



DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT
FIELDHEAD, DEVON, EX14 4RX
OCTOBER 2023

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1.1 Project Facts

Applicant:	Jody Lott
Location:	Fieldhead, Luppitt, EX14 4RX
Current Land Use:	Residential dwelling.
Access:	Road access via a country lane off of Church Hill, Luppitt. Approximately 3 external off-road parking spaces, will be replaced with at least 4 off-road spaces and 1 within a new garage.
Site Area:	Approximately 1450 sq m.
Proposed Use:	Residential dwelling.

1.2 Summary of Proposal

Fieldhead is located within the small village of Luppitt, which belongs to the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, an un-spoilt rural landscape on the back of Devon and Somerset.

Fieldhead's sloped site contains one residential dwelling. The proposals are for a 2 storey replacement dwelling with a pitched roof on the existing footprint and a small extension to the east accommodating extra living spaces and a garage. Originally it was intended to extend the existing bungalow by a first floor storey to gain space for a family of 4 who moved into the area to make this house their permanent family home. However, it became apparent that the existing structure was of poor quality and not strong enough to support an additional floor. Therefore it was decided to replace the house on the existing footprint with a high quality, well insulated structure that will exceed current standards of thermal efficiency.

The site is not part of the village centre and is quite isolated and well hidden from the main road through Luppitt (Church Hill). It is screened by dense hedgerows and trees and hardly visible from various vantage points around the village. The existing house is located on the lower levels of the site and is almost invisible from the road.

There are no direct neighbours to Fieldhead and the nearest properties are all 2 storey structures. Therefore the addition of another floor will be an appropriate measure to make the house viable for a family, and the 2 storey structure will be designed in a way to ensure that it will sit quietly and harmoniously in its setting.

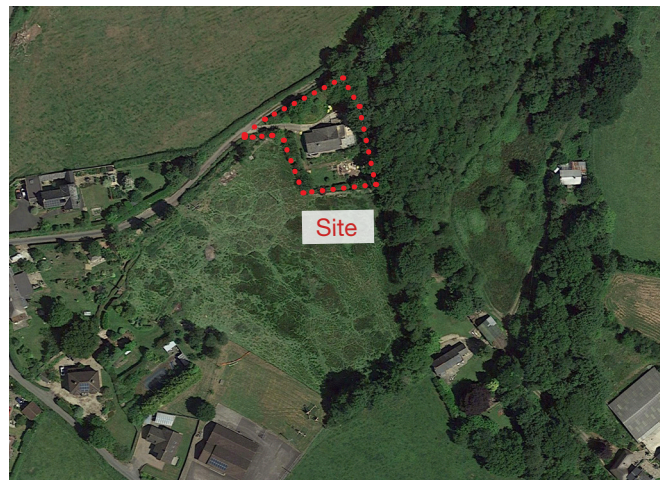
2.1 Location



Fieldhead is located near the centre of Luppitt, a village in East Devon. The area is primarily agricultural, hosting scenic countryside views.

Luppitt is approximately 6km north of Honiton, 19km south of Taunton, and 27km north East of Exeter.

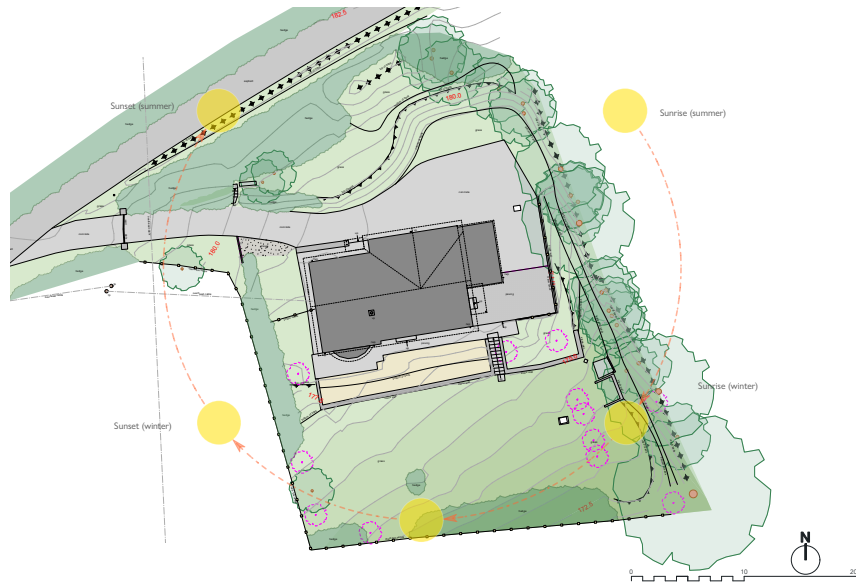
2.2 Site



The site is approximately 1450 sq m located on the slope of Church Hill in Luppitt. The site has scenic views of the countryside to the south.

