

# PlacesMatter

Design Review Report  
The Grow House P80e

28 February 2023

## The Grow House Higher Road, Longridge

Reference: PM\_2023\_007

---

### Report of the Online Design Review Panel

**Date of Review:** 15 February 2023  
**Format:** Online  
**Lead Designers:** Jackson-Crane & WM Design for NRL

### Findings

As presented, the proposal does not yet meet the standard required for NPPF Paragraph 80e, but does have much to commend its approach and it does seem to be well on its way.

The connection of the proposition to nature was supported, as was the bio-receptive concrete, but more could have been done to inform the design narrative and to ensure that the design is 'of its place'.

The Panel encouraged you to explore the geometry of the proposition and to push and rotate the building North and East, to avoid overhanging the Roman road.

The cantilever feels conceptually wrong. The upper box should be the "floaty bit" but as presented it lacks rigor and this 'box' needs a much greater depth of thought.

Sustainability needs much more thought and you should seek Passivhaus certification and expand the team to include sustainability expertise. This building is "crying out for ground source heat".

You must get agreement from the LPA to the viewpoint positions. The Biodiversity Net Gain approach needs clear metrics and you need a robust carbon calculation for the building.

## Background

The site of the proposed new dwelling lies to the south of Higher Road, Longridge, in open countryside adjacent to the course of a Roman Road, within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The proposal envisages a single bespoke dwelling, The Grow House, which is being presented in the context of NPPF Paragraph 80e. The Panel was therefore considering whether the house was of exceptional quality of design, in that it:

- *is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture and would help raise the standards of design more generally in rural areas; and,*
- *would significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.*

## Design Review

The Panel thanked you for your very clear presentations, which it felt had demonstrated a lot of thought and a number of good design principles. The Hay Time Project was felt to be a great opportunity to add something to the landscape and for the community and would enhance the setting. The connection of the proposition to nature was supported, as this made the whole feel like it was “emerging from the ground”. The bio-receptive concrete was also felt to be a strong idea in principle.

More could be have been done on the context, townscape and history though, to inform the design narrative. Farm cottages and clusters of buildings dominate this landscape and so it would have been good to see how that had informed the scale, mass and size of the plot. The Panel appreciated that much had gone before in earlier design iterations and that you were necessarily limiting the material presented.

The Panel felt unsure that this design was truly “of its place” and encouraged you to do more on the concept to ensure that it was. The siting of the building and the approach to it could usefully have considered other options. There are a number

of paths and PROWs away from the site and these should be used as links to the wider landscape and patterns of the valley.

Whilst you have understandably picked up the Roman road, this was not felt to be related to the concept or story of the dwelling, which is not necessarily a problem. The Panel was taken by the idea that emerged in conversation that you might leave sections exposed once the full survey and excavation had taken place. So, don't bridge the cantilever over the road, make the road the feature in the landscape at this point. The Panel encouraged you to emphasize the significance of this Roman road in your application.

The landscape led approach and idea is a strong one, but it does feel as if the building has been placed in the landscape first and there was no landscape proposals plan to show otherwise, or how it all weaves together. You need more analysis on that. In terms of the approach and sense of arrival, it is a nice surprise to find the dwelling behind the wall and you were encouraged to explore that more, in terms of the notion of farmsteads that group buildings around a courtyard.

The Panel also encouraged you to explore the geometry of the proposition, which is very linear and has straightness that may jar with the woodland edge, the field patterns and the angles on the ground. The dry-stone wall is not perpendicular and so you were asked to consider rotating the building and not to be confirmed to the upper storey necessarily having the same geometry as the ground floor.

Push the building North and East as you rotate it, to help address the geometry of the dry-stone wall, which as presented is a missed opportunity. The overall height may also be a problem, so drop down and look for a sweet spot where you don't need to step things out. Any rotation may need you to get light into the plan from the top though, so carefully consider that. In conversation you showed the Panel a sketch idea that might start to resolve this.

