

**Yeo Vale Replacement Porch Extension**  
**Design and Access Statement 2024**

**Intro**

This Design and Access Statement has been Prepared by Carpenter Oak Ltd., to support a Householder Planning Application for a replacement porch extension to the applicant's home at Yeo Vale, Four Mills Lane, Crediton.

A previous application for a replacement porch was submitted in 2023 (Ref: 23/00829/HOUSE) and was refused due to concerns around the 'height, bulk, massing and design' of the proposal, against the context of the existing home and wider Conservation Area.

The design intentions of the revised proposal are set out within this statement, to demonstrate how the revised design seeks to respond to the criticisms of the previous application.

**The Existing Home and Setting**



*Photograph 1: Overview of west side of Yeo Vale*

Yeo Vale is a semidetached, early 20<sup>th</sup> Century home in the Arts and Crafts style, sitting within Crediton Conservation Area. A Heritage Impact Assessment has therefore been produced by GK Heritage to accompany this application.

Yeo Vale's primary access was formerly from Exeter Road on the east of the site. The original attractive Arts and Crafts facade therefore forms the east elevation, and is to be unaltered by this proposal.



*Photograph 2: East facing arts and crafts facade*

### West Facing Orientation

Due to the development of the Exeter Road into the A377, there is no longer access to Yeo Vale from the east, and therefore the home is now accessed from Four Mills Lane to the west.



*Photograph 3: View to Yeo Vale from Four Mills Lane*

The original west elevation was a simple rear elevation, of far less architectural interest than the east elevation, including a small lean-to toilet, accessed from outdoors.



*Photograph 4: Existing west elevation viewed when entering from pedestrian gate*



The architectural quality of the west elevation of the home has been further depleted through the addition of an informal lean-to porch, including a concrete retaining wall, polycarbonate roof and makeshift timber supports.



*Photograph 5: Existing lean-to porch structure and externally accessed W/C*

#### Existing Access and Parking Arrangements

There are two gates onto the property from Four Mills Lane; one pedestrian gate, and one vehicular gate. However, the vehicular gate is currently blocked by a timber outbuilding which dominates the garden to the west of Yeo Vale. Planning Permission was previously granted for this timber outbuilding under Planning Application Ref: 4/18/99/2042.



*Photograph 6: Existing timber outbuilding blocking vehicular gates*



Inevitably the strip of land in front of the vehicular gates is therefore often currently used for parking.



*Photograph 7: Land to the west of garden wall inevitably used for parking*

The pedestrian path leading from the entrance gate includes steps, which further reduce the accessibility of the home.



*Photograph 8: Existing steps along pedestrian access path*

## Screening

The existing garden wall to the west of the site is a characteristic feature of Four Mills Lane, and gives a good degree of screening to the property. The existing wall and gates are to be unaltered by the proposal.



*Photograph 9: Characteristic brick walling continuing to neighbouring Weaverham to the north of Yeo Vale*



*Photograph 10: Characteristic brick and stone walling continuing to neighbouring Taw Vale Terrace to the south of Yeo Vale*



## **Replacement Porch Extension Proposal**

### Project Ambition 1: Improving inclusive access and parking



*Proposed 3D View 1: Proposed view from Four Mills Lane (Gates Open)*

The first intention of the project is to demolish the existing timber outbuilding, in order to restore access to the property via the existing vehicular gates.

The topography allows level access to the dwelling through these vehicular gates, in contrast to the existing stepped access via the pedestrian gate.

Restoring the use of the vehicular gates will allow for parking within the boundaries of the garden wall when required, in addition to the existing garage.

### Project Ambition 2: Improving the architectural quality of the west elevation

As explained above, the architectural quality of the west elevation of the home is currently poor. The west elevation of the home was originally intended as a humble rear elevation, but has now become the entrance elevation. The architectural quality of the approach to the building is then further marred by the existing polycarbonate lean-to porch which is to be removed. The intention is therefore that the replacement porch will drastically improve the architectural character of the west side of the home.

### Previous Proposal (Application Ref: 23/00829/HOUSE)



*Previous Application: Proposed view to south elevation of the porch extension*

The previous proposal for the porch extension is pictured above.

The intention of this design was to be faithful to the Arts and Crafts style of the existing home which the applicants hugely appreciate and wish to conserve.

The pitch of the roof of the original proposal was therefore set at 45° to match the existing home, which inevitably added to the bulk and height of the proposal.

It's fair to say that the original design was intended to include a level of design flair, to add to the architectural character of the simple rear elevation of the building, which now serves as the entrance elevation.

### Criticisms of Previous Proposal

The previous decision notice included the following statement noting the reasons for refusal;

*'The Local Planning Authority is of the opinion that the proposed development, by reason of its height, bulk, massing, and design would fail to read as architecturally sympathetic, harming the appearance of the building and setting of the conservation area. The porch would be visible in public and private views, and would harm the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area by dominating the elevation, visually turning the property around, elevating the status of the rear of the property, and eroding the relatively industrial character of the lane through the increased encroachment of domestic features. It is considered that there are no substantial public benefits which would outweigh this harm. As such, it is contrary to Policies DM1 and DM25 of the Mid Devon Local Plan and guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework.'*

### Revised Proposal



*Proposed 3D View 2: Proposed view to south elevation of the porch extension*

In response to the criticisms of the previous proposal, the new proposal is for a contemporary extension, with a simple and restrained design, which will not seek to compete with the Arts and Crafts architecture of the original home.

