

Design Statement

Proposed Replacement Garage/Store with Oak-Framed Garage and Home Office

Down House, Wyllye, Wiltshire, BA12 0QN (Grade II Listed)

1. Introduction

This Design Statement accompanies a planning and listed building consent application for the replacement of an existing garage and store at Down House, Wyllye, Wiltshire, a Grade II listed dwelling. The proposal is for a new oak-framed garage with integrated store and home office, positioned in a similar location to the existing structure but relocated approximately 1.5 metres away from the boundary wall to facilitate ongoing maintenance of the wall and improve long-term site management.

The aim of the proposal is to provide improved functional accommodation while respecting the character, appearance and setting of the listed building and the wider village context.

2. Site and Context

Down House is a traditional rural dwelling within the village of Wyllye, characterised by historic buildings, boundary walls and ancillary outbuildings typical of Wiltshire villages. The existing garage and store are modest ancillary structures located to the side/rear of the main house and are clearly subordinate to the principal building.

The surrounding area contains a mix of traditional materials including timber, brick, stone and muted roof finishes, with outbuildings commonly simple in form and agricultural in character.

3. Proposed Development

The proposal is to replace the existing garage and store with a new oak-framed garage building incorporating storage and a small home office. The new building will remain in broadly the same area of the site but will be repositioned approximately 1.5 metres away from the boundary wall. This adjustment will allow proper access for inspection and maintenance of the wall, reducing the risk of long-term deterioration and avoiding future interventions that could affect the historic fabric.

The scale and massing of the proposed building will remain modest and clearly secondary to the main house, ensuring that it does not compete visually with the listed dwelling.

4. Design Approach and Form

The design adopts a simple, traditional outbuilding form, reflecting the character of rural ancillary structures commonly found within Wiltshire villages. The oak frame provides a traditional structural method appropriate to historic settings and reinforces the visual connection to local vernacular building traditions.

The building is deliberately uncomplicated in its form, with a straightforward roof profile and simple elevations, ensuring that it reads as a functional outbuilding rather than a domestic extension to the main house.

5. Materials and Appearance

Materials have been carefully selected to complement both the listed building and the wider historic setting:

Roof: Black corrugated steel sheeting, providing a durable, low-maintenance finish with a restrained, agricultural character appropriate for an outbuilding.

Walls: Larch feather-edged boarding, which will weather naturally over time to a muted silver-grey, helping the building to blend into its rural surroundings.

Doors and Windows: Stained softwood, chosen to provide a traditional appearance while remaining clearly subordinate to the main house in terms of detailing and finish.

Structure: Exposed oak frame, reflecting traditional construction methods and adding visual interest without appearing ornate or domestic in style.

These materials are intended to be honest, robust and appropriate for a secondary building within the curtilage of a listed property.

6. Impact on the Listed Building and Setting

The proposal has been designed to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of Down House and its setting. The replacement building will remain ancillary in scale, sit comfortably within the established pattern of development on the site, and will not interrupt key views of the listed house.

Relocating the building slightly away from the boundary wall is considered beneficial, as it allows for the proper upkeep of historic site features and avoids potential damage caused by restricted access.

The choice of traditional materials, simple form and rural character ensures that the new building will sit quietly within the site and will not detract from the significance of the listed dwelling.

7. Sustainability and Longevity

The use of an oak frame and larch cladding provides a long-lasting and sustainable construction approach, with materials that age gracefully and require minimal chemical treatment. The black steel roof offers durability and reduces long-term maintenance requirements.

Providing a home office within the outbuilding supports flexible working and reduces the need for travel, contributing modestly to sustainability objectives.

8. Conclusion

The proposed replacement garage, store and home office has been carefully designed to respect the character and setting of the Grade II listed Down House. By retaining a similar location, maintaining a modest scale, and using appropriate traditional materials, the proposal preserves the significance of the heritage asset while improving functionality and long-term site maintenance.

Overall, the development is considered to be a sensitive and appropriate enhancement to the site, fully in keeping with local character and national and local heritage policy objectives.