Your current rigid approach feels uncomfortable next to the Roman road and generates a geometry that doesn't exist, with a cantilever that feels conceptually wrong. The upper box should be the "floaty bit" and the materiality of the rest needs to be more grounded. As presented it lacks rigor and the 'box' needs a real depth of thought, as it is really important to get that element right. If you are referencing geomorphological strata, then why is this box shown with vertical materials, when they should really be horizontal? If you were to push this back it

would avoid shadowing the living spaces below and could be positioned to shelter the main entrance on the North side. During discussion you showed how it could also recognise the alignment of the Roman Road. In this regard, the Panel indicated it would create more sense of 'this place'.

Its materiality is also very important and needs a clear rationale. It jars a little with the local vernacular and needs to be better connected to the to the box below, either in form or materials. The chimney stack seems alien and very big, so you were asked to explore stone rather than concrete for that. There was concern expressed about the scale and proportionality of the window openings, which whilst these will give great views, need greater rigor, so do a study of stone walls with openings and find the local scale for these, even if that means having more, smaller windows. You were also asked to provide extended long sections out from the building in to the landscape to show how the proposition sits in its context.

You have clearly given consideration to the wider views, but the Panel felt that the elevation to the South was quite hard and needs more work in the way in which it works with the landscape and woodland wrapping around it. Some of the extended walls here look like a "bit of an add on", adding to the sense of things being too hard, and the steps stand out in the CGI perspective as neither being very elegant nor thought through. So, more exploration of the boundaries is needed, alongside the ha-ha, which was felt to be a good idea.

Your material choices are referencing agricultural buildings. But these are also very hard, even if the end result of the bio receptive concrete does add a softness. More natural materials might be softer, and in this landscape, stone is an obvious choice. That you could explore and test. Your metal 'farm gate' to the lower garden was not felt to be working and you were asked to make this from wood, reflect a more sustainable approach and to "add more beauty".

Whilst the ground floor plan was felt to be generally successful, you were asked to "take the labels off the plan and be sure just what all of the walls are doing". The notion of the elevated box being for bedrooms was questioned. This has the best views and you were asked to consider flipping the arrangement for the kitchen to East and linking that with a living area on the first floor, which would have the best views, but all in discussion with your client.

The Panel discussed sustainability with you and noted that this really needs much more thought and integration at an earlier stage in the design journey. You

indicated a desire to design at Passivhaus levels, which the Panel would support, but you really need to seek certification for that if it is to be done properly. The mechanical and energy demands of the building will affect the parapet widths and sections, so they need to be known now and be fully integrated in the design solutions. The Panel also felt that this building was “crying out for ground source heat”.

The Panel recognised your efforts to get agreement from the LPA to the viewpoint positions. This agreement will still be needed, but the positions do feel fit for purpose and reasonable at this stage and you have a clear message on drainage and SUDs. Whilst you have explained your Biodiversity Net Gain approach, this needs clear metrics to support your case. Similarly, the bio-receptive concrete may be innovative, but you will need a more robust carbon calculation for the building. If there are examples of it in use in other countries, then seek those out to support your claims that this is the first use in this country.

The images and approach to re-wilding and food production were felt to be very commendable, but be clear as to whether or not your client requires any areas of less wild and more ornamental garden and if so, plan them in now. You also need to do more sunshine analysis to determine whether you have the living spaces in the correct positions – for example, why have the afternoon sun in the kitchen, when it might be better to have it in the morning? So, step back and look again at the organisation of the main elements of the building.

In summary, the Panel thanked you for your presentations and constructive conversation. As presented, the proposal does not yet meet the standard required for NPPF Paragraph 80e, but does have much to commend its approach and it does seem to be well on its way.

The connection of the proposition to nature was supported, as was the bio-receptive concrete, but more could have been done on the context, townscape and history to inform the design narrative and to ensure that the design is ‘of its place’.

The Panel encouraged you to explore the geometry of the proposition, which is very linear and has a straightness that may jar with the woodland edge, the field patterns and the angles on the ground. So, push and rotate the building North and East to align with the geometry of the dry-stone wall and avoid overhanging the Roman road.

The cantilever feels conceptually wrong. The upper box should be the “floaty bit” and the materiality of the rest needs to be more grounded. As presented it lacks rigor and the ‘box’ needs a much greater depth of thought.

Sustainability needs much more thought and you should seek Passivhaus certification and expand the team to include sustainability expertise. This building is “crying out for ground source heat”.