The proposed flat green roof will significantly reduce the height and visual impact of the extension compared to the 45° tile roof previously proposed.

The footprint of the proposed extension has been significantly reduced, and will now only protrude from the rear of the home by 3m, compared to 5.15m as originally proposed (Application Ref: 23/00829/HOUSE).



### Proposed Materials

The following materials are proposed for the extension;

- Engineering Bricks



The existing home is generally in red brick, however, there is a band of darker engineering bricks up to waist height capped with a protruding course of bricks laid on edge.

The design intention is that the new brickwork should generally contrast the red brick which forms the majority of the existing home, just as the retrained contemporary architectural style of the extension deliberately aims to contrast the Arts and Crafts style of the existing home.

It is possible that an engineering brick may be selected which will nonetheless complement the engineering bricks used on the lower courses of the existing building.

Ultimately the final selection of the brick product is yet to be made, and the applicants are more than happy to discuss the choice of bricks with the Planning and Conservation Officers in due course.

### Proposed Materials Continued

- Timber

The revised design includes a band of timber cladding above the glazed areas of the extension, and a timber post to the south west corner.

In some ways the selection of timber continues the theme of contrasting the external appearance and materials of the existing home, in order to avoid competing with the existing architecture.

However, the existing Arts and Crafts home also includes many beautiful timber features within the interior and naturally timber is a key material associated with the arts and crafts movement. The use of timber is therefore completely harmonious with the overall materiality of the original home.

- Green Roof

The green roof will provide an attractive surface to the roof, as well as providing a habitat for insects which will increase the biodiversity of the property. The green roof will also help to attenuate rain water runoff from the extension, which will ultimately discharge to a water butt and new soak away.

- Composite timber and aluminium framed windows and doors

The slim-line windows for the extension are to be formed in timber internally, with grey aluminium cladding externally. Again this will provide a restrained, contemporary aesthetic which will deliberately contrast the existing home.

### Detailed Response to Criticisms of Previous Proposal

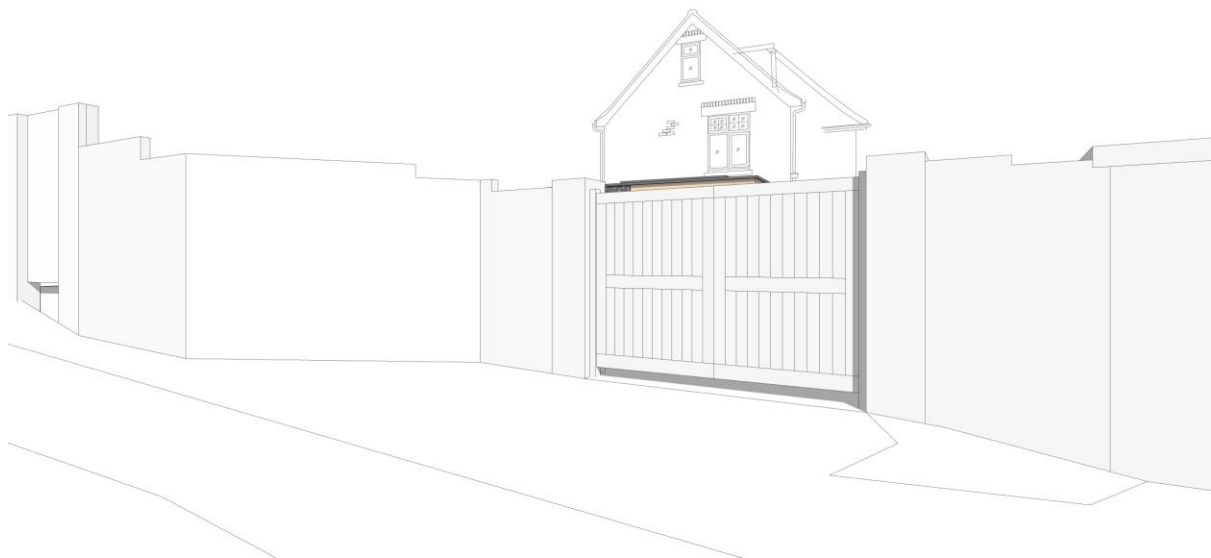
The following section will respond to each point raised in by the Planning Officer in the previous decision notice.

*Original Reason for Refusal: 'The Local Planning Authority is of the opinion that the proposed development, by reason of its height, bulk, massing, and design would fail to read as architecturally sympathetic, harming the appearance of the building and setting of the conservation area'.*

Response: The revised design has therefore significantly reduced the height, bulk and massing of the extension. The previous Arts and Crafts design has been replaced by a more restrained, contemporary aesthetic.

