

16 COURTENAY AVENUE

'GUILDENS'

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

PLANNING APPLICATION

REV - A

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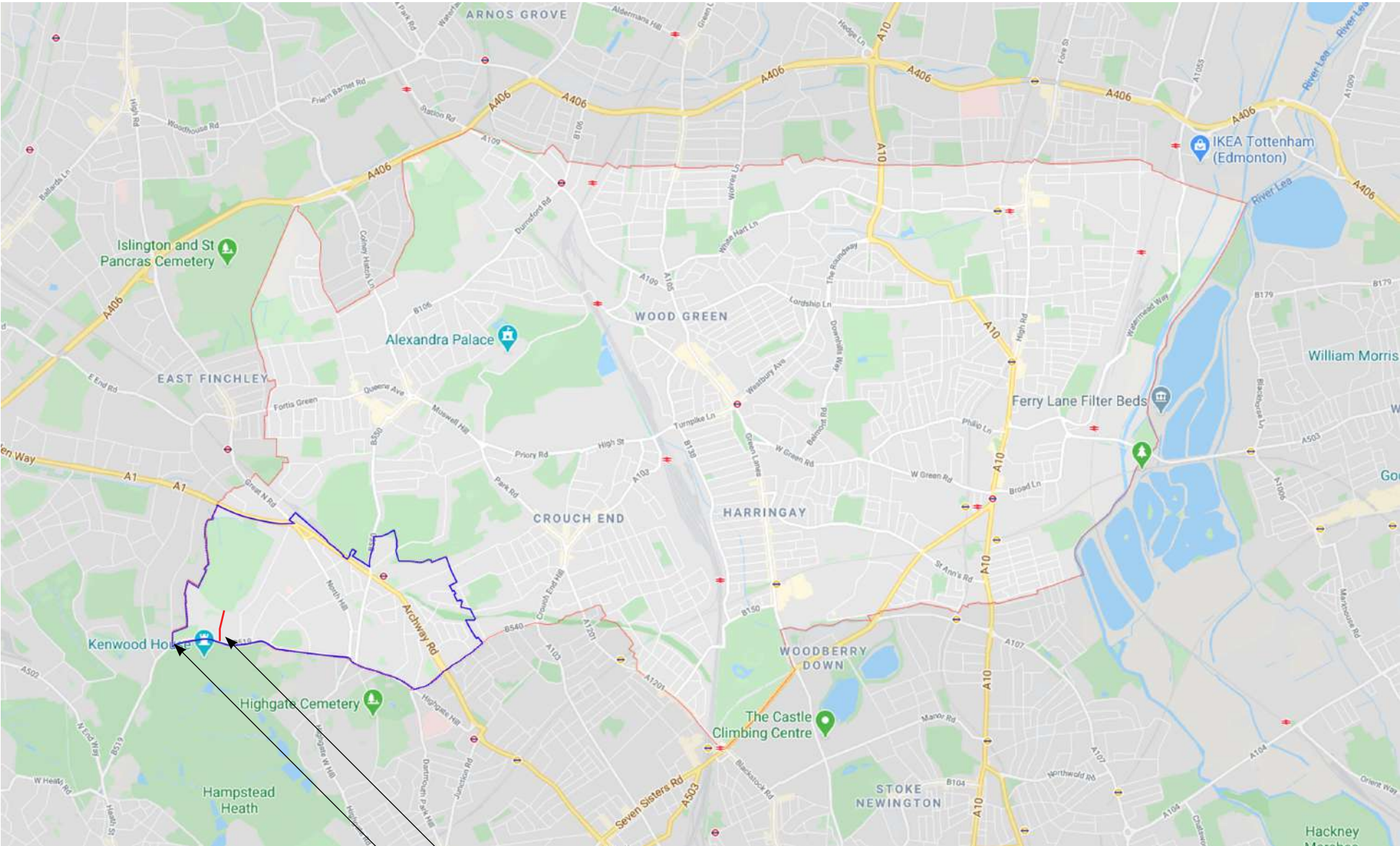
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Wolff Architects have prepared this statement on behalf of our client in support of an application for the removal of the front façade of approved replacement dwelling (HGY/2022/2162) and installation of new façade with associated alterations to the roof at ‘Guildens’, 16 Courtenay Avenue, N6 4LP.