You must get agreement from the LPA to the viewpoint positions. The Biodiversity Net Gain approach needs clear metrics to support your case and you will probably need a more robust carbon calculation for the building.

The Panel would welcome the opportunity to see the next iteration of this scheme once you have refined your proposition in response to this Design Review, expanded the team, and any discussions with the Local Planning Authority and confirmation of the viewpoints are concluded on this current proposal.

---

## PlacesMatter

RIBA North, 21 Mann Island, Liverpool Waterfront, Liverpool L3 1BP

Telephone +44 (0)7841 458696

[richard.tracey@placesmatter.co.uk](mailto:richard.tracey@placesmatter.co.uk)

[www.architecture.com/placesmatter](http://www.architecture.com/placesmatter) @PlacesMatter\_1

---

# PlacesMatter

Design Review Report  
**The Grow House P80e**

26 April 2023

## The Grow House Higher Road, Longridge

Reference: PM\_2023\_012

---

### Report of the Online Design Review Panel

**Date of Review:** 19 April 2023  
**Format:** Online  
**Lead Designers:** Jackson-Crane Architects & WM Design for NRL

### Findings

As presented, the proposal does not yet meet the standard required for NPPF Paragraph 80e, but it is getting very close.

Consider the relationship of the built elements and whether these could be a number of structures linked by glazing. The size of the courtyard may be too small.

Test the materiality of the 'box' and work harder on the details of the 'glass beam' and finished building.

The position of the chimney and inclusion of the pergolas need a rethink. Explore the final alignment of all the elements – plan geometry, box alignment and chimney position.

Sustainability will be at the core of this proposition, so the inside / outside relationships and reduced carbon footprint should come to the fore.

## Background

The site of the proposed new dwelling lies to the south of Higher Road, Longridge, in open countryside adjacent to the course of a Roman Road, within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The proposal envisages a single bespoke dwelling, The Grow House, which is being presented in the context of NPPF Paragraph 80e. The Panel was therefore considering whether the house was of exceptional quality of design, in that it:

- *is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture and would help raise the standards of design more generally in rural areas; and,*
- *would significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.*

This report should be read in conjunction with the previous one dated 28 February 2023, reference: PM\_2023\_007.

## Design Review

The Panel thanked you for your very clear presentations and the lovely axonometric sketch, which brought together the design of the housing and landscape. The new materials and visuals were all thought to be very helpful. You were urged to continue with the rigour in design thought that you have brought to this design evolution.

The fact that you are only proposing to build on 6% of the site was applauded. The landscape is all really positive, with woodland, deadwood structures, orchards and meadow, all very strong elements of the wider design proposition. The proposed level of BNG at c.39% was also felt to be very positive.

The proposition now really feels as if it has emerged from the landscape. The townscape analysis was felt to be useful, but you were asked to take this a step further and be very clear about widths and depths of vernacular buildings.

Whilst there may be no one single pattern of development this will help you to define the dimensions of the built elements in relation to the courtyard, which it was felt could be larger.

You should be presenting this so that the narrative ties in with the townscape analysis as presented. This might be more as a pavilion on the landscape, rather than a modern take on a farmstead.

The revised rotation of the plan and the new geometry were felt to be improvements which help the building sit better in the landscape, create levels that add to its sense of emergence and which has resonance with the heritage assets on the site.

You were urged though to avoid over complicating things. This might best be seen as three built elements connected by glazed sections. This would allow you to reconsider the chimney and the “fussy” Southern elevation, as well as the alignment of the ‘top box’.

The long site section has clearly described and shown how the built elements relate to the landscape and wider townscape. The biophilic concrete is a really interesting choice and it was confirmed after the meeting that this is attached to a SIP panel main structure, which will reduce the carbon footprint of the whole.

The ‘glass beam’ to the upper box will need very careful consideration to ensure that it doesn’t become too reflective. You were asked to test further the geometry of the ‘box’ and explore the final roof appearance if you felt that this could still accommodate the desired solar PV elements in the required alignment. The materiality of the ‘box’ may be too close to that of the main structures, so test that further.

