

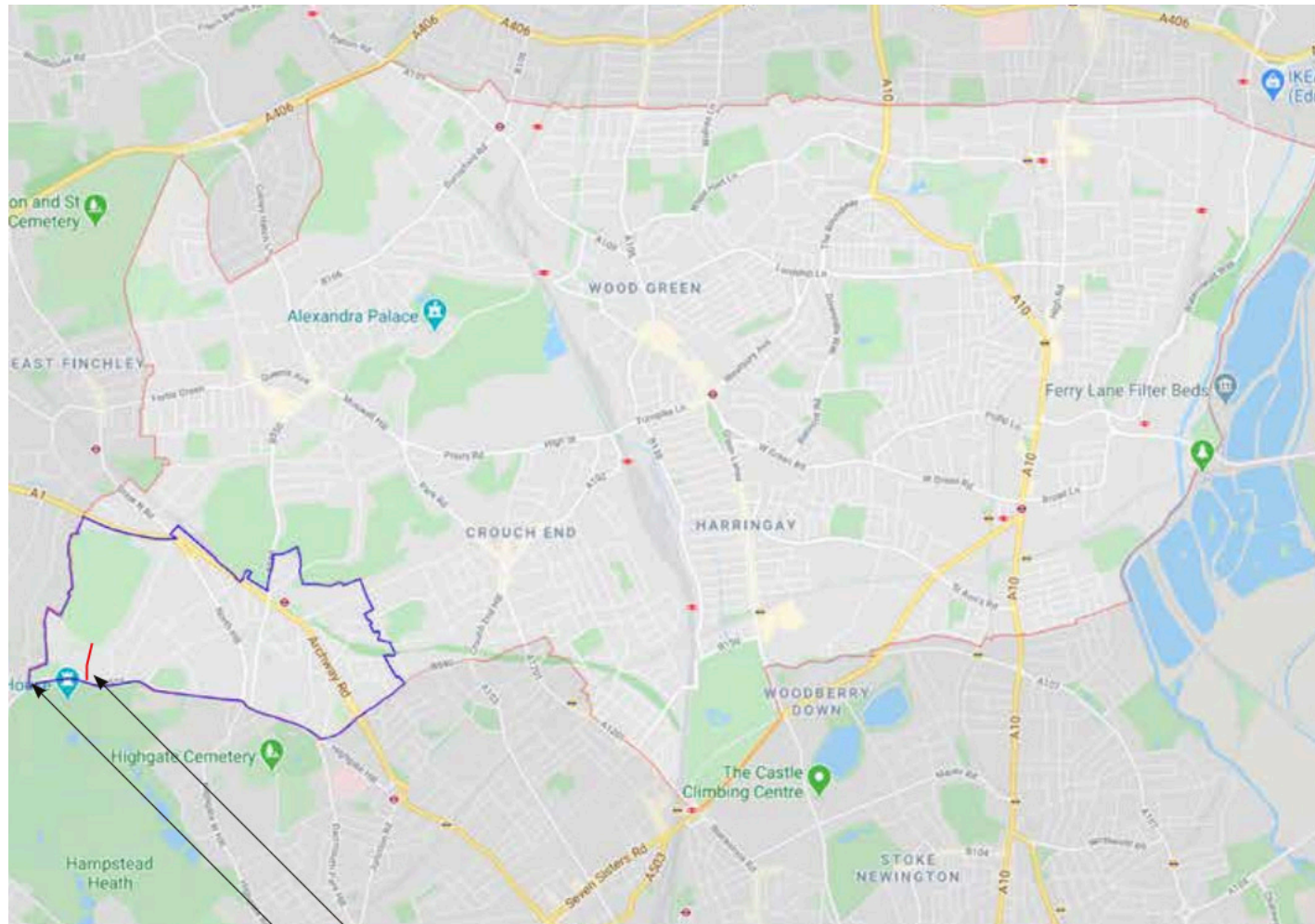
BRACKEN KNOLL

COURTENAY AVENUE

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Rev A - 10.08.2023

Rev B - 27.09.2023



- Courtenay Avenue
- Highgate Conservation Area

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1.0 EXISTING

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Duffy Associates have prepared this statement on behalf of our client in support of full planning application to extend and refurbish Bracken Knoll, Courtenay Avenue, London N6 4LP.