This report should be read in conjunction with existing, demolition and proposed development drawings submitted by Wolff Architects. Reference should be made to the latest relevant Wolff Architects issue sheet for a full schedule of these drawings.



— Courtenay Avenue
— Highgate Conservation Area



1.0

LOCATION



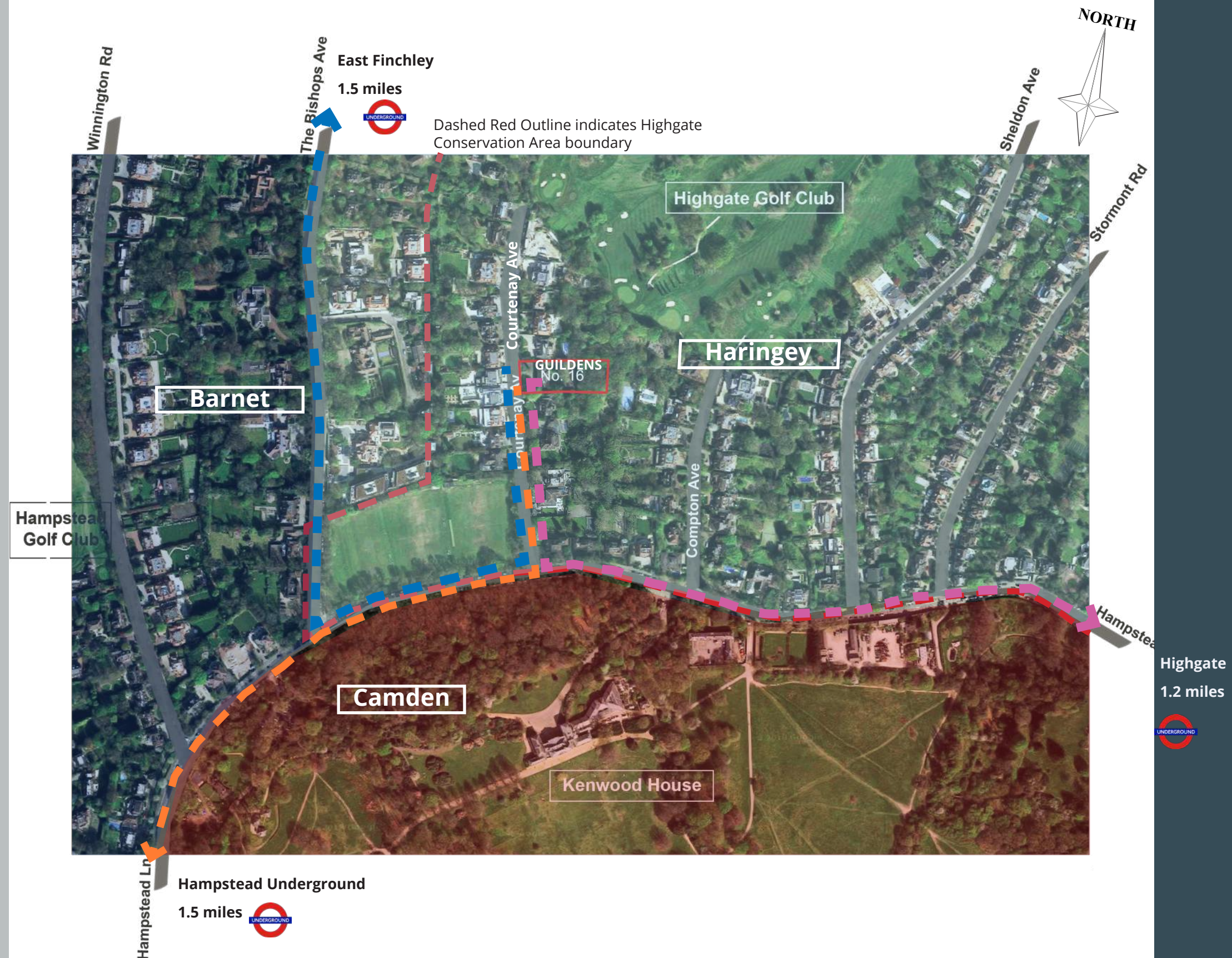
SITE LOCATION

The application site comprises of Guildens - No. 16 Courtenay Avenue.