The Panel was not convinced that the pergolas presented an integrated element to either the architecture or landscape and you were asked to reconsider these. It was suggested this be reviewed together with the arrangement of the building elements as it might work better attaching the pergola to the building at the front. You were also encouraged to merge your drawings, as you have done with the 3D-axio, to show the architecture and landscape on one page. This will enhance your joint rigor of the proposals and might reveal whether the dominant central wall is really needed at all.

The required sections of the building are still missing and you need to “zoom in to the details”, for example to the edge of the roof, to ensure that this can be delivered with the required level of quality to elevate this way beyond any sense of it being a normal house.

You were asked to consider mirroring the internal arrangements of the upper box, as this might help with the chimney arrangements and alignment. It might also offer the opportunity for egress on to the green roof and the spectacular views that would be seen from there.

In summary, the Panel thanked you for your presentations and constructive conversation. As presented, the proposal does not yet meet the standard required for NPPF Paragraph 80e, but it is getting very close.

Consider the relationship of the built elements and whether these could be a number of structures linked by glazing. The size of the courtyard may be too small. Test the materiality of the 'box' and work harder on the details of the 'glass beam' and finished building. Be rigorous in furthering the design and ensure the narrative is based on evidence.

The position of the chimney and inclusion of the pergolas need a rethink. Explore the final alignment of all the elements – plan geometry, box alignment and chimney position. Sustainability will be at the core of this proposition, so the inside / outside relationships and reduced carbon footprint should come to the fore.

All of the Panel's previous recommendations need to be adhered to if this is to be delivered as at P80e dwelling. The Panel would expect the LPA to impose suitable conditions to all elements of the design to ensure that happened.

---

## PlacesMatter

RIBA North, 21 Mann Island, Liverpool Waterfront, Liverpool L3 1BP

Telephone

uk

[www.architecture.com/placesmatter](http://www.architecture.com/placesmatter)

@PlacesMatter\_1

---

# PlacesMatter

Design Review Report  
**The Grow House P80e**

**30 May 2023**

## The Grow House Higher Road, Longridge

Reference: PM\_2023\_012

---

### Report of the Online Design Review Panel

**Date of Review:** 19 April 2023  
**Format:** Online  
**Lead Designers:** Jackson-Crane Architects & WM Design for NRL

### Findings

As presented, the proposal still does not yet meet the standard required for NPPF Paragraph 80e, but this is not something that can't be remedied.

You should consider the final comments made in this report and make further amendments.

## Background

The site of the proposed new dwelling lies to the south of Higher Road, Longridge, in open countryside adjacent to the course of a Roman Road, within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The proposal envisages a single bespoke dwelling, The Grow House, which is being presented in the context of NPPF Paragraph 80e. The Panel was therefore considering whether the house was of exceptional quality of design, in that it:

- *is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture and would help raise the standards of design more generally in rural areas; and,*
- *would significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.*

This report should be read in conjunction with the previous one dated the 28 February 2023, reference: PM\_2023\_007 and the 19 April 2023, reference PM\_2023\_012.

## Desk Review

The Panel thank you for the updated materials.

The Desk Review is considering whether the previous findings have been fully resolved or not. These were:

*Consider the relationship of the built elements and whether these could be a number of structures linked by glazing. The size of the courtyard may be too small.*

*Test the materiality of the 'box' and work harder on the details of the 'glass beam' and finished building.*

*The position of the chimney and inclusion of the pergolas need a rethink. Explore the final alignment of all the elements – plan geometry, box alignment and chimney position.*

*Sustainability will be at the core of this proposition, so the inside / outside relationships and reduced carbon footprint should come to the fore.*

In response to your submission the Panel has the following comments and observations:

We agree with your assertion that a pitched roof option is not successful, and we support your view that it should not be pursued, as we agree that the building sits better in the landscape in the proposed form.

We also welcome the rotation of the upper-level volume and its alignment with the lower level geometry, which has significantly improved the building's architectural expression, with the three components of the plan now simply expressed.

The splitting of the built elements into three, which reflect the internal functionality works well. But, glazing the element between the main living spaces and the guest suite, the sitting area, was suggested and would be an additional improvement.

The removal of the pergolas also has helped to streamline the appearance of the building, which is very much welcomed.

The inside/ outside relationship is improved. We agree that the size of the courtyard now looks fine.

