Ashbourne House, Crich

**Design Statement: ADDENDUM**

Proposed New Dwelling: Ref AVA/2021/1200

March 2022

**James Boon Architects**

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| Document | **New Dwelling in the Grounds of Ashbourne House, Crich Design Statement: ADDENDUM** |
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**Design Statement**
**New Dwelling in the Grounds of Ashbourne House, Crich**

## 1.0 Introduction

This document has been prepared to support an application for approval of reserved matters following the granting of outline approval for a new access onto the highway that was to facilitate a new residential dwelling in the grounds of Ashbourne House, Crich. This application now contains details of the house design, its siting, appearance and scale.

The applicants own Ashbourne House, and are looking to downsize into a smaller purpose built low energy dwelling to meet their current needs, and as the house has a reasonable size garden, the opportunity to develop a house in an area they already know and love is highly desirable to them. The house is being designed to be as environmentally sustainable as possible, nearing Passivhaus standards, and also to sit sympathetically within the existing setting of the village of Crich.

Following the submission of the application, and following various consultation responses to the case officer at Amber Valley Borough Council, a number of design changes have been discussed, to which a formal response is required. As part of this, elements of the design have been changed in response to these comments. These and some further clarifications and justification are included within this addendum document.

## 1.1 Notes

This report is to be read alongside the revised drawings produced to accompany the planning submission. It has been prepared by James Boon Architects.

## 2.0 Revised Proposals

### 2.1 Siting and Overlooking

The possibility of increasing the separation distance between Old End House (OEH), that is to the south east of the site, and of the proposed new dwelling has been discussed with the case officer and applicant at length.

On the original submission, the distance from OEH to the new dwelling was 7.3m. This position was determined by the desire to avoid the rear of the new property being within the Root Protection Zone (RPZ). However, as can be seen on the below sketches, if the house is slid to the north (along the line of the angled east elevation, not directly backwards from the front elevation) by circa 2.7m, then the separating distance between OEH and the new dwelling can be increased to 10m.

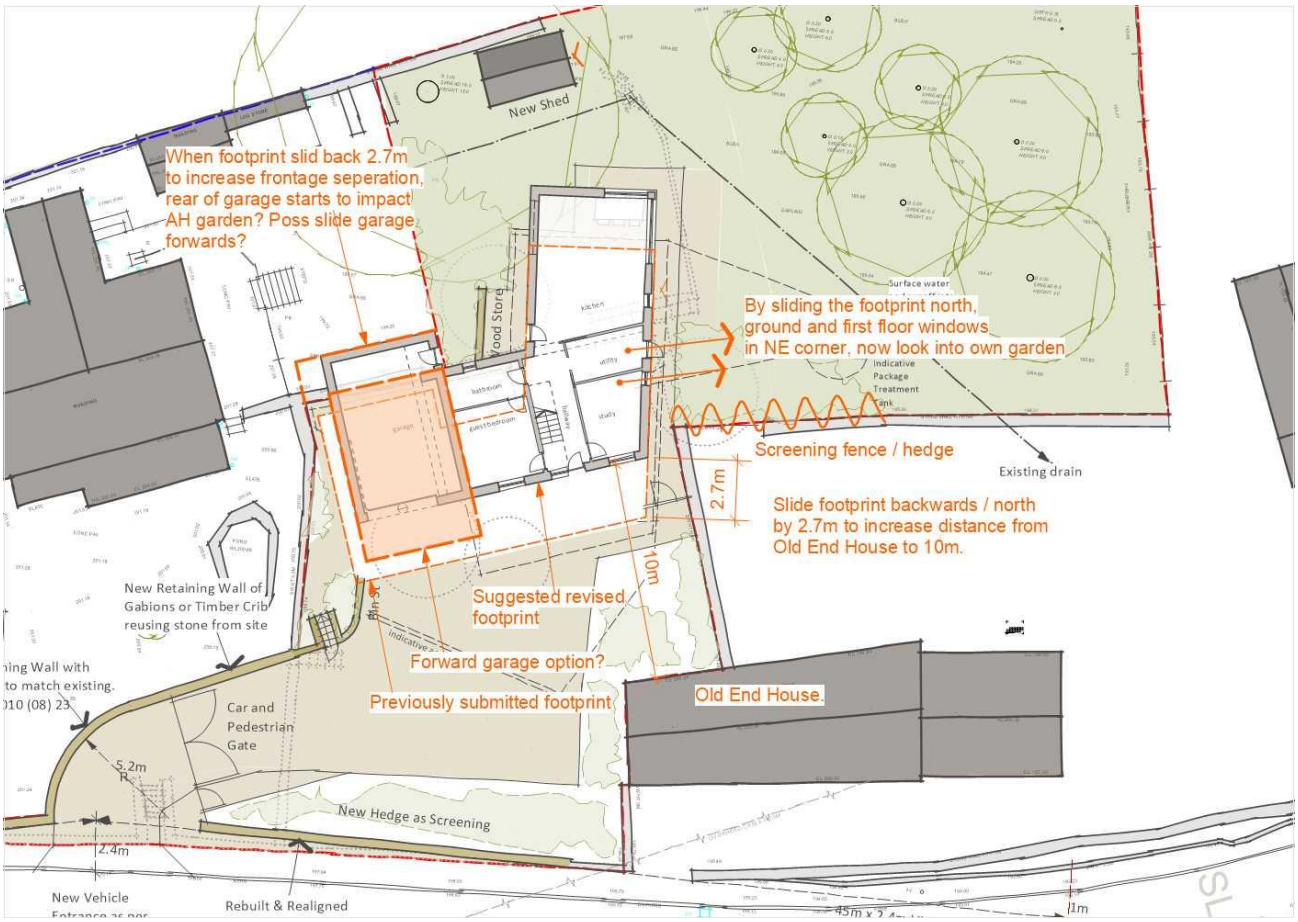


Image: Sketch of ground floor on the site plan used to inform discussions with planning case officer.

However, as can be seen from the sketch, the rear of the garage which projects beyond the rear elevation to give a rear access door and canopy for access to the kitchen, would now be outside of the red line originally forming the application. Therefore, proposals are to pull the garage forwards, so the rear elevation of it aligns with the rear of the house. Without the rear access to the garage, the footprint of the house will also be moved to the west by circa 200mm to slightly increase the width of the access to the side or east of the house.

The separation between the proposed house and the existing Ashbourne House, increases slightly as well when sliding the plan away from OEH, and the separation is strengthened by the single storey garage cut into the slope, meaning the house itself only appears to start at the far side of the garage.

One added benefit of sliding the house itself backwards is that the Study window and Utility door that will be glazed, are now very much looking into their own garden, rather than being up against the boundary

with the garden of OEH. This reduces any concerns regarding overlooking and this can be further reduced with suitable timber fence and screening planting along the northern and western boundary of OEH garden.

On the first floor, the south east corner of the Lounge has deliberately been designed to have no windows overlooking to the south east. The central first floor window is well away from OEH. The small window in the south east corner is set at high level, with a cill at 1.4m high is not intended to be viewed out of, other than a glimpse of the sky, but is intended to give sunlight and daylight into the corner of the house.

The north east corner window gives views across the garden and to views of the countryside beyond. By sliding the footprint of the building further north, the extent of overlooking is reduced, and following discussions with the planning case officer, this has been further reduced by "squaring up" the eastern window so it now faces into the garden.

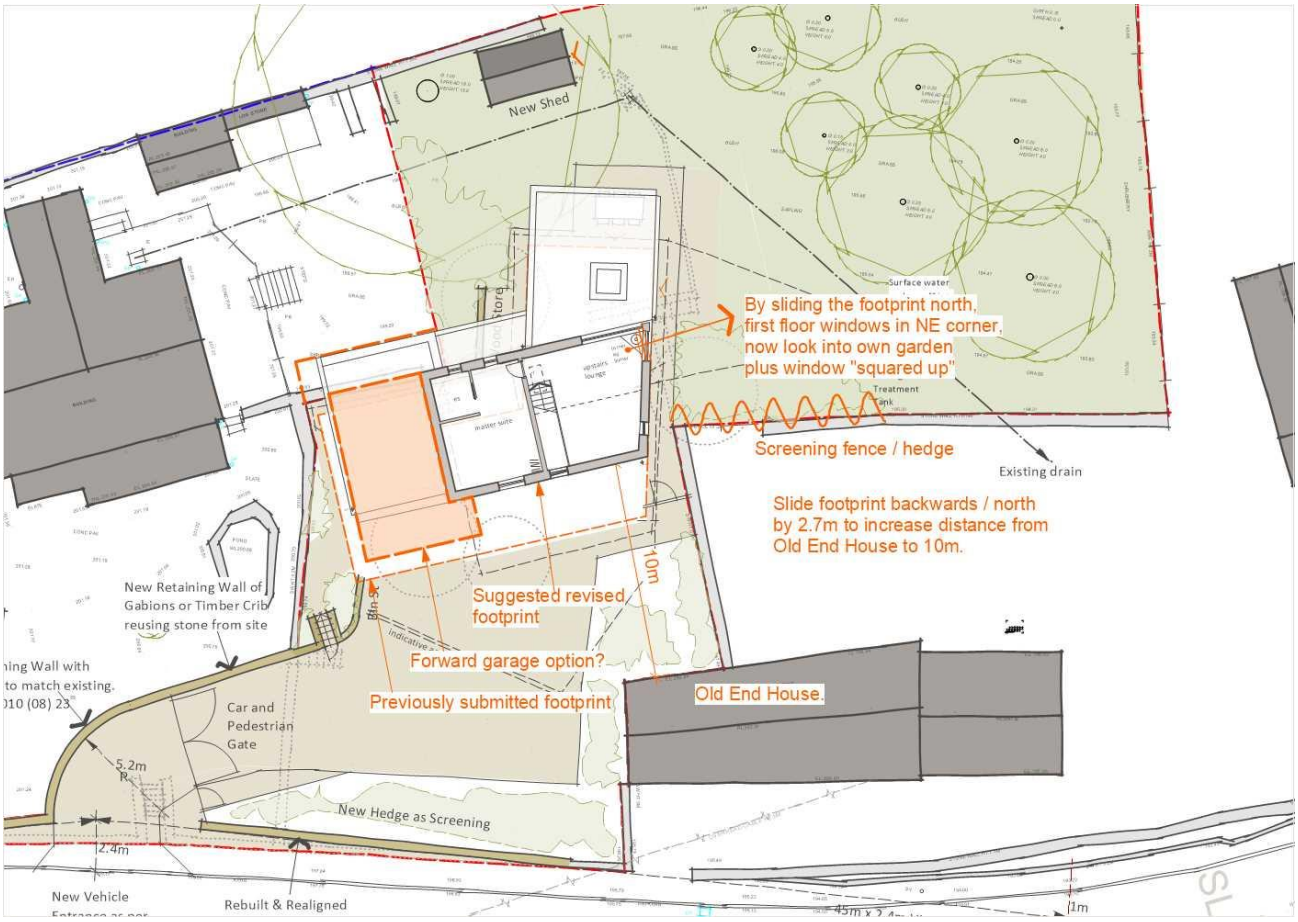


Image: Sketch of first floor on the site plan used to inform discussions with planning case officer.

## 2.2 Materials

The choice of materials has also been discussed at length with the case officer and applicant. On the original submission, the lower walls of the house were proposed to be in render, while the upper walls are to be in timber cladding. The applicant and the architect acknowledge that the general setting of Crich is predominantly stone walling within this and some other older parts of the village, mainly within the Conservation Area (which this site is not), but there are a number of other materials used, especially outside the conservation area, and especially at the edge of the village, as this site is. Section 143 of the Crich Parish Neighbourhood Plan does acknowledge that render is a material found in the village.

Following discussions, the choice of materials has been revised, so that the lower external walls of the house, where visible from the streetscene to the south and east, will be in stone. The height of this stone, will be to the underside of windows on the first floor, so it is clearly the dominant material. However, the upper elevations of timber are to be retained.

This revised choice of materials, with stone to the walls, will help ground the new dwelling both physically in the immediate site, but also into the wider setting of Crich. However, as an energy efficient property built of a timber frame construction, timber cladding is an appropriate material for the upper sections of the house, showing the dwelling to be a clear modern addition to the streetscene.

The timber will be either stained to be dark / grey in appearance, or a larch or cedar that can be left to naturally go grey / silver, and thus making sure the appearance of the timber is not a harsh contracts to the stone. When forming part of a composition set within a typical vernacular form with a pitched roof above, this feels a wholly appropriate design. Below are some precedent images of stone and timber combined, that indicate this would be a sensitive and appropriate solution in this context:



Images: Various precedent images showing timber and stone in close proximity to each other, and how the grey colour of the timber sits comfortably with the stone.

In response to whether the proposals meet the requirements on Policy NP4 within the Crich Neighbourhood Plan, as described above, the render has been changed for stone, however the timber has been retained, as described above. NP4 states the need to “ensure a narrow colour palette”, and as set out above the timber cladding will be grey in appearance in order to do just Furthermore, below is an indication of some of the recent projects within the Crich Parish where timber has been used. It should be noted that most of these show timber in its golden brown colour, which appears to have been preserved as such and not allowed to naturally change to grey, which is the proposal as set out above.



Image: The above are on Top Lane / Shaws Hill. Left shows a render/timber first floor extension, while Right shows another first floor extension that is soon to be timber clad.




Image: The above are also on Top Lane / Shaws Hill, showing a house predominantly of timber cladding.




Images: This is a new build property on Hindersitch Lane in Crich Carr, near junction with Top Lane.

Lastly, the planning case officer during discussions requested the possibility of the upper west gable being in stone rather than timber. Having made a number of design changes already, it is felt that to further change this element of the proposal from timber to stone, would dilute or weaken the overall design proposals, which show a clear demarcation between the lower stone and the upper timber. Additionally this elevation is proposed to be lightweight timber frame structure with cladding as there isn't a loadbearing wall beneath this due to the garage layout, that could take the structural loads of the stone.

### 2.3 Trees and Garden Store

As described above, the footprint of the proposed dwelling has been pushed north, which means the corner of the single storey rear projection of the house, now sits within the Root Protection Zone, which it had originally been sited to avoid. During discussions with the planning case officer this was felt on balance to be an appropriate compromise to give the larger separation distances to the front.

The Arboricutural Method Statement that accompanied the submission clearly sets out a number of possible ways that foundations, especially lightweight single storey builds, can be carefully constructed within the RPZ without having a detrimental effect on the tree, and these will be followed as part of the technical designs. Furthermore there are at present a number of concrete paved paths, and stored materials underneath the tree within the RPZ, and as part of this proposal these will be removed, so that soft landscaping can dominate beneath the tree.

However, to rationalise this, a small garden store will be built against the northern boundary, clad in the same timber as the house. This will be a lightweight "shed" requiring no foundations and having a minimal impact on the RPZ.

## 3.0 Summary to Addendum

Following discussions and negotiations with the planning case officer at AVBC, the design has been revised to take on board concerns regarding choice of materials, siting and overlooking. The applicant has not been inflexible, but has been willing to discuss and negotiate a number of key changes.

The proposed new dwelling is now to be sited further north, increasing the separation distance to Old End House to the south east, and making sure that the windows on the east elevation look into their own garden. The separation from the existing Ashbourne House is also increased, while the relationship with this is clearly subservient as the new sits well below the existing, and beyond the single storey garage which is cut into the slope of the land.

Materials have been changed to better reflect the local character, by being predominantly stone at low level, to the underside of first floor window cills. Above this the timber cladding has been retained, that will be chosen and specified to be grey in colour to sit comfortably against the stone and to keep a narrow colour palette.