The scheme is located within the Highgate Conservation Area. Therefore, the new build proposal has been designed to be sympathetic to the context, character and appearance of its surroundings as outlined in the Highgate Conservation Area Character Appraisal and any new additions are designed to complement the retained elements.

Courtenay Avenue is a private road with controlled access. It is marked by large-scale single family dwellings in traditional styles, with Neo-Georgian and Neoclassical buildings within the immediate surroundings of the site, as well as some Arts and Crafts. A number of properties in contemporary styles have been recently introduced on the street. The original building facade of Guildens is of limited architectural interest. The original building has received a number of ill-advised alterations and extensions throughout the years and has recently been granted permission for full demolition with facade retention.

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 and, in particular, the original property while creating a thoughtfully designed high-quality dwelling for contemporary living.



Site highlighted in RED



ORIGINAL SITE SPATIAL CONTEXT

Originally the street facing facade was largely exposed with an exception of a large tree on the northern side of the elevation shielding the north wing. The house was 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 border of the property is currently marked by a low hedge and no gates are present.

The rear garden of the property has multiple levels accessed by various stairs. The back of the garden is heavily overgrown with bushes and large trees while closer to the house there is a significant amount of hard landscaping and a tennis court.

With regard to the Highgate Conservation Area, the 'Highgate Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan' (dated 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.

It is noted that a number of houses in the street have been rebuilt previously with the newer houses usually larger and closer together through infilling their plots more fully. This is not just a recent change and such ongoing changes of the type of properties in the street has led to an evolving character for the street.

Original Property highlighted in RED

Western Birds-eye View



Southern Birds-eye View



PLANNING HISTORY AND PREVIOUS DEVELOPMENT

A full overview of the status of Guildens is provided within the Heritage Statement prepared by Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture that is submitted with this document. That Statement, which concludes that the existing property's architectural significance is low and its overall contribution to the Conservation Area is neutral, should be considered in full but some key elements of it are summarised and considered below.

Most pertinently, it should be highlighted that Guildens is of only limited quality as architecture and is considered to be a rather poor example of a building designed by C H B Quennell.

There is no prevailing form or architectural style on Courtenay Avenue as the road has continued to change with many houses significantly rebuilt or replaced. Replacement of, and significant changes to, the houses in Courtenay Avenue is not just a recent process. As summarised on the marked-up plan, such development has been ongoing for in excess of 30 years with other houses also constructed prior to this time that 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.



Somerlese



Ridgefield



Branksome



Beaulieu



Guildens



2.0

EXISTING PLANS



EXISTING SITE CONTEXT

The neighbouring property to the north, Blue Orchard, sits in a close proximity to the border and is separated from the Guildens by a stone retaining wall topped with a high timber fence, forming a narrow path between properties. Blue Orchard is externally rendered in an off white tone with dark tile roofs. The property has a significant amount of modern features with some Arts and Crafts elements.

On the south side there is ample space between the existing dwelling and the neighbouring property - Bracken Knoll, even though Bracken Knoll extends right to the property boundary. There is a generous border of shielding planting between the buildings. Bracken Knoll is a red brick building with some Arts and Crafts features while maintaining largely Neoclassical composition and layout.