However, this has resulted in possibly an unintended consequence of a very hard and unwelcoming entrance. This is not something that can't be remedied. Fenestration is needed and particularly to the upper levels of the cantilevered volume.

Comparing the elevations, the north elevation is windowless. The image of the built example (page 3 of changes document) is quite beguiling, but its charm is in the relationship of the windows (floor to ceiling) with the stone-filled cages and their metal surrounds.

The move to gabions is a surprise and has added to the heaviness of the cantilevered upper floor. It makes the ground level building appear low in height.

Additional moves that would improve all of this include:

- Inclusion of tall, narrow window(s) in the north elevation of the cantilevered upper floor (could be resolved by moving the bed to the opposite wall);
- consider vertical not horizontal timber to workshop door;

- ensure that there is sufficient differentiation between the materials for the ground floor and the cantilevered upper floor.
- extending the glazed divide between workshop and main house out over the entrance to the end of the cantilevered element;
- ensure that use of the gabions is not creating structural challenges with the added weight;
- add some landscape interest to the approach to the house – a single tree/ a planter?
- Puncturing some vertical gaps in the approach wall (page 16);
- Reconsider the gate – solid metal sliding gate adds to the fortress character, which goes against the overall concept. Completely perforated would be better and consider if circular is the right pattern as all else is geometric. It could be a bespoke pattern in iron-work;
- Can you please confirm what the material is to the soffit of the balcony to the end of the cantilevered upper floor, as this will be very prominent from views of the building from the bottom of the site; and,
- Similarly, can you also confirm the material to the soffit above the balcony, as this will also be very prominent from views of the building from the bottom of the site.

In summary, the proposition is nearing the standard required, but it is not quite there.

We would welcome the opportunity for a final Desk Review on this project.

---

## PlacesMatter

RIBA North, 21 Mann Island, Liverpool Waterfront, Liverpool L3 1BP

[Redacted] uk

[www.architecture.com/placesmatter](http://www.architecture.com/placesmatter) @PlacesMatter\_1

---

# PlacesMatter

Design Review Report  
**The Growing House P80e**

01 August 2023

## The Growing House Higher Road, Longridge

Reference: PM\_2023\_025b

---

### Report of the Design Review Panel

**Date of Review:** 31 July 2023  
**Format:** Desk  
**Lead Designers:** Jackson-Crane Architects & WM Design for NRL Holdings

### Key Findings

As presented, the Panel undertaking the desk review considers that the proposal meets the test set out in NPPF Paragraph 80e and is considered to be of an exceptional quality of design.

The Panel's recommendation is based specifically on the high quality of the proposals shown in the submitted documents and we would expect the LPA to impose suitable conditions to all elements of the design to ensure that this is what is delivered.

## Background

The site of the proposed new dwelling lies to the south of Higher Road, Longridge, in open countryside adjacent to the course of a Roman Road, within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The proposal envisages a single bespoke dwelling, The Growing House, presented in the context of NPPF Paragraph 80e. The Panel was therefore considering whether the house was of exceptional quality of design, in that it:

- *is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture and would help raise the standards of design more generally in rural areas; and,*
- *would significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.*

This report should be read in conjunction with the previous reports, references: PM\_2023\_007, PM\_2023\_012 and PM\_2023\_017a.

## Desk Review

The Panel undertook a second Desk Review of this project using a set of drawings, a video and documents as follows:

- Revised narrative July 2023;*
- Revised presentation July 2023, and;*
- Undated animation received 28 July 2023*

The Panel's recommendation is based specifically on the high quality of the proposals shown in these documents and we would expect that any planning consent condition the delivery of the project accordingly.

All of the changes that have been made are very positive and it is in that context that the Panel supports the project. You have engaged with the Places Matter process in a very collaborative and cooperative spirit and the Panel commends you for that.

In summary, the Panel undertaking the desk review considers that the proposal meets the test set out in NPPF Paragraph 80e and is considered to be of an exceptional quality of design.

---

## PlacesMatter

RIBA North, 21 Mann Island, Liverpool Waterfront, Liverpool L3 1BP

Telephone + [REDACTED]

[www.architecture.com/placesmatter](http://www.architecture.com/placesmatter) @PlacesMatter\_1

---