

Detailed design of porches, canopies and door surrounds

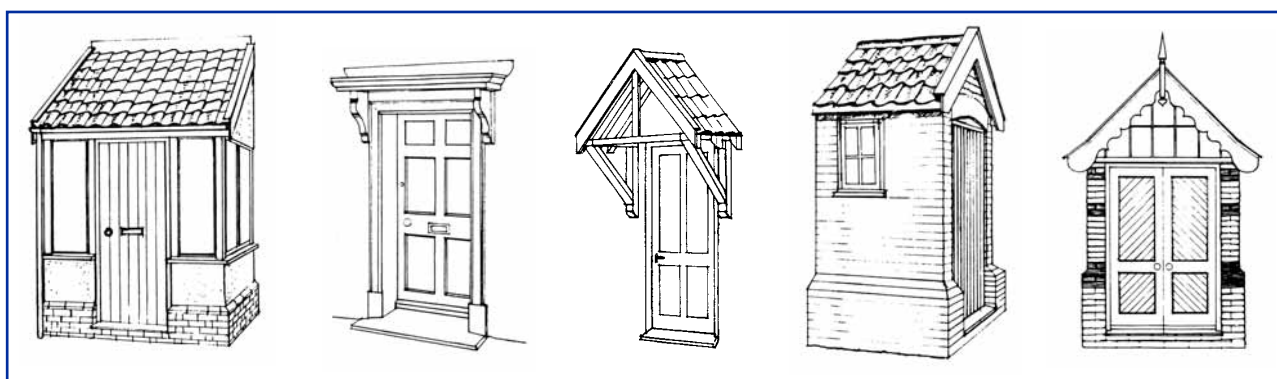
The Importance of Porches

Porches, by their very nature, tend to be a prominent feature upon any building. They are often the key focal point of a house and should be designed with commensurate care. A well-designed porch will enhance and give interest to a new house as well as reinforcing local building traditions. Conversely an ill-conceived porch can blight even a well-designed new building and add an inappropriate and discordant feature within the wider setting.

Traditional Forms of Porch

Many early timber framed buildings and cottages within the district would have originally been built without porches. Those porches that were part of the original design of a house, or those that were added later, were generally very simple open-gabled or lean-to roofs supported either on posts or brackets fixed to the wall of the building. In general, when designing new dwellings to reflect the local building traditions, a recessed draught lobby located within the house is often more appropriate than a projecting porch or canopy.

Historically, grand entrances and large monumental porches were erected on important buildings such as large country manor houses. These can make a dramatic and important contribution to the design of a property but only in the right context. There has been a trend to copy these more impressive porches and then to graft them onto modest new residential properties, especially in new estates. This is a crude attempt to give the property kudos and style which in almost all instances fail.



Examples of typical traditional porches

Porches On New Buildings

Generally where porches are to be used on new buildings they should be kept small and simple and relate to the style of the building to which they are attached. A traditional open canopy is often the most appropriate form. Modern enclosed porches or traditional style portico's, both of which are crudely detailed, should be avoided, especially in areas that contain a predominance of traditional buildings.

Sometimes porches are designed as a continuation of the main roof slope. This leads to what is known as a 'subtractive form', which invariably looks wrong. Porch roofs need to be visually separated from the main roof of the dwelling in order to produce an authentic feature. Continuation of the roof slope will be strongly discouraged in all cases.



This simple porch respects the traditions of the area and adds a pleasing focal point feature on this new dwelling



Note how this simple canopy style porch helps reinforce the character of this new development.

Door Surrounds

Painted timber door surrounds and more elaborate stone mouldings can greatly enhance the main entrance to the house. Such a device was common in period houses and represented a cost-effective way of embellishing and adding prestige to the doorway. Features such as carved fluted pilasters with broken pediments above is a common feature, especially within the larger settlements of the district. However again caution and restraint is needed in the use of such features on modern houses. They should be kept traditional in style, properly detailed, relatively simple and suitable to the overall design of the property. Recent examples, where crudely executed and ill-fitting surrounds have been added to new dwellings in an attempt to add instant design quality are no longer acceptable. Such features must be conceived and used only as part of the overall design of the property where the context allows it.

Objective 26

- Salisbury District Council will encourage the use of porches in new designs as they can add interest and articulation to the streetscape.
- The design statement accompanying any planning application will need to explain how the design of the porch is appropriate to the building and its context.
- Where porches are to be used, appropriately scaled drawings (1:10) showing their detailed design will be required.