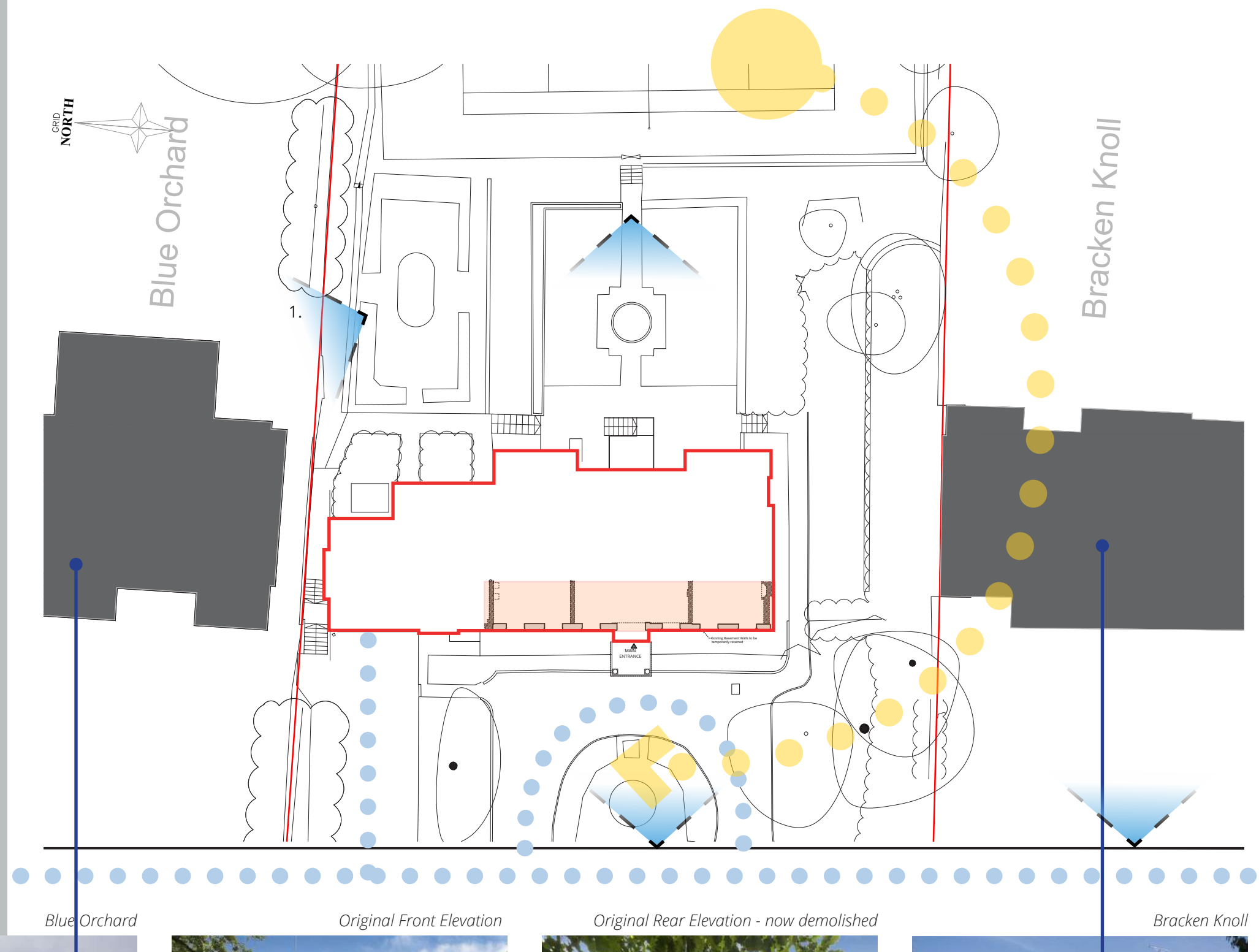
Outlined in red is the original property extent that has now mostly been demolished in preparation for the new development works in accordance with recent planning approval.

KEY:

- Site outlined in red.
- ○ ○ Existing vehicular access.
- ← ● ● Sun Direction

Original house outlined in RED

Retained structure for second phase demolition



Blue Orchard



Original Front Elevation



Original Rear Elevation - now demolished



Bracken Knoll

EXISTING FLOOR PLANS

Overall, the condition of the original property was poor and becoming increasingly less habitable with leakages due to lack of maintenance and upkeep.

Internally, the building required modernising and updating. The floor to ceiling heights were low comparative to modern living standards with a mix of outdated styles and furnishings. The overall internal condition of the property has deteriorated with signs of water damage. Currently, the original house has been partially demolished through stages.

All pre commencement conditions - 4, 5, 9 and 10 of the original application allowed on appeal ref. APP/Y5420/W/19/3243272 have been discharged in 2022 which allowed for demolition works to commence on site.

Phase 1 demolition works have been progressed lately retaining the front facade and some internal walls for stability.

Whilst implementing the scheme through Phase 1 works, Phase 2 demolitions have been temporarily paused to allow for the New Build planning determination.

