CHAIN BANK, CHIRK WREXHAM



DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
FOR GARAGE RETROSPECTIVE PLANNING APPLICATION INCLUDING HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

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Anne Netherwood B.Arch BD
11 Cottage Fields
St Martins
Oswestry
Shropshire SY11 3EJ
01691 778495

I. INTRODUCTION

This document is produced in support of an application for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for the garage which has been built in the north-west corner of the garden. The existing house is an Arts and Crafts design situated within the Chirk Conservation Area, and subject to an Article 4(2) Direction. It is also within the buffer zone of the Pontycyllte Aqueduct, part of the Llangollen Canal World Heritage Site. The ground within the property boundary slopes steeply down to the south, Outside the boundary on the west side there is a public footpath leading to the Chirk Aqueduct which is in constant use by visitors to the Heritage Site.

2. OBJECTIVE

[redacted] and was in consultation with the then Conservation Officer, Ms Kathryn Moore over the alterations required. The deck and garage received Planning Permission and Conservation Area Consent in 2022 (CHI P/2022/0038) and are now completed. However, although the garage has been built with all dimensions according to the permission received in 2023, it includes features that were not included in the original application, and therefore a new application is required.

3. DESIGN

Mr Richards constructed the building himself, and in the process realised that it would be very dark inside, and so he included windows on the east side (facing the house) and on the south side. These windows do not overlook any adjoining properties. Because the glass panels in the balustrading around the deck on the south of the house mist up in cold weather, he decided to use a different design on the terrace at the back of the garage, and has built brick piers which are intended to support metal railings. All the brick used in the construction matches the brick in the house. The original design for the north face of the garage showed timber boarding on the gable above the door opening. This would have matched the boarding on the outbuildings to the east of the house. However, Mr Richards thought it would look better with render to match the rest of the garage (and the house) which is what he has built.

The pergola has been partly erected above the terrace to the south of the garage which is over the workshop below. This was intended to be a support for climbing plants, particularly roses, [redacted] on the deck to the south of the house. Having erected the timber pillars, Mr Richards thought it would be good to put a lightweight roof covering over, so that he could use the terrace in wet weather. He is open to discussion with regards to the pergola.

The final difference from the agreed drawings is the proposed door to the garage and two doors to the workshop. These are needed for security. The doors are of German manufacture and are of a very high quality. The colour of all the doors and windows in the garage will match the agreed colour of the house windows.

4. SITE

As noted on the Design and Access Statement for the planning application for the Summerhouse (reference P/2025/0366), the garden to the south was very overgrown, with self-seeded trees competing with some planted mature species. Mr Richards has been in discussion with the Llangollen Canal Trust in relation to thinning the trees on both sides of his boundary – something that the Trust will welcome. There is a separate planning application relating to the removal and management of trees within the garden, discussed with the Wrexham Council Arboriculture Officer, Jon Brewin (reference P/2022/0055) and granted on 9th March 2022. Two leylandii trees have already been felled (see below) but the spruce which Mr Richards had intended to keep was blown down in the January 2025 gale.





The existing western boundary of the site is mainly scrub, and is not in good condition. Approximately 70m of new beech hedge is already planned to be planted along the western boundary, by the garage, replacing the existing scrub. The lower part of the boundary will be a mixture of native trees such as hazel, hawthorn and hornbeam. It will be kept to a height of 2 metres, high enough to give some screening from the Pontcysyllte site, but not so high as to be unmanageable. When the new hedges have grown they will help to screen the garage building to minimise its visual impact on the World Heritage Site.





Because of the changes in level on the east side of the garage, Mr Richards has constructed a retaining wall. This is shown on the site plan included with this application. The site plan will also be submitted separately in order to discharge the planning condition, but we would prefer to submit the application for discharge after the present application has been determined.

5. HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

5.1 Pontycyllte World Heritage Site

As noted on the previous D and A statements, a photograph taken soon after the house was built shows the open view to the aqueduct, now a World Heritage Site. The aqueduct, viaduct and tunnel are all Grade II* listed and are a major tourist attraction, reached from Castle Road by a footpath along the outside of the western boundary to Chirk Bank. The house itself was oriented to maximise the view of the aqueduct and viaduct, as shown in an early photograph of the garden viewed from the house. The house would have been clearly visible from the aqueduct, and the path at that time, but since then both the garden trees and the trees bordering the path have matured, and the house cannot now be seen at all from the aqueduct and very little from the path. The proposed thinning of some of the trees will allow glimpses from the house. The south elevation of the house is not currently visible from the World Heritage Site nor from the path leading to it from Castle Road, and will not be visible even when the garden trees are thinned. The pergola will not be visible from the canal towpath and will not have any significant impact on visitors' enjoyment of the canal and aqueduct.

5.2 Chirk Conservation Area

Chain Bank is specifically mentioned in the adopted Chirk Conservation Area Assessment (p.16)

> "2.24 Bryn Coed and Chain Bank on Castle Road, Chirk Council Offices on Holyhead Road and Whitewalls on Station Road are all excellent, early 20th Century examples of differing revival styles of architecture within the Conservation Area…. Bryn Coed was built in 1912 by Shayler and Ridge for A. Wood, a manager at Brynkinallt Colliery in the Restoration revival style and is notable for its symmetrical composition and detailing. Whitewalls and Chain Bank are of later date and have been designed in a vernacular revival style reminiscent of the Arts and Crafts Movement of the late 19th Century. Their carefully considered detailing and fenestration make them particularly distinctive within the Conservation Area."
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> 4.56 To the west of the public footpath leading to the canal is Chain Bank, another early 20th Century property of Arts and Crafts style. The building, set at the top of the northern slope of the Ceiriog Valley, is of high architectural value to the Conservation Area, retaining much of its original character and having group value with the other Arts and Crafts influenced buildings of Whitewalls, Ty Ririd and Glyn Wylfa. Of particular note are the original leaded windows, elegant bowed window to the western elevation, tall, brick chimney stacks and sprocketed, Westmorland slate roof. The garden of the property, which follows the steep slope of the valley, also contains some fine trees including a copper beech which adds variety of colour to wider views during the summer months."

As noted in the DA statement for the summerhouse application, we have followed the advice from the Planning Officer and Jon Brewin to minimise any impact on the copper beech tree.

6. PHOTOGRAPHS



Photograph of the aqueduct and viaduct from the house, c.1930





Views from the aqueduct and path, 1/2/22. Adjoining modern properties are visible, but Chain Bank is completely hidden behind the trees



South elevation of garage and workshop



East elevation of garage



Retaining wall to east of workshop



Southern end of retaining wall seen from workshop access drive



Block surround to steel supporting column



Retaining wall seen from garden



Garage terrace and retaining wall in relation to house