

**DESIGN + ACCESS STATEMENT**  
Full Application

**PROJECT:** Replacement Dwelling  
Pipistrelles, Holewell Lane, Cheriton Bishop. EX6 6HW

**CLIENT:** Mr Jeffery + Ms Wells

**DATE:** 09 October 2022

## **ASSESSMENT**

Pipistrelles is a detached single-storey property located in the countryside between Holewell Lane to the north and the A30 to the south. The existing hedge line to the north has a number of ash trees which unfortunately have ash dieback and so are being removed. To the south of the dwelling is a small paddock owned by the property which was used to graze horses and as a result there are several stable buildings east of the property. Between the house and the paddock is a single-storey garage / workshop structure. The residential plot tapers to the west where the existing access to Holewell Lane is located. The access itself enters the highway through what appears to be a lay-by providing sufficient visibility in both directions. There are also several sheds and other outbuildings scattered across the site including two large greenhouses.

The dwelling itself is sub-standard in its construction and has potentially reached the end of its expected lifespan. It has a concrete tiled roof and walls generally of painted render with sections of clay tile hanging and timber cladding. The garage / workshop has similar external finishes while the stable buildings have profiled roofs and timber clad walls. In terms of appearance, the existing dwelling is not considered to be of any historic or architectural merit.

A preapplication was submitted to enquire if Mid-Devon would support the replacement of the existing dwelling with a new house and attached annexe. This would provide a specific dwelling for the applicants, their immediate family and the grandparents of their children. It would also allow the existing sub-standard dwelling to be replaced with one that would not only go above and beyond the current building regulations it would substantially reduce its carbon footprint for future generations to assist with the current climate crisis and the depletion of the ozone layer. At the same time, a new dwelling gives the potential to enhance the character, appearance and biodiversity of the countryside setting while promoting sustainable diversification of the rural community.

The formal preapplication response dated 14 December 2021 was supportive of the proposal to include an increase in scale to two-storey. It was confirmed that a replacement dwelling could potentially be an enhancement to the setting visually and a vast improvement to the existing property in terms of the sustainability aspect and the carbon footprint by a reduction in the reliance on nonrenewable resources. In terms of the provision of an annexe, it was highlighted in the response that this would only be supported if it was an extension to the host dwelling.

## LAYOUT

The proposed main dwelling will be for the applicants and their two children while the annexe will be for the grandparents one of whom is suffering from 'long covid' and needs support with day-to-day activities which her daughter provides.

The concept is for the main dwelling to run parallel with the highway, Holewell Lane to provide an attractive and positive street frontage with the adjoining annexe parallel with this to the south. To retain a level of privacy between the two, a shared entrance / hallway separates them. By positioning the accommodation in this way, it allows both properties to maximise the views over the paddock and maximise a south aspect for natural solar gains. At the same time this forms an L-shape building that wraps around and naturally screens the private rear amenity space that both the house and annexe look out over.

The new dwelling has then been positioned directly over the existing property it replaces. The existing garage / workshop will be retained, and this forms a courtyard setting at the rear with the new replacement dwelling which also naturally screens the private rear garden. A new post and rail fence will separate the rear garden from the area of land used for stabling while the other outbuildings and sheds will all be removed to visually improve the setting while bringing order to the layout.

The proposals utilise the existing entrance onto the highway in the west boundary and this not only provides access to the garage / workshop it also provides a parking and turning area immediately adjacent to the main entrance. The turning area will ensure all vehicles enter and leave the highway in a forward direction. As shown on the submitted drawings, the existing hedges and trees will all be retained apart from those with ash dieback.

In terms of the house layout, as discussed previously, the main dwelling lies to the north and the annexe to the south divided by a shared entrance / hallway which terminates with a shared utility / boot room at the back of the property leading into the rear garden. The annexe has a living room and guest bedroom / study with its own bathroom on the ground floor with the main bedroom being on the first floor with just a WC facility.

The main property has a living room to the west and a large family room to the east to cater for both the house and the annexe. The two main spaces are separated by a study and an inner hallway for a WC and the stairs to the first floor. Above this are four en suite bedrooms for the applicants and their children as well as a spare room for guests. Solar shading has been provided to the main courtyard windows and these also combine as walkways to a small central terraced area directly above the utility space. By setting the spaces out in this way it allows both groups to share the main garden as well as other internal spaces but, at the same time, it also provides small garden areas and their own living rooms where they can retain some privacy when they need it.