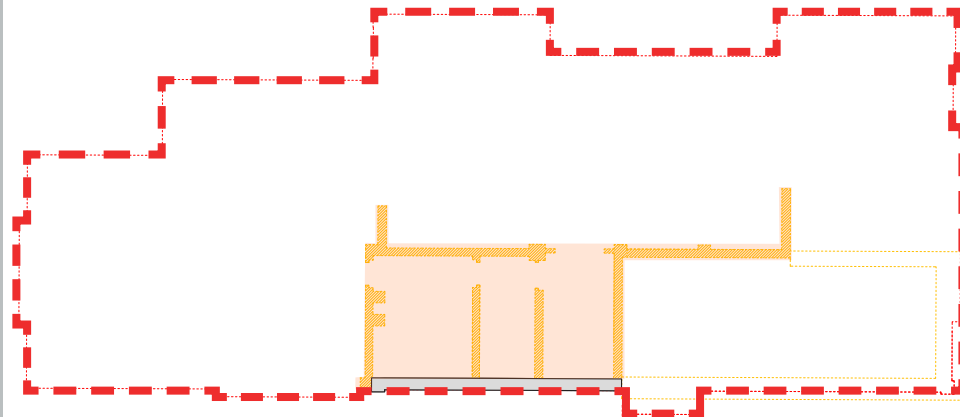
 Second Phase- demolition

 Outline of original house extent

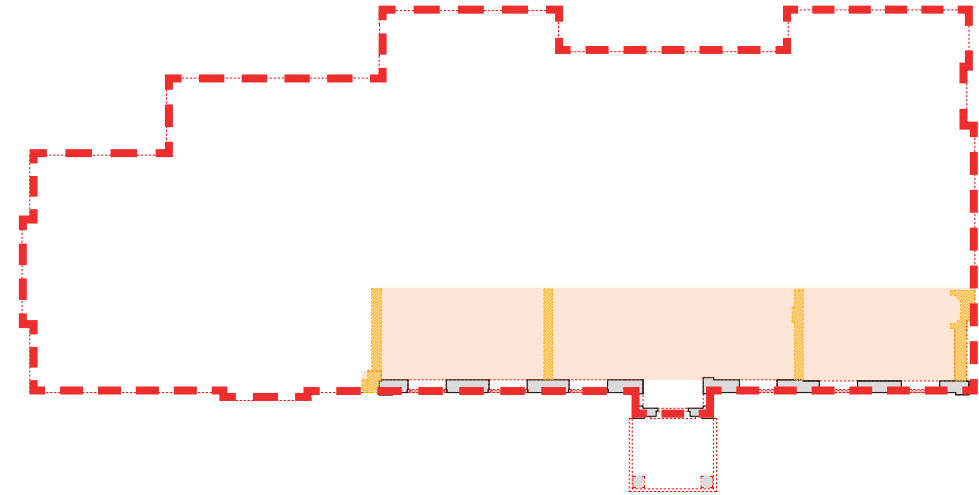
 Existing

Original outlined in RED

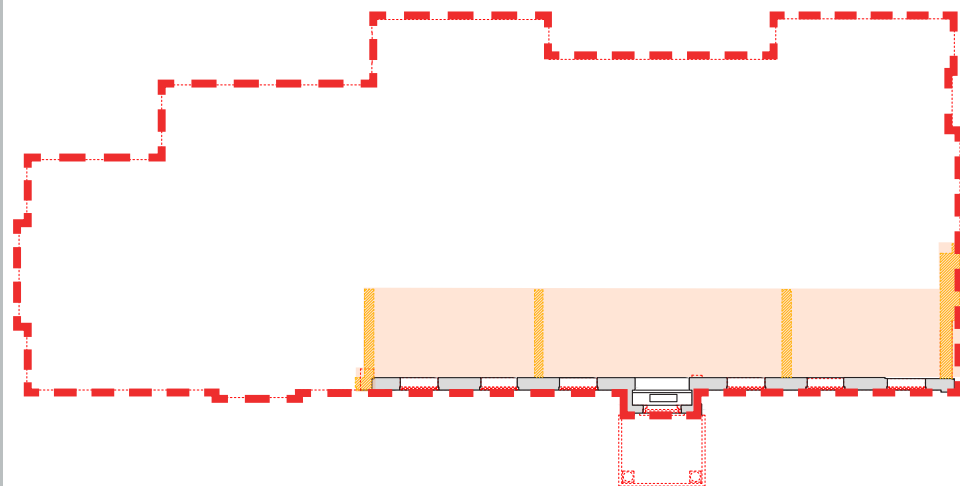
Existing Lower Ground Floor



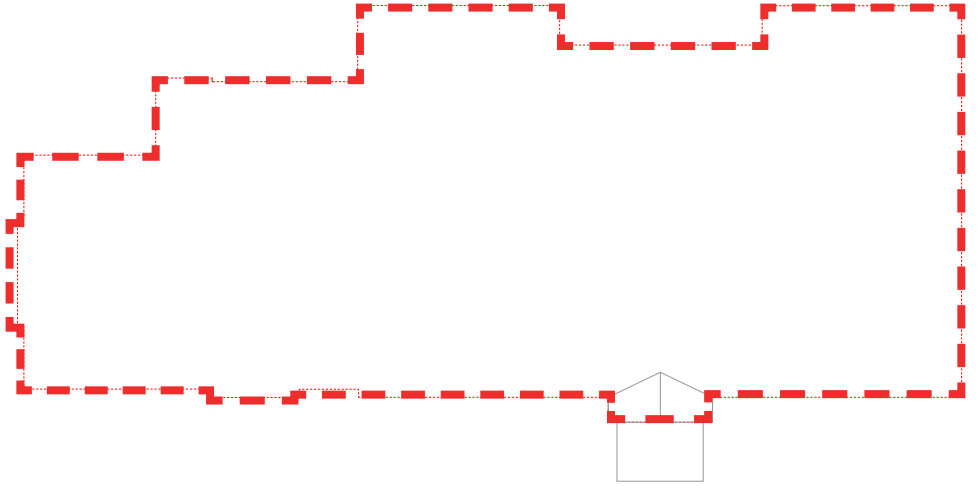
Existing Ground Floor



Existing First Floor



Existing Roof Plan



 2nd phase demolition currently on hold



One of the pre commencement conditions discharged last year - Condition 4 identified the structural methodology with which the front facade shell be retained. The drawings are presented opposite.

These works are planned to commence within the next phase of demolitions which will leave only a fraction of the main facade remaining as highlighted on the 'Existing Front Elevation' drawing, also shown on this page for reference.