1.2 SITE LOCATION

Courtenay Avenue is private cul-de-sac on the north side of Hampstead Lane with controlled access. The proposal is for the extension and refurbishment of the existing detached house of Bracken Knoll.

The scheme is located within the Highgate Conservation Area. There are no statutorily protected buildings, listed buildings or locally listed buildings on the subject site. The new extensions have been designed to be sympathetic to the context, character and appearance of its surroundings and to complement the retained elements.

Courtenay Avenue is marked by large-scale single family dwellings in traditional styles, with prevailing arts and crafts character. A number of properties in contemporary styles have been recently introduced on the street. The original building of Bracken Knoll is of modest architectural interests and has been variously extended and altered in the past.

The design principles employed to achieve a sympathetic redevelopment of the site include adopting an architectural language appropriate to the context, character and appearance of the area while creating a thoughtfully designed high-quality dwelling for contemporary living.



EAST VIEW



NORTH-WEST VIEW



SOUTH-WEST VIEW



WEST VIEW

1.3 EXISTING SITE & SURROUNDINGS

The street facing facade is primarily hidden by greenery and bushes. Large trees on the northern side separate the dwelling from its neighbour Guildens. The house is set back from the street as is common on Courtenay avenue, with flat planting and hard landscaping offering a generous driveway with two sided access. The front facade of the house is in line with both its neighbours.

The rear garden of the property has multiple levels accessed by stairs. The back of the garden is heavily overgrown with bushes and large trees, while closer to the house there is a landscaped garden with a raised stone paved patio.

With regard to the Highgate Conservation Area, the Highgate Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (December 2013) places Courtenay Avenue within the 'Bishops' subarea. The common character of this subarea is noted as being drawn from the high quality of the residential architecture based upon inter-war development by a single developer of each of Stormont Road, Sheldon Avenue, Compton Avenue, Courtenay Avenue and Denewood Avenue.

Considering Courtenay Avenue specifically, the Appraisal notes the character of large detached houses and the sloped viewing into the Highgate Golf Course at the northern end of the road. The street has no formal pavements but grass verges, which gives it a rural feel. The slope of the street is fairly pronounced, and houses of the west of the road are higher than the road level whilst those on the east are lower or level with the road.

There are some re-built houses and infill houses on the road which are built closer together than the original layout, reducing the gap views through to rear gardens and mature landscaping. Other houses such as 'The Rydings' have been very well preserved, as are some of the houses further north. Guildens has detailed Flaming bond brickwork, as does Bracken Knoll.

It is a clear feature of the character of Courtenay Avenue that for many years existing properties on the street have been replaced, remodelled, or extensively altered. Many of these new and updated properties display common architectural features but the street is much changed from its original construction and its appearance continues to evolve.



GUILDENS



BRACKEN KNOLL



THE RYDINGS

1.4 SITE CONTEXT

The neighbouring property to the north, Guildens, is separated from Bracken Knoll by a wide garden area and tall trees.

Guildens it was built in a restrained neo-classical style. The principal elevation remains original, with the exception of the modern shuttered metal garage door, with simplistic detailing in the restrained neo-Georgian classical style with a separation between the principal house and service wing.

To the southern boundary, the neighbouring property, The Rydings, sits in a close proximity to the boundary and is separated from Bracken Knoll by a timber fence, forming two narrow paths between the properties.

The Rydings is comprised of a dark red facing brick under a clay roof. It has been very well preserved, and the houses further north are in general surviving originals.

1.5 PLANNING HISTORY AND PREVIOUS DEVELOPMENT

Replacement of, and significant changes to, the houses in Courtenay Avenue is not just a recent process. Such development has been ongoing for in excess of 30 years with other houses also constructed prior to this time and did not reflect the original style established in the 1920s and 1930s.