## **SCALE**

The main dwelling has been designed as a two-storey structure while the annexe is one and a half storeys with the first floor being partly within the roof space. The shared entrance hallway that joins the two structures is single storey. By splitting the house into several smaller structures not only reduces the visual scale of the overall dwelling it also creates a traditional rural setting of a cluster of buildings set out in a courtyard formation. The overall appearance is that of a house and adjacent barn with a light link between them. At the same time the design then gently steps the scale down into the rural landscape across the width of the site from a two-storey structure adjacent to the highway to the single-storey garage / workshop.

By utilising a number of smaller forms, it retains a traditional narrow gable which in turn keeps the overall ridge height to a respectful scale. Houses and combined annexes can create large masses on rural sites but the staggered form of the two blocks with the low-level connection retains a sympathetic scale to the rural context of the site. The annexe will appear as a subservient element to the host dwelling. The design of the facades has also been carefully considered so that different materials have been used to break-up the elements into smaller parts to further reduce the visual scale of the dwelling. The annexe itself maximises the three-dimensional form and space by utilising the roof space as additional accommodation further reducing the potential scale of the building.

## APPEARANCE

In terms of appearance, the design emphasises the concept of a small barn / outbuilding sitting alongside a cottage with a low-level lightweight connection between the two. The setting and positioning of the two main forms as well as their scale have been explained in detail above. The two main pitched forms have natural slate roofs. The main dwelling has been mainly clad to provide tone and texture to the elevations with a section of painted render wrapping around the ground floor from the roadside to the main entrance. By using the materials in this way it not only breaks-up the expanse of the walls but also reduces the overall scale of the facade visually. As a play against this and to emphasise its subservient nature, the annexe, like the garage / workshop, has mainly painted rendered walls but with sections of cladding to link the palate of materials back to the host dwelling.

The shared section at the rear that provides the utility, and first floor terrace will be in keeping with the monotone palate and built with black brick as an extension of the black brick plinth that runs around both structures. The annexe bedroom utilises a modern dormer to increase the floor space slightly and to maximise the long distant views to the south. The dormer is set back into the site so won't be seen from the 'street' elevation. It will be built in anthracite metal to seamlessly blend with the natural slate of the main roofs as will the bay window features, again complimenting the monotone palate of materials and in keeping with the context of the site.

Windows have been kept modest to the front street elevation to again accentuate the barn and cottage concept with the large, glazed areas kept to the rear overlooking the private amenity space to maximise solar gains and afford access to the garden. In terms of sustainability, the reduction in the buildings footprint to reduce its impact on the environment has been discussed above. To reduce the carbon footprint of the building and to assist its autonomy, photovoltaic panels are proposed, and these have been carefully positioned on the south side of the north structure, so they sit hidden in the 'valley' between the two forms. There are no adjacent neighbouring properties or amenity spaces, so the dwelling won't affect privacy or cause any overbearing affects.

## **LANDSCAPING**

The proposals will not affect the existing landscaping inside or outside of the site. The existing boundary conditions will remain unaltered with the only new addition being a post and rail fence to the east boundary to separate the garden from the stabling area. All of the existing boundaries have well-established hedgerows that provide sufficient screening, so no further landscaping is required. The existing access and driveway will be retained to the garage / workshop, so the only additional space required is the parking area itself. At the rear, the submitted drawings clearly show a new shared terrace area set within the newly created courtyard space and this is naturally screened from views outside of the site by both the new and existing buildings. The only other element is a garden wall that connects the parking area to the main entrance which in turn will create a small private garden space for the annexe itself off the guest bedroom / study.

## **ACCESS**

The proposals will not affect access to the existing or any adjacent property. Emergency vehicles will be able to reach the new dwelling and the proposals will not affect or encumber access facilities for anyone else. The new dwelling will have a level threshold to the main entrance together with a WC facility on the ground floor for those less able. The driveway will provide turning in curtilage to ensure all vehicles enter and leave the highway in a forward direction. The proposals utilise the existing access which has good visibility in both directions.