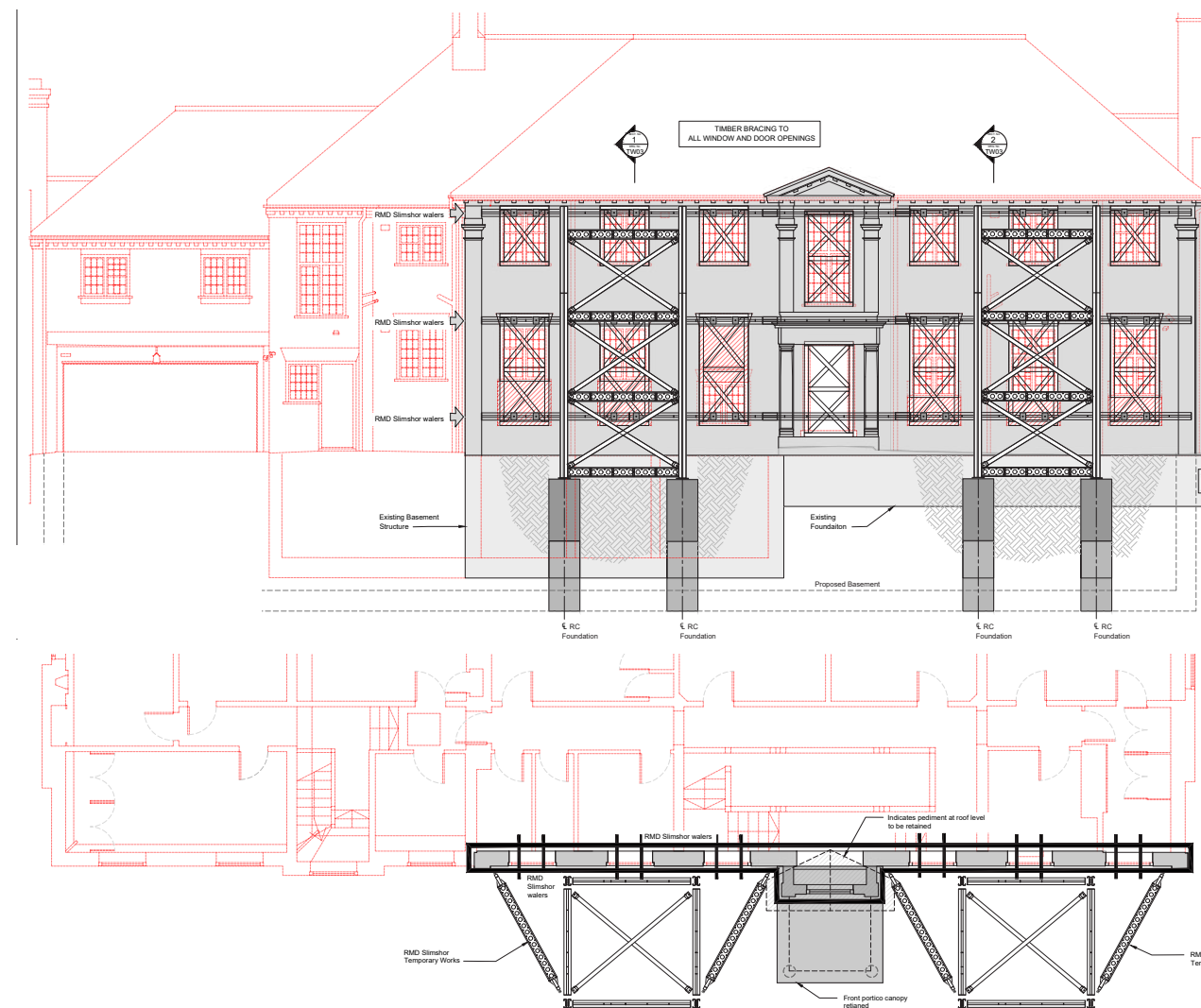
The retention of an existing facade creates numerous conflicts with the rest of the scheme:

- Visually it restricts the architectural style and the proportions of the new property enforcing what was originally designed as a poor quality frontage on the rest of the house.
- The floor to ceiling heights needs to be retained rather low comparing to the modern living standards in the area.
- Retention of the front wall also compromises the sustainability benefits of what could otherwise be a fully and integrally insulated home.



Existing Front Elevation

Existing South Side Elevation



3.0

IMPLEMENTED PLANNING



APPROVED PLANS

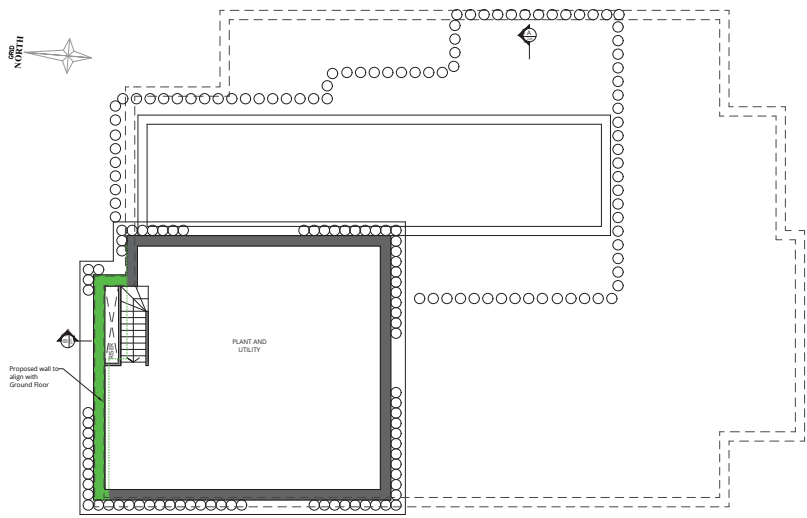
The scheme was approved on appeal ref. APP/Y5420/W/19/3243272 dated 23/12/21 for the demolition of existing dwelling with retention of front facade and erection of replacement two-storey dwelