Church of St. Chad and the siting of the commercial core of The Cross. The Civil War of the 1640's destroyed much of the castle and some village buildings, but a slow increase in economic growth of the area followed that. Medieval burgrave plots dating from the period of Edward I, were gradually replaced.
- 3.3 In the 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries the village was still very rural. The 19th century saw the expansion of the town including the construction of a variety of public buildings. Strawberry picking played a key part in the late 19th and early 20th century. Whilst vernacular 17th century farmhouses and cottages and Georgian buildings are evident and contribute strongly to the character of the conservation area, Victorian buildings are perhaps the most dominant in terms of architectural interest.
- 3.4 Several developments occurred in the middle of the 20th century, demonstrating the expansion of Holt as a commuter village, assisted by the nearby by-pass. These included Dee Park estate in 1949, Laburnham Way, Ashley Court, Smithfield Drive, Fairview, the toilets and car park in the 1970's. Bridge Court was developed in the 1980's, and in the 1990's a number of other developments occurred. This included Vicarage Court, Francis Lane, Castle Court, Cherry Orchard, The Pinfold and Whitegate Fields. In the 2000's Castle Fields and Millfield were built. Ashley Court, Bridge Court, Fairview, The Pinfold, Vicarage Court are in the conservation area, because of location rather than design.

4.0 The significance of the heritage assets

4.1 **Assessing significance** is embedded in national planning policy. Heritage values that contribute to a greater understanding of significance are identified by Cadw's Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales (2011) as being: -

- Evidential
- Historical
- Aesthetic
- Communal

4.2 There are six commonly accepted levels of significance. These are as follows: -

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| • Outstanding | Highest level of importance, SAMs, WHS, Grade I and II* listed buildings and Historic Parks and Gardens |
| • High (significant) | Grade II listed buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens and conservation areas |
| • Medium (moderate) | Locally listed buildings, and those buildings that contribute to a listed building's setting |
| • Low (limited) | Limited heritage value |
| • Neutral | Neither positive nor negative features |
| • No significance | Features that detract from the heritage values |

4.3 Holt conservation area has been divided in to 4 sub areas. They vary somewhat in terms of significance, depending on the level of surviving historic and architectural interest. Green Street and Cross Street, to which this application relates is an historic street, but buildings for the most part are modern, as demonstrated by No. 1 Ashley Court, a 1970's detached property in its own grounds, a simple rectangular two storey brick building with an attached garage. Of note is its brick boundary and high hedge, which contributes to the sense of enclosure to Cross Street. It has no heritage significance.

4.4 Heritage Values - Holt Conservation Area

Evidential Value – High	The village has a history of use that has evolved over time, as evidenced in archival and archaeological records. This includes historic use, including the shape and boundaries, which are well preserved. Its northern boundary, also the Welsh / English border, is the River Dee. The river, banks and bridge have an important spatial and geological relationship between the village that is fundamental to its special character. The bridge is a critically important and symbolic gateway from Wales into England and is of national historic and architectural importance in both countries.	Overall significance High  
Historical Value – High <i>(Special Historic Interest)</i>	Holt is unique with its historic settlement pattern, landform, landscape, distinctive geology, topography, and river setting, contributing strongly to its sense of place. The topography and geology contribute to a strong defensive character, which is relevant when acknowledging the border location of the village, the historical conquest of Edward I in Holt, and the Civil War in the 17th century. The conservation area retains many authentic structures that contribute to its wider setting in the landscape. It has been designated as a conservation area for nearly 40 years and has special historic interest.	
Aesthetic Value – High <i>(Special Architectural Interest)</i>	The townscape and urban form vary somewhat in the conservation area, reflecting the different age and style of properties within it. The area has developed organically, with a grid iron street form and a strong plot boundary, with varying spatial characteristics and grain. The built-up area has a strong and varied architectural palate. Its townscape quality is generally high. Vernacular, Georgian, and Edwardian development front pre-existing streets, although there exist a surprising number of modern infill developments within the historic area. Development is domestic in scale and generally two storeys. The historic tower of St Chad's church is not a dominant feature from within the village, despite its height, but has several important views to it. Georgian properties are restrained, classically composed and vertical in emphasis. The brickwork is typically Flemish bond, with slate roofs and brick chimneys. Victorian buildings typically have some architectural embellishment, creating rhythm, variety, and interest in the form of bays, horizontal windows, and strong entrances. Private gardens are a very important feature of the conservation area in terms of the area's spatial quality. The interrelationship and quality with the public realm are more pronounced where there are gardens with red sandstone or brick boundaries that continue a building or street line and in the local sandstone. High hedgerows and trees lining boundaries also contribute to the sense of place.	
Communal Value - medium	It has local interest for the wider community in which it serves.	

4.5 Heritage Values - Green Street and Cross Street

Evidential Value - high	The street is part of the grid iron street pattern first laid down by Edward I, as evidenced by its parallel layout with Bridge Street. It is identified in historic cartographic mapping sources, including Evans's maps sources of the late 1700's. archival and map sources.	Overall significance Medium 
Historical Value – medium	The layout of the street is highly significant for its historical grid iron street pattern associated with Edward I. However, the buildings upon it are mostly mid to late 20 th century and of no historical significance.	
Aesthetic Value - low	The architecture on the street are mundane examples of the mid to late 20 th century, with little reference to the historic built form of the 17 th – 19 th century that contribute to the character of the conservation area. The plot boundaries are well established, and the back of pavement line is generally consistent. The built form, massing, and projections, are varied, adding to an interesting and varied building line. Trees add to the special interest.	
Communal Value - medium	It has local interest for the wider community in which it serves.	

4.6 Heritage Values - Ashley Court

Evidential Value - medium	The cul-de-sac, and the application site are evidenced via planning records and mapping sources.	Overall significance Low 
Historical Value – low	Built in the early 1970's as a cul-de-sac.	
Aesthetic Value - low <i>(Special Architectural Interest)</i>	Modern housing with integral garaging of brick with concrete tile roof, with a street pattern that is alien to the historic street pattern. Brick boundary and strong enclosure of the boundary by hedgerow.	
Communal Value - low	The buildings are in private ownership	

4.7 Key Points of Significance relevant to the site:

- The relationship and context of the building to the medieval street.
- Its strong plot boundary that contributes to the street scene and creates enclosure to the plot.

5.0 Relevant Conservation Planning Policy and Guidance

- 5.1 Section 72 of the **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990** states, in the exercising of planning functions in conservation areas special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, when assessing planning applications.
- 5.2 The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 enables Welsh authorities to give more effective protection to the historic environment by further improve procedures for its sustainable management and to provide further transparency on decision making. This is read in conjunction with Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment.
- 5.3 National guidance is within Planning Policy Wales (edition 10, 2018): Chapter 6: The Historic Environment. The introduction states in 6.1.5 “The planning system must take into account the Welsh Government’s objectives to protect, conserve, promote and enhance the historic environment as a resource for the general well-being of present and future generations.” Chapter 2 has further information on placemaking and character.
- 5.4 Under 6.1.6 “The Welsh Government’s specific objectives for the historic environment relevant to this context is to seek to conserve archaeological remains, both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure, and the economy; safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved; preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas, whilst the same time helping them remain vibrant and prosperous.
- 5.5 Wales Technical Advice Note 24: Historic Environment, (October 2017), Section 7 states in 1.7 that “In policy terms, the historic environment is defined as 6: “All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and deliberately planted or managed.” A historic asset is: “An identifiable component of the historic environment. It may consist or be a combination of an archaeological site, a historic building or area, historic park and garden or a parcel of historic landscape. Nationally important historic assets will normally be designated.”
- 5.6 Setting is quantified in 1.25 which states that “The setting of an historic asset includes the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced, and appreciated embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral. 24 Setting is not a historic asset in its own right but has value derived from how different elements may contribute to the significance of a historic asset”.”. Other relevant guidance is contained in the ‘Setting of Historic Assets in Wales, Cadw (May 2017) and ‘Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales, Cadw (May 2017).
- 5.7 Relevant local plan policies are in the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996 - 2011 (adopted 2005). Policy EC7 is relevant. Holt Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan are also relevant.

6.0 Impact of The Development Proposal on The Heritage Assets

- 6.1 The proposals pertinent to the conservation area and this report relates to the erection of a garage and domestic storage room with new access gate and posts at No. 1 Ashley Court, Holt.
- 6.2 The proposal includes the follows: -
- A single storey garage, located to the front of the plot using materials to match the house.
 - An 1800mm high sliding timber gate.
 - New brick pillars 2100mm high to match the brickwork to the existing wall.
- 6.3 The policy to which this relates – EC7 states that “within, and in close proximity to, conservation areas, the priority will be to preserve and/ or enhance those buildings, structures, streets, trees, open spaces, archaeological remains, views, and other elements which contribute to the unique character of the area. New buildings and alterations or additions to existing buildings in conservation areas, whether listed as of special architectural or historic interest or not, must reflect the design and character of the area as a whole and the form, scale, detailing and materials of existing buildings.”
- 6.4 It has been demonstrated that Holt Conservation Area has high significance. Green Street and Cross Street has medium significance because of its context as part of the medieval grid iron street pattern and not because of high aesthetic value, as most buildings are mid 20th century onwards in character. Ashley Court has no significance and does not contribute to the character of the conservation area. The building to which the application relates, No. 1 Ashley Court, forms a homogenous group with the other buildings on Ashley Court, although its frontage faces Cross Street.
- 6.5 **Design** - The proposed garage and storage room is a T shaped single storey building, built at the front of the plot. Its height, massing and scale is modest and in keeping with the plot and associated house. It is tucked into the corner of the plot, close to the public toilet block with the ridge line of the building running parallel with Green Street. This is the same as the principal roof of the host building. The appearance of the building is given articulation, depth, and shadow by the introduction of garage doors, which face side on to Green Street. The garage doors are the same design as others in Ashley Court. The plot has been maximised to provide as much associated ancillary accommodation as possible, but it still retains the spatial

characteristics and form that is within the immediate and wider vicinity. The scale of this is seen in the context of neighbouring properties and will not be over dominant or prominent in this setting.

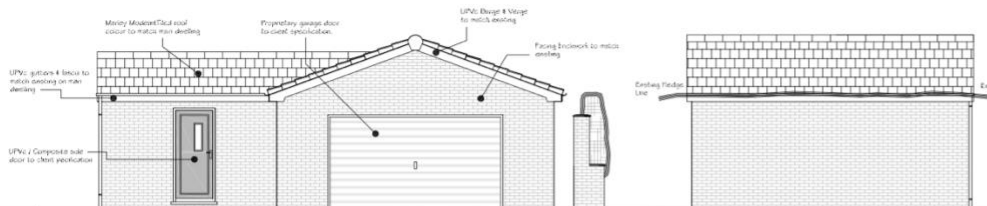
- 6.6 The building **materials** to the garage comprise a grey tile roof and walls of red brick. Brick pillars match the wall surrounding the plot. The garage doors are to be specified.
- 6.7 **Façade treatment** - The façade to Green Street is viewed at much closer range than the façade to Cross Street, which will be seen at a distance. The continuous façade to Green Street is deliberately simple in form. It is close to the frontage and its form is not dissimilar to the nearby building of local interest – No. 4 Cross Street. This is combined with existing landscaping to blend the development into the site.
- 6.8 **Solid to void ratio** - The proportion of solid to void is high, with the building for the most part solid, with little in the way of voids, consisted with a garage or historic outbuilding.
- 6.9 **Detailing** - The detailing to the building is simple, with little ornamentation. The brick pillars and gate will reinforce the building line of the property and its relationship to Green Street and is a positive development that will reinforce the strong enclosure of the plot.
- 6.10 **The impact on the wider setting** - The setting of No. 1 Ashely Court relates to the surroundings in which it is experienced. In this context, the setting relates to modern planned suburban development, which is created by two storey buildings, built in the most part in the mid 20th century onward. Whilst No. 4 Cross Street is of some historic interest, this is the exception rather than the rule to Cross and Green Street, and the development does not impact upon the way in which that is seen or experienced. The proposed development at No. 1 Ashley Court is not prominent or intrusive, and the effect on the wider setting is limited to the immediate surroundings. The scale of development is in context to adjacent buildings and will preserve this part of the conservation area's character and appearance, as it reflects the design and character of the area as a whole and the form, scale, detailing and materials of existing buildings. The setting is preserved, and the development is in accordance with Policy EC7 –Conservation Areas.