The context is rural and as Fieldhead is not part of the village centre, the site and the surrounding properties are spaced out on generous plots, screened by dense vegetation and hardly visible from long distance vantage points.

The UK government website states that the site is at very low risk for surface water flooding and river and sea flooding.



2.3 Existing Site Appraisal

The site is sloping, however the existing house is built on level ground, and due to the retention of the footprint, little to no excavation will be required for the house. Part of the bank between the road and the existing driveway will be cut back to allow for an improved parking and on-site turning area.

The existing site is surrounded by vegetation. The design seeks to preserve as much of the existing planting as possible as the proposed building is located on the same footprint as the existing, trees and planting should not be affected. New planting will be proposed to compliment the existing and improve habitats for wildlife.

The existing bungalow is of no architectural merit and seems out of place in a rural setting with mostly 2-storey stone or rendered structures or large farm complexes. It is poorly built and sub-standard to current regulations in relation to thermal efficiency and structural requirements. Whilst the building is usable, it is too small in its current form to house a family with 2 children, provide space for a home-office and visiting elderly parents. The existing house is a generic, out-dated building type that can be found anywhere in the country without much relation to its immediate setting or wider rural context, the Blackdown Hills AONB.



2.4 Previous Planning Applications

There are no planning application records for Fieldhead, EX14 4RX according to East Devon District Council.

2.5 Existing Images

VIEW FROM THE NORTH WEST OF SITE



VIEW FROM THE SOUTH WEST OF SITE



VIEW FROM THE EAST OF SITE

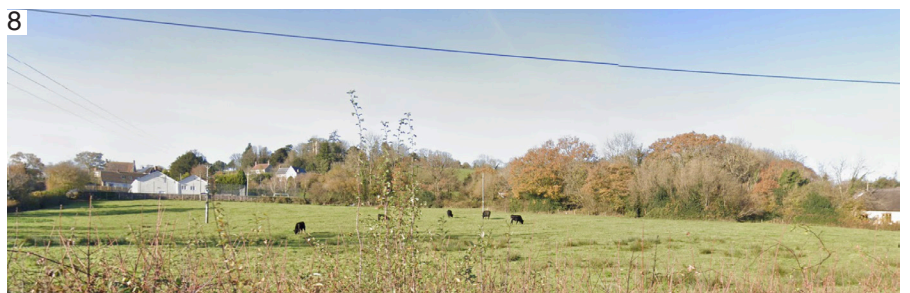
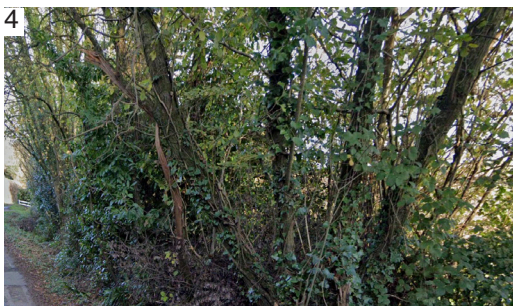


VIEW FROM THE NORTH OF SITE



2.6 Images From Around Site

The images below show the property is hardly visible from surrounding roads and long distant vantage points and screened by trees and dense vegetation.