This is therefore the updated character of Courtenay Avenue; a street of enlarged houses that almost fully fill their frontages with a prevalent style incorporating both Arts and Crafts and Neo-Georgian features. These elements now characterise the streets to a much greater extent than any other character that may have existed previously.

Courtenay Avenue is also a completed self-contained element within the Conservation Area. As a gated cul-de-sac it does not contribute to general experiences of the Conservation Area and sits separate from even immediately neighbouring streets.

Development in this area should therefore be considered in that limited context only.

a. RIDGEMOUNT

Ref: HGY/2007/1097 - **Full demolition works - Approved**
Erection of two storey detached dwellinghouse with accomodation in roofspace, and garage and swimming pool in basement

Ref: HGY/1990/0688 - **Extension/Alterations - Approved**
Erection of ground floor rear conservatory/studio extension

Ref: OLD/1989/0318 - **Extension/Alterations - Approved**
Erection of two storey front extension to provide new additional space for hall, study + bathroom

Ref: OLD/1970/0218 - **Extension/Alterations - Approved**
Erect one storey extension to house plant, chaning rooms, sauna bath and bar for swimming pool

Ref: OLD/1960/0156 - **Extension/Alterations - Approved**
New extension for use as laundry

b. GUILDENS

Ref: HGY/1999/0762 - **Extension/Alterations - Approved**
Erection of extension to rear of existing property and creation of new basement level accomodation

Ref: HGY/2019/1168 - **Demolition works - Appeal approved**
Ref: APP/Y5420/W/19/3243272
Demolition of existing dwelling with retention of front facade and erection of replacement two-storey dwelling and associated extension to lower ground floor and the creation of a basement level

c. BRACKEN KNOLL

Ref: HGY/2017/1560 - **Facade retention scheme, partial demolition - Approved**
Demolition of house behind retained front facade, construction of replacement house of 1253sqm with accomodation at lower ground, ground, 1st floor and attic, and associated landscape and tree protection.

Ref: HGY/2013/2486 - **Facade retention scheme, partial demolition - Approved**
Demolition of house behind retained fron facade, construction of replacement house of 1253sqm with accomodation at lower ground, ground, 1st floor and attic, and associated landscape and tree protection

Ref: HGY/1999/0656 - **Extension/Alterations - Approved**
Erection of a single storey rear extension

d. HEATHWAYS

Ref: HGY/2004/0182 - **Extension/Alterations - Approved**
Ground floor extension to rear of property, extension of bay at first floor level and redevelopment of existing side extension

e. THE RYDINGS

Ref: HGY/1999/0685 - **Extension/Alterations - Approved**
Erection of ground floor breakfast room/kitchen extension, conservatory and wc/laundry rear extensions. Erection of utility/larder rear ground floor extension and associated alterations. Second floor (roof) bedroom 6, kitchenette and bathroom and rear extension and fron extension. First floor bedroom 1 and 2 and covered courtyard rear extension.

Ref: HGY/1997/0375 - **Extension/Alterations - Approved**
Erection of 2 storey rear extension, single storey conservatory between main house and garage building and conservatory to suth elevation. Construction of underground swimming pool and facilities. Refurbishment of existing tennis court and pavillion.

Ref: OLD/1981/0282 - **Full demoloition works - Approved**
Erection of new house

Ref: OLD/1981/0281 - **Full demoloition works - Approved**
Erection of one dwelling house

Ref: OLD/1980/0235 - **Full demoloition works - Approved**
Erection of one dwelling house

Ref: OLD/1980/0234 - **Full demoloition works - Approved**
Erection of one dwelling house

Ref: OLD/1981/0280 - **Full demoloition works - Approved**
Erection of one house

Ref: OLD/1979/0227 - **Full demoloition works - Approved**
Erection of one detached house and removal to trees shown in tree survey dated Feb 79

f. GABLES

Ref: HGY/2013/1542 - **Extension/Alterations - Approved**
Rear extension at lower ground, ground and first floor levels

Ref: HGY/2013/0191 - **Extension/Alterations - Approved**
Rear extension at lower ground, ground and first floor levels