6.11 Summary of impacts on the heritage values and planning policy

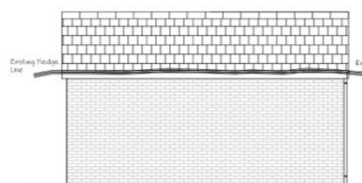
- Evidential - The layout of the heritage assets has not changed. The proposed changes are reflective of the existing character and appearance of No. 1 Ashley Court, and to the wider modern development context of this sub area. The setting and views of the heritage assets has changed marginally but not in a way that is negative.
- Historical - The historical significance of the heritage assets can still be appreciated.
- Aesthetic – The garage proposal is neutral and preserve the character of the conservation area. The solid gateway and brick pillars enhance the character of the conservation area, strengthening the enclosure to the plot, which recognised as a positive feature of the conservation area.
- Communal – None.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The application site forms part of a modern housing development of the 1970's, Ashley Court, which does not contribute to the character or significance of Holt conservation area. It fronts Green Street, which has medium significance because of its context as part of the medieval grid iron street pattern and not because of high aesthetic value.
- 7.2 The proposed development overall will create a strong plot boundary, along with existing features to be retained – the high hedge and boundary wall, that contribute to the enclosure of the plot. This strong and consistent street boundary and varied building line is consistent with the surrounding buildings. It will not detract from the wider village character or that of this character sub area.
- 7.3 The proposed development would preserve the character and appearance of conservation area, and its special architectural and historic interest. The impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the conservation area is neutral and in accordance with Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 7.4 The proposed development would be visible to some degree in sequential views from Cross Street to Green Street. Its impact would be minor in terms of the ability to appreciate the character and appearance of Cross and Green Street and its associated structures.
- 7.5 The proposed development is not prominent or intrusive, and the effect on the wider setting is limited to the immediate surroundings. The scale of development is in context to adjacent buildings and will preserve this part of the conservation area's character and appearance, as it reflects the design and character of the area as a whole and the form, scale, detailing and materials of existing buildings. The development is in accordance with Policy EC7 –Conservation Areas. It would not cause harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage assets.
- 7.6 The application should respectfully be supported.



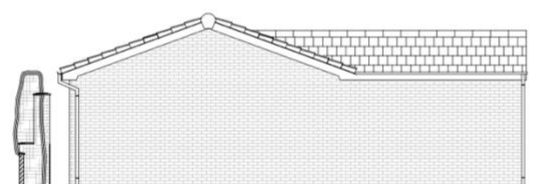
PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION



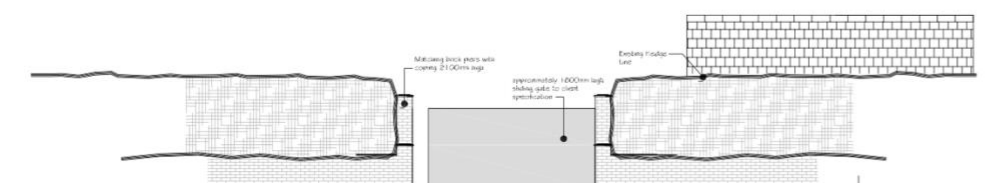
PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION



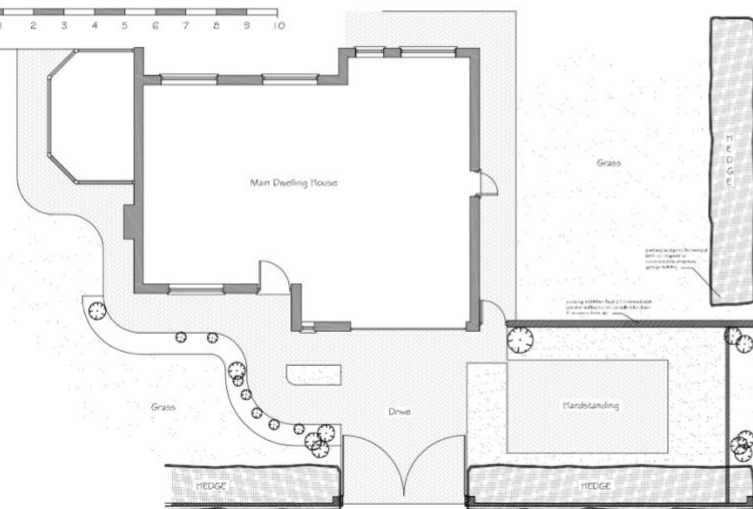
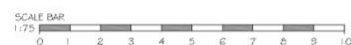
PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION



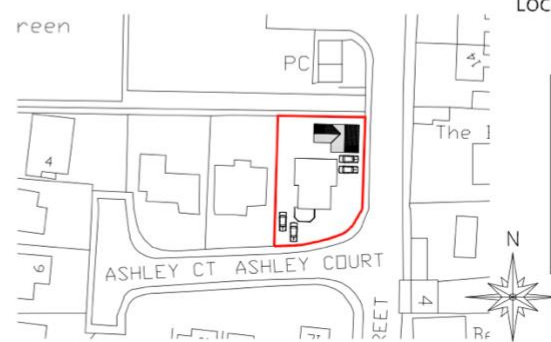
PROPOSED FRONT GATE AND POSTS ELEVATION OFF CROSS STREET 1:50 AT A1



EXISTING LAYOUT

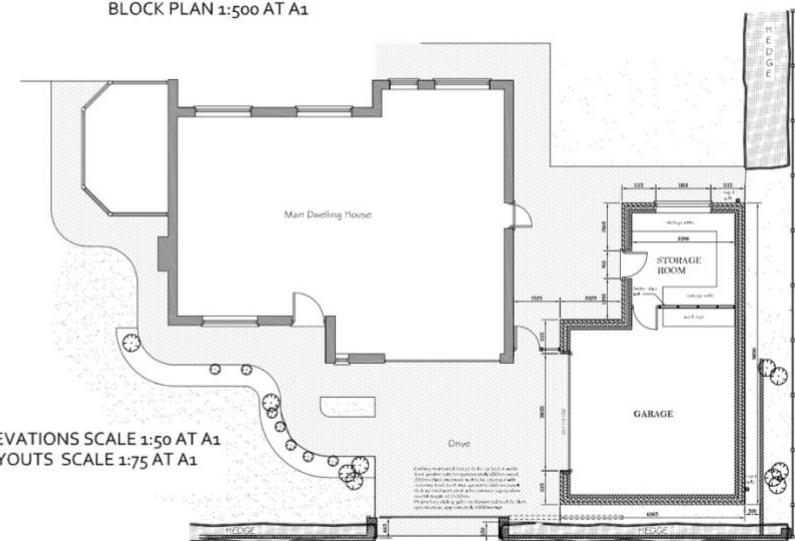


LOCATION PLAN 1:2500 AT A1



BLOCK PLAN 1:500 AT A1

NAME	REV
Mr. M. Green	SEPT. 2021
PROJECT	DATE
PROPOSED GARAGE AND STORE AT 1 ASHLEY COURT, HOLT, WREXHAM LL139JZ	1.75 AT A1 1.50 AT A1
OWNER	END. DATE
PROPOSED PLANS & ELEVATIONS	2021/AC01
REMARKS	



ELEVATIONS SCALE 1:50 AT A1
LAYOUTS SCALE 1:75 AT A1

PROPOSED LAYOUT