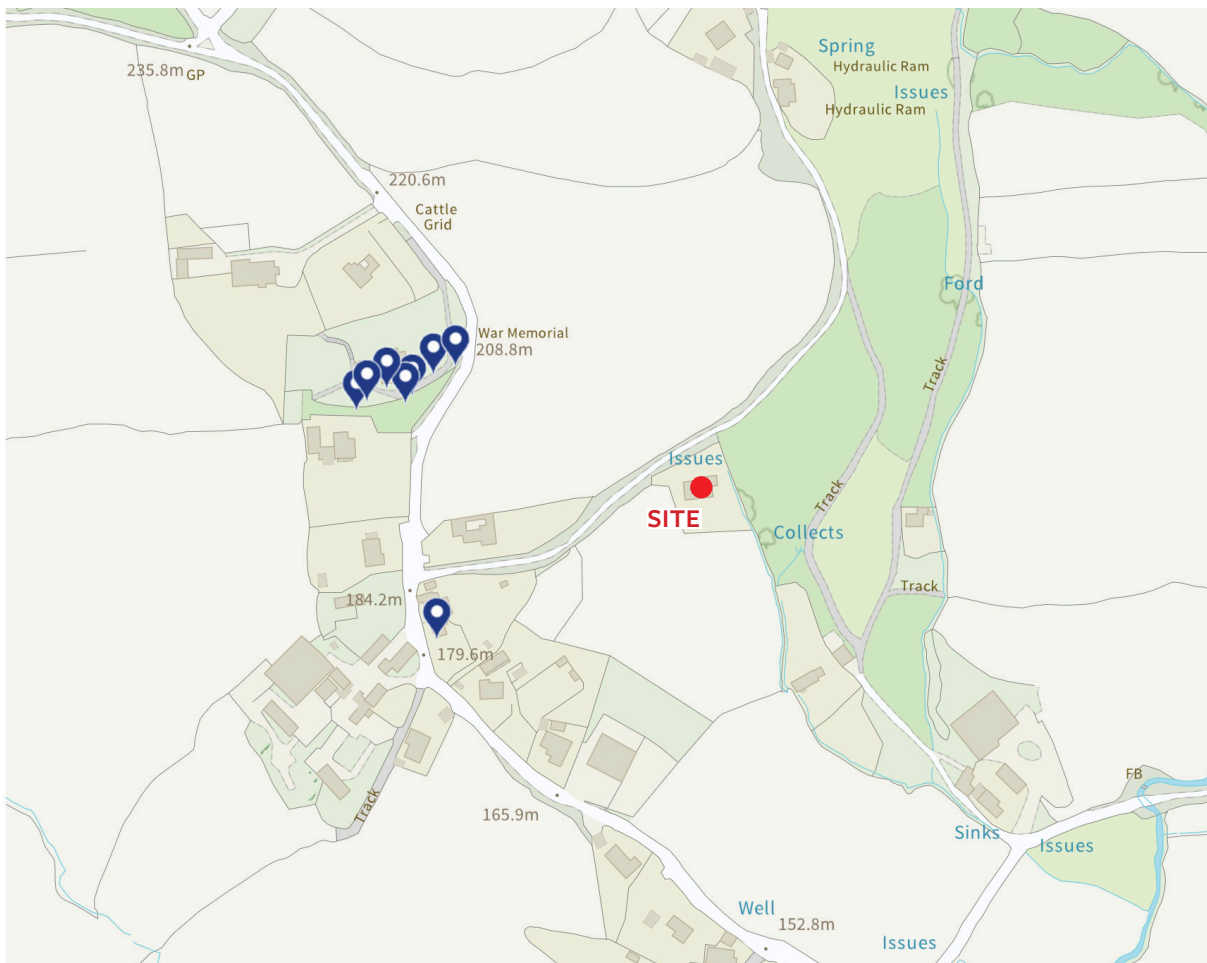


3.1 Wider Context Appraisal

The local area is part of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which is characterised by small villages in a rural setting accessed by country lanes with Devon Banks (traditional hedgerows) either side. However, Luppitt is also quite close to Honiton, which is just 6km south, and in good commuting distance to Exeter to the south west and Taunton to the north.

Most buildings in Luppitt are agricultural or historical stone buildings, some newer more contemporary rendered or timber clad buildings are also part of the village fabric.

There are no listed properties in very close proximity to be affected by the proposal. (See map attached below). The closest listed properties are located over 150m away from Fieldhead and will not be affected by the view back towards the hill.



3.2 Immediate Context Appraisal

The historic buildings in Luppitt, the church, the old post office, consist of traditional stone external walls, and the more contemporary buildings are either clad in timber or rendered.

Roofs within the area range from tiles or thatch, to corrugated metal for agricultural buildings.

The examples below show that most houses within Luppitt are two storey pitch-roofed structures, Fieldhead is the only bungalow in the village and appears out of character in this setting.

Nearby properties.



4.1 Design Criteria

New dwelling:

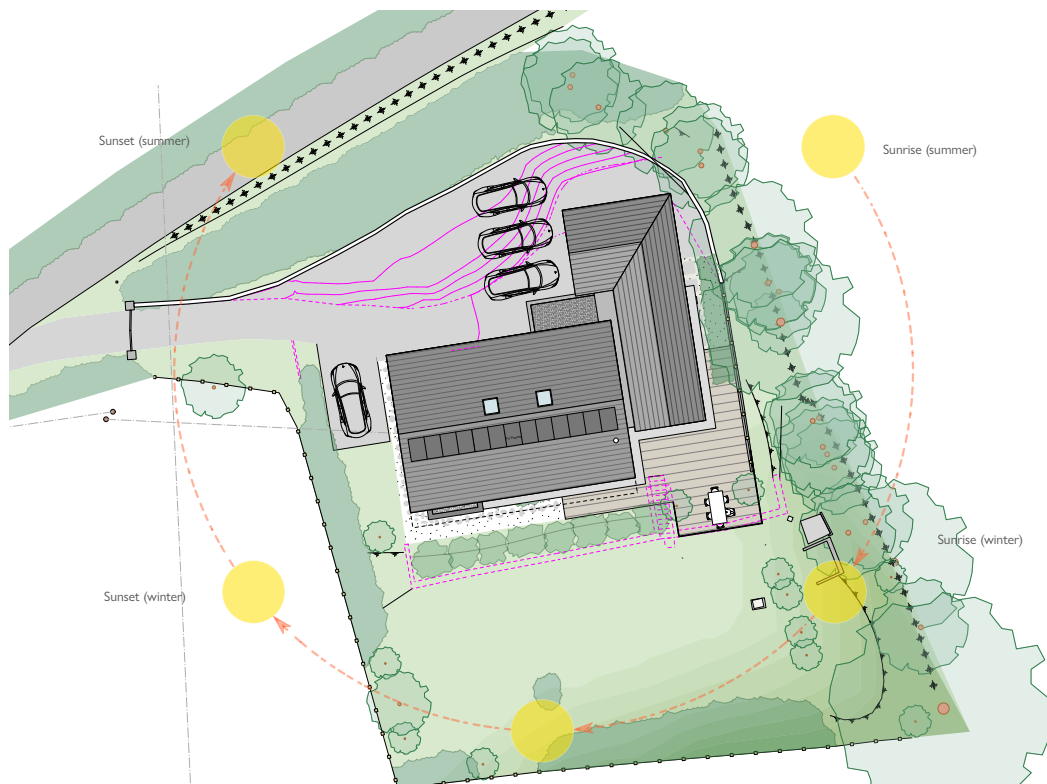
The existing dwelling is too small to accommodate the applicant's family with 2 young children and a space to work from home. Adding an additional floor is the most economical and compact solution to satisfy their needs. Re-building the existing house provides an opportunity to create a building that is not only built to the highest standards of thermal efficiency with high quality materials, but to also create a building that has a much stronger relationship to its immediate garden setting and to blend in sensitively and harmoniously with the local rural landscape.

A new sustainably built property of high quality design will raise the standard of the area more generally and could set a precedent for new development in a countryside setting.

The criteria that informed the proposal:

- Retention of Footprint
- Renovation of ground floor and addition of first floor
- Extension to the east of site
- New garage and improved on-site parking / turning areas
- Retain original access to site
- Fit within architectural style of surrounding houses through form, scale and material
- Ensure height of building is appropriate to context
- Increase buildings size to accommodate a young family with facilities to work from home.

The proposal for Fieldhead aims to respect and retain the character of its local surroundings, while encouraging progression and building for a sustainable future.



4.2 Scale and Layout

The existing footprint will be retained, maintaining the positioning of the structure and by adding an additional first floor provide the most compact and efficient solution to accommodate extra space for a family home.

As the majority of surrounding buildings are 2-storey, the new structure will blend in harmoniously and look like a timeless addition to its village setting.

The house has no immediate neighbours and the structure will be hardly visible from any surrounding vantage points due to its dense vegetation and mature tree coverage that will remain intact. Only the bank will be modified and cut back to ease access, parking and turning to the property.

The form is traditional with a pitched roof, and the detailing of the building will be clean, elegant, contemporary and robust. The footprint is broken down into a main house structure over 2 stories and a subservient extended wing to the east that is single storey and houses additional living spaces and a garage as an integrated part of the overall structure.

The lower garden will remain untouched.

4.3 Appearance

The new design will be clad in dark timber with natural timber accents and a slated pitched roof to reflect the rural style of houses in the area. The appearance (siting/design/scale/height/colour) has been carefully considered against the recommendations of the Luppitt Neighbourhood Plan :

“Also important is building design that reflects, but not necessarily replicate, the style of the typical vernacular and heritage buildings found in the parish. External building materials should be non-reflective and of colours and tones that blend harmoniously with the surroundings. Screening should be permanent and ideally comprise Devon species of trees, shrubs and hedging.” p51 Policy ND2 Luppitt Neighbourhood plan

“The parish Council will not be architecturally prescriptive in its consideration of applications for new buildings and welcomes high-quality, innovative and original design providing that it respects the distinctive character of luppitt parish and its vernacular and heritage buildings. The Parish Council will resist any application for the developments that does not integrate sympathetically with the existing landscape and the character of existing settlements or which has an adverse impact upon neighbouring properties and the landscape.” p51 Policy ND2 Luppitt Neighbourhood plan

“Replacement dwellings will only be supported if they replace an existing dwelling of little or no architectural or heritage merit with a dwelling of a scale and design compatible with the character and appearance of the surrounding area and whic in all other respects complies with the policies in this plan.” p51 Policy ND4 Luppitt Neighbourhood plan

4.4 Access

Access remains unaltered and will not affect parking in the area. By cutting back the bank, off-road parking and on-site turning areas will be improved significantly.

4.5 Use and Amount

The proposed use will be a residential dwelling to replace the existing.

	Existing Dwelling (sq m)	Proposed Dwelling (sq m)
Ground Floor	104.7	157
First Floor	-	112.8
Garage	15.9	26.85
Overall Footprint	120.6 sq m	181.35 sq m

There is an approximate gain of 60.75 sq m in footprint.

4.6 Sustainability Considerations

The building's fabric will be insulated to a very high standard to maximise its thermal performance, reducing its need for artificial heating. Natural light and solar gain will be facilitated via larger areas of south facing glazing to the principal accommodation (living areas + bedrooms). The issue of overheating has been considered and will be mitigated by a sunshading flat roof to the south facing glazing on the ground floor and roof overhangs to shade the first floor glazing. Cross ventilation will be provided by north facing roof lights that can be opened in summer to provide constant circulation of fresh air.

PV panels are proposed across the whole length below the ridge on the south facing side of the roof to reduce the property's carbon footprint. The pitch of the main house roof has been considered to optimise the efficiency of the PV panels.

There will be no increased risk of surface water flooding as levels will remain the same.

Existing trees will be retained as the footprint of the building will remain.

An air source heat pump in combination with U.F. heating powered by the electricity from the PV panels is proposed as main heating source.

External Lighting

External Lighting will be kept to a minimum and make use of timers and sensors wherever possible to preserve dark skies and minimise operating times, glare and light pollution, to contribute positively to biodiversity.

5.1 Local Policies

The Design responds to the criteria set out in the ‘Blackdown Hills AONB - Design Guide for Houses’ and the ‘Luppit Neighbourhood Plan’. These are the policies that the project addresses:

“Parish Council will take a positive stance towards retaining the younger generation in the parish whilst addressing the needs of the older generation and working towards a well-balanced community within a framework of protection for the natural environment and landscape.” p21 (Luppit NP)

“New development should be built to the highest standards of design and reflect the distinctive vernacular style of existing buildings in the parish.” p49 (Luppit NP)

“Maintain the unspoilt rural character of the parish.” p50 (Luppit NP)

Policy ND2 - Materials, Design and Sitting. p61

1. Avoidance of adverse and harmful impact upon the landscape, existing settlements and neighbouring properties.
2. High Quality Design, sympathetic to and reflecting the character of, existing vernacular and historic buildings in the parish.
3. Reflecting Rural Character in scale, mass and height of development that is sympathetic and responds to the immediate built environment and landscape and reflects the traditional rural character of the parish.
4. Siting that avoids hill tops and prominence and is sympathetic to and respects the immediate surroundings and landscape contours and does not adversely affect the local landscape character.
5. Materials and finished colours and tones that are non-reflective, locally and distinctive and used to respond positively to the immediate built environment, natural surroundings and local context.
6. External Lighting that preserves dark skies and contributes to biodiversity by keeping external lighting to the essential minimum, using down lighting and task lighting of the lowest practical wattage plus photocells, timers and sensors wherever possible to minimise operating time, glare and light pollution according to the guidance. p62
7. Screening and landscaping that minimises any adverse impact upon the landscape and surroundings permanently all year round using, wherever possible, a mix of trees, hedging, shrubs and other plant species that are indigenous to Devon.
8. Parking for cars and other vehicles is provided on-site, and screened.
9. New development to be designed to operate on a net zero carbon basis, meeting and exceeding the Government standards in relation to energy efficiency.

5.2 Foul Drainage

The proposal will connect to the existing septic tank which has been recently replaced. Rain water will discharge to soakaways.

5.3 Conclusion

The replacement dwelling to Fieldhead aims to create a sustainable, high quality building of traditional form but detailed in a contemporary manner, to sit quietly amongst the local context. The new design will accommodate a young family that moved into the area and is willing to invest into the local building stock by creating a new, durable and energy efficient home that will compliment the rural village setting in a much more harmonious and appropriate way than the bungalow that it replaces.