*Original Reason for Refusal: 'The porch would be visible in public and private views, and would harm the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area by dominating the elevation.'*

Response: Due to the reduced height of the extension, this will now be virtually invisible from the public realm, as it will be screened by the existing boundary wall and vehicular entrance gates, as pictured below. In addition the reduced mass of the building will avoid dominating the existing west elevation.



*Proposed 3D View 3: Proposed view from Four Mills Lane (Gates Closed)*



Detailed Response to Criticisms of Previous Proposal Continued: Building Orientation

*Original Reason for Refusal: The proposal will have the effect of 'virtually turning the property around, elevating the status of the rear of the property'.*

Response: In a subsequent email sent to Ben Hancock-Parr on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022, the original Planning Officer (Holly Brimson) stated the following:

*'My view is that given the changes at the property over time (such as the removal of the entrance from Exeter Road/A377), and that the existing rear door is now used as the front door (which is evident by the use of the doorbell, the lean-to porch and current parking arrangement being at the rear), I would argue that from a planning point of view, the western elevation would be viewed as the principal elevation.'*

This demonstrates that, in the Planning Officer's view, the orientation of the property has already been reversed. In this case the proposed entrance extension is simply a logical response to the reversal of the home's orientation which has already taken place.

Furthermore, the current orientation of the building appears to be a matter of opinion, because the Conservation Officer's Response to the original application, Dated 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023, notes that *'The east elevation is still architecturally the principal elevation'*. If this were the case it would be possible to form an extension to the west of the property within the applicant's Class A Permitted Development Rights.

In either case, in principle, an extension to the west elevation to form a practical entrance to the home must surely be acceptable.

**Building Areas**

Element	Existing Gross External Area	Proposed Gross External Areas as Per Original Application Ref: 23/00829/HOUSE	Proposed Gross External Areas as Per Revised Application Ref: 23/00829/HOUSE	Proposed Gross External Areas as Per New Application
<b>Main Home</b>				
Existing Main Home Ground Floor	73.4m <sup>2</sup>	73.4m <sup>2</sup>	73.4m <sup>2</sup>	73.4m <sup>2</sup>
Existing Main Home Ground Floor	73.4m <sup>2</sup>	73.4m <sup>2</sup>	73.4m <sup>2</sup>	73.4m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Existing Outbuildings to be removed</b>				
Existing W/C Lean-to	1.7m <sup>2</sup>			
Existing Porch Lean-to	7.2m <sup>2</sup>			
Existing Outbuilding	21.0m <sup>2</sup>			
<b>Proposed Porch Extension</b>		20.0m <sup>2</sup>	18.0m <sup>2</sup>	15.0m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Total Gross Area</b>	<b>176.7m<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>166.8m<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>164.8 m<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>161.8m<sup>2</sup></b>
		<b>Reduction of 9.9m<sup>2</sup> compared to existing</b>	<b>Reduction of 11.9m<sup>2</sup> compared to existing</b>	<b>Reduction of 14.9m<sup>2</sup> compared to existing</b>

All of the proposals for the entrance extension to date therefore lead to an overall reduction in the density of development on the site.

Moreover the current proposal is 25% smaller than the original application, at 15m<sup>2</sup> as opposed to 20m<sup>2</sup>.

### **Drainage**

As noted on the submitted plans, the proposed extension will be built over a foul drain which is shared with the neighbouring home (Weverham). This drain is adopted by South West Water. Consent has already been granted by South West Water to build over this drain as proposed.

Surface water runoff from the proposed extension roof will be attenuated by the green roof. Furthermore a rainwater butt will be installed as per the recommendation of the 'Preliminary Ecological Assessment' by Wills Ecology. Any residual runoff will discharge to a new soak away as shown on the submitted plans.

### **Wildlife and Ecology**

See 'Preliminary Ecological Assessment' by Wills Ecology.

This report noted that *'Careful examination of the internal and external features of the property found no signs of use by bats, nor significant potential for bats to be found.'*

As per the recommendations in this report, the extension will include;

- 2 No. Bird bricks to the north elevation
- 1 No. Integrated bat tube to the west elevation

A 'Bug and Bee Hotels/Brick' will also be installed in the garden as per the recommendation of the Preliminary Ecological Assessment.

The proposed green roof will provide further new habitat for insects and increase the level of biodiversity within the property.

Finally the Preliminary Ecological Assessment made recommendation to limit the use and intensity of external lighting, which shall be followed in full.

The Preliminary Ecological Assessment concluded that *'Provided that the recommendations within this report are implemented, particularly regarding external lighting, the impact on protected species will be negligible.'*

### **Heritage**

See Historic Impact Assessment (HIA).

### **Conclusions**

The intentions of this project are to improve the accessibility of the dwelling whilst also enhancing the architectural quality of the western aspect of the home. This will improve the view of the home from Four Mills Lane, although the visual impact will be minimal due to the screening offered by the existing western boundary wall and gates.

In comparison to the previous application (Ref: 23/00829/HOUSE) the new proposal seeks to minimise the height and mass of the extension, with a simple, restrained and contemporary design, which will not compete with the Arts and Crafts architecture of the original home.