Ref: HGY/1994/0004 - **Full demolition works - Approved**
Erection of new house

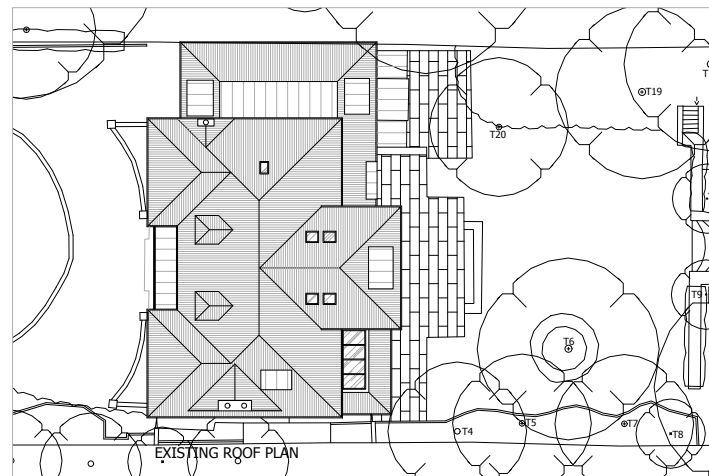
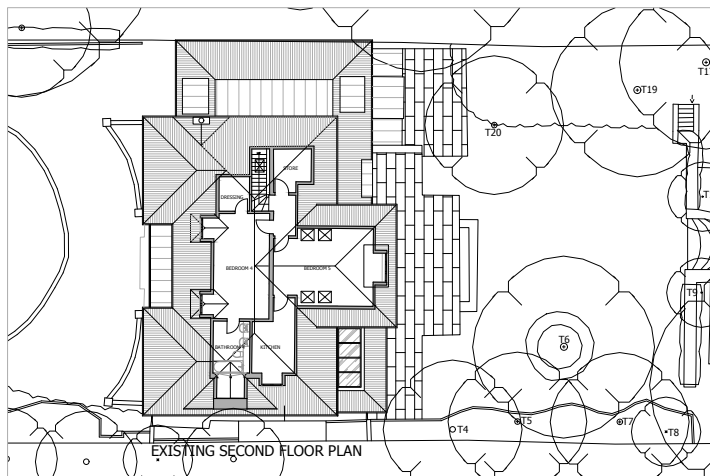
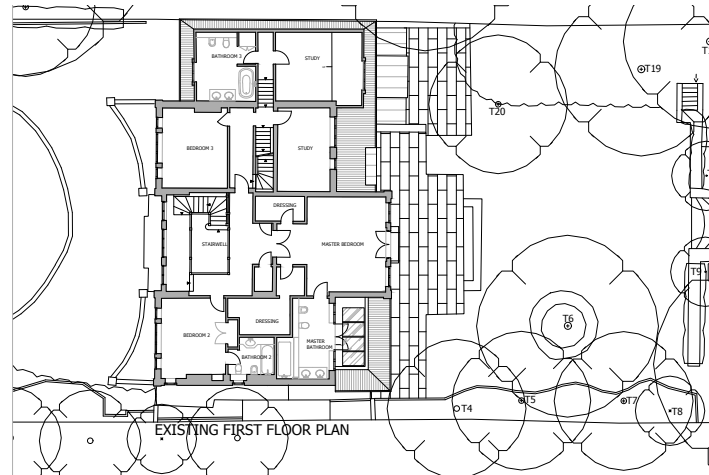
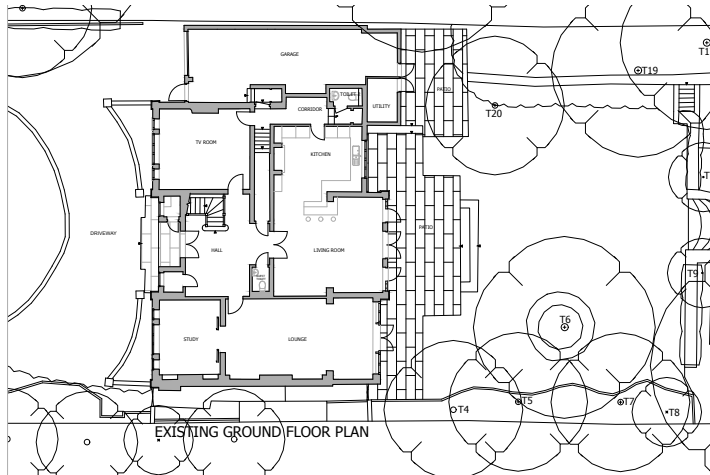
EXISTING PLANS

The existing property consists of two principle floors - ground and first - and a smaller, second floor is accommodated within the roof space.

A main lobby leads to the living areas - dining room, living room and kitchen to the east side, tv room to the north side, a study and lounge to the south side. The kitchen, living and lounge face the garden, where large paved areas lead down stepped access to the garden area. There is a garage to the north that can accommodate one vehicle.

The first floor of the building has three bedrooms, three bathrooms, a dressing room and two studies.

The second floor has two bedrooms, one bathroom and a kitchen. This floor is only accessible via an internal staircase.



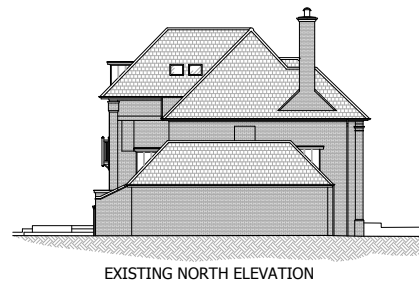
EXISTING ELEVATIONS

The existing dwelling is of brick finish, predominantly in a stretcher bond with detailed Flaming bond. The front elevation has two large bays that present approximately one third of the width of the original property. The window at ground floor level have brick elements over. The main entrance is slightly set back.

Although the front elevation of the original property is symmetrical and pleasant to look at, it is being damaged by the side addition to the north which brings imbalance to the whole.

Similarly the rear elevation has some elements of interest but has been altered and become disjointed by various additions and alterations.

A couple of dormers at front and rear bring light to the attic space. The roof of the side addition is well set down from the main roof.



2.0 PRE-APP

Principle of development

The principle of a rear and/or smaller extension to this house is considered acceptable in principle, subject to details.

Design, layout, heritage

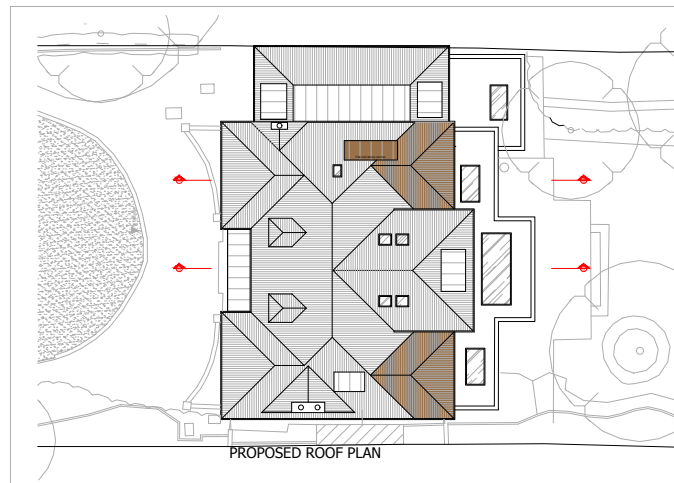
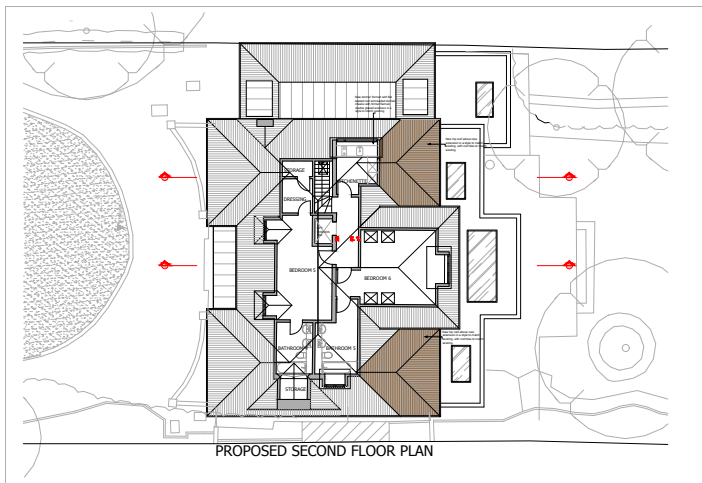
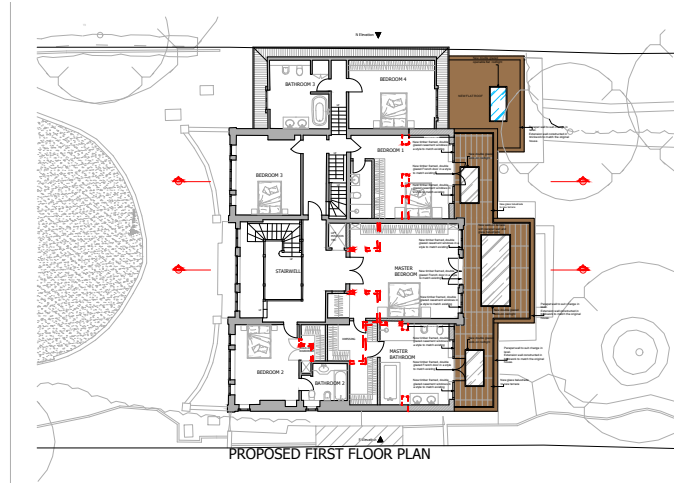
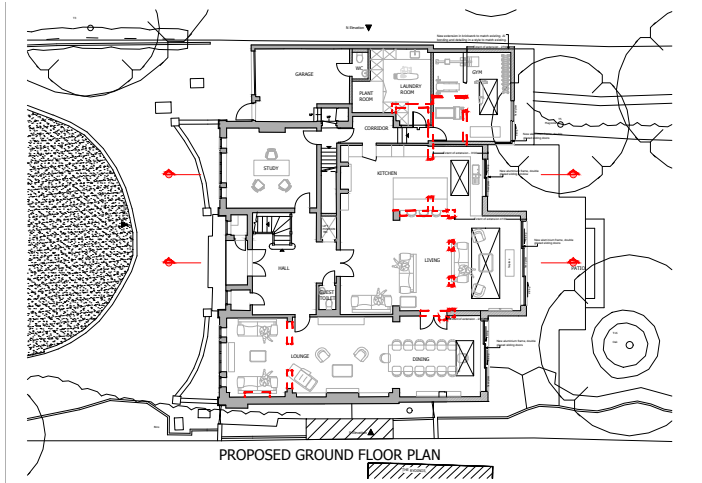
Bracken Knoll is an original building of modest architectural interest on its own merits and has been variously extended and altered in the past with a detracting porch and columns to front elevation. It is flanked by two surviving original houses, respectively Guildens to the north and The Rydings to the south.

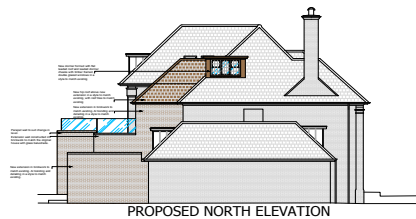
Despite the detracting alteration that the building has suffered over the years, both the siting, the overall proportions and the surviving original style and character of the building still contribute to the historic townscape and character of the conservation area to the point that the most recent 2017 consent was based on the principle that the retention of the facade would ensure that the existing building continues to contribute to the character of the conservation area and its townscape. Conservation advice related to that consent acknowledged, anyway, that the sole facade retention was less than ideal. The key contributing features of Bracken Knoll which were identified as part of the 2017 consent were the retention of the hierarchy of the frontage, the original materiality, and the retention of the gaps between the properties.

The intrinsic special features of interest of the original building were very limited to the sole main elevation and were more of a siting and spatial nature instead of being related to any specific architectural quality, craftsmanship quality and decorative features of the building.

The proposed alterations and extensions need therefore to respect especially the significance of the main elevation, given it was deemed worth of retention, and offer an opportunity to create an aesthetically pleasant, well-proportioned, lightweight, and honestly contemporary rear elevation that complements the character of the host building and sits well in its Conservation Area context.

The proposed side dormer to north elevation appears as a small and minimally intrusive addition; it is therefore supported in principle, depending on detailed design.





The rear extensions at ground floor would further project into the garden and, while broadly acceptable in principle, these should be harmoniously designed and detailed to read as consistent, contemporary additions that respond well to and complement the host building while reinforcing its spatial and functional relationship with the rear garden.

The symmetric, first floor extensions with pitched roof appear bulky and prominent and would obscure the original roof form of the host building.

It is therefore recommended to reduce the bulk and simplify the form of the first-floor extensions, so to unveil the roof form of the host building, and to simplify their design so to consistently match the design of the proposed extensions to ground floor.

The proposed roof terraces with fully glazed parapets are uncharacteristic of the host building and its design, however the terraces above the contemporary extension can be better expressed through visually permeable yet interesting, decorative panelling or metal mesh as balustrades.

The proposed extensions should be altogether externally coherent and should acknowledge, unveil, and complement the proportions, geometry, architectural forms and features, pattern of fenestration and windows proportions of the host building.

Proposed materials and detailing should complement the materiality, colour palette and defining features of the host building, but can be very contemporary and sleek.

The overall composition of the proposed rear elevation to ground and first floors can benefit from greater transparency, design consistency and elegant detailing to achieve a context-led response to the prevailing historic character of the host building and this part of the conservation area.

The proposed first floor terrace is longer than the existing and is proximity to the Rydings. It is recommended to consider existing and proposed distances and retain or improve existing conditions, in the interest of the protection of privacy and avoiding increased overlooking.

3.0 PROPOSED

3.1 DESIGN CONCEPT

The design concept for the proposal have been developed based on the requirements of the present users.

The scheme seeks to refurbish and extend the existing house into a modern family home with 7 bedrooms arranged on the existing three floors.

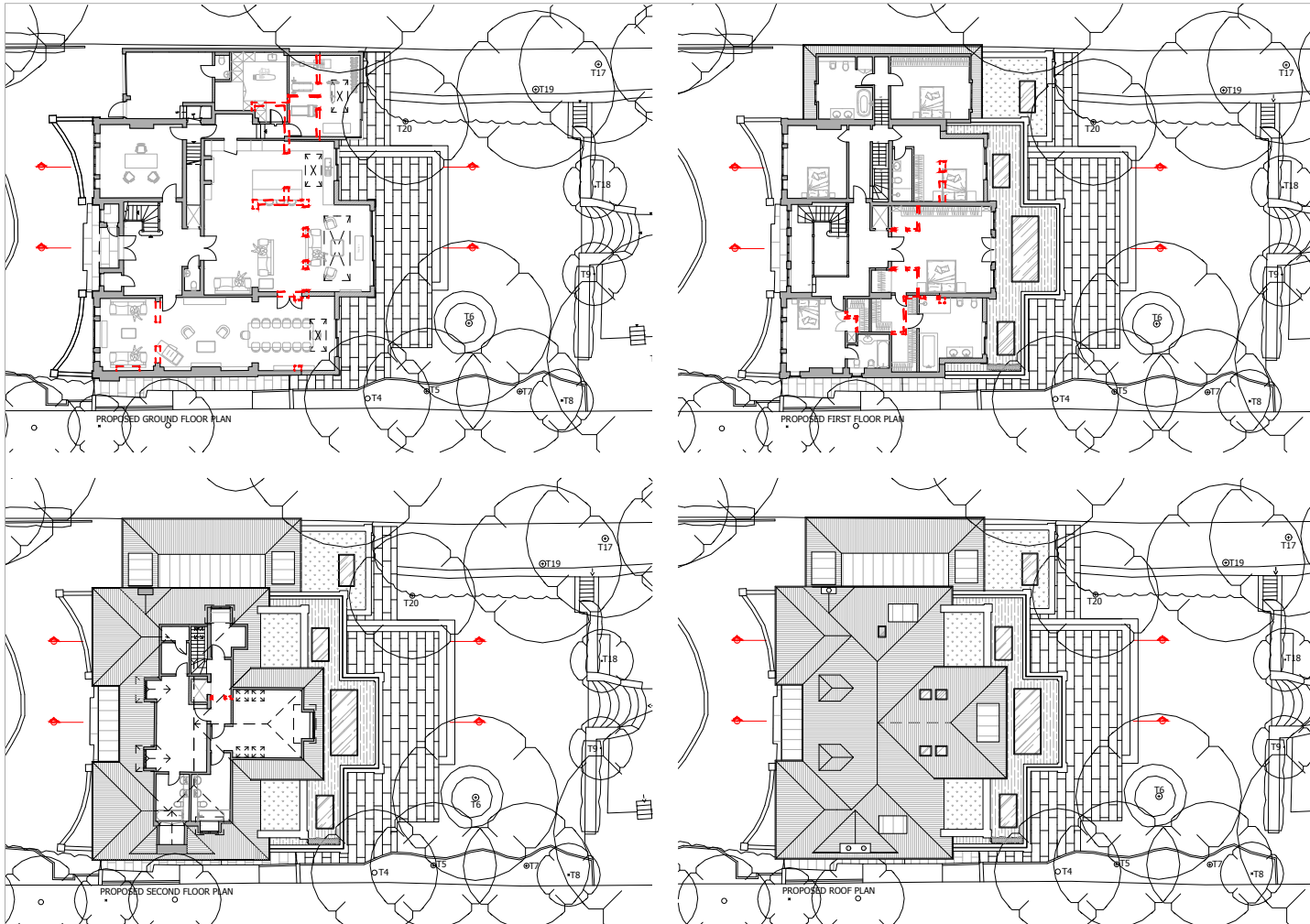
The proposed massing and elevation have been carefully considered to respect the significance of the main rear elevation and, at the same time, to create an aesthetically pleasant, well-proportioned and contemporary rear elevation that complements the character of the host building.

The new extensions to the building have been designed to encourage views out over the landscaped garden and away from neighbouring properties.

There are no proposals to alter the front facade, which will be retained intact.

3.2 PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT

The proposal makes use of the existing building footprint and extends to the rear. The proposed extension has a stepped central bay as per the existing configuration and its width will match the existing property. Existing trees and driveways will all be retained to maintain the characteristically generous gardens and driveways along the avenue.





3.3 PROPOSED PLANS

Proposed Ground Floor

The proposed ground floor of the main house will accommodate many of the living spaces attributed to modern family living. Entering through a large entrance hall that will lead to a living room, kitchen, family room and breakfast room, as well as dining room and reception room on the south side and a study on the north side. The lift will provide vertical circulation to the upper floors. The primary level access to the building will remain to the Courtenay Avenue side.

The extension to the garage, accessible from the main house, will include a new laundry/plant room and a gym, which open onto the rear garden.

Proposed First Floor

The proposed first floor will accommodate the existing master bedroom with an enlarged en-suite and re-shaped dressing room and four additional bedrooms. All the key windows are orientated east-west as per existing building. This limits overlooking onto adjacent neighbouring gardens to the north and south.

Proposed Second Floor

The proposed second floor will accommodate two bedroom with en-suite and a space for a kitchenette, which will have natural light thank to the new dormer window.

Proposed Roof

The new extensions will be build with flat roofs, so to maintain the profile of the original roof of the host building, which will be retained.

3.3 PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

Front elevation

By retaining the original facade of the house, the historic relevance is kept and the scheme will preserve the character of the Conservation area.

Rear Elevation

The proposed additions to the existing rear elevations have been carefully considered and designed, to be read as consistent and contemporary additions which respond well and complement the host building, reinforcing the relationship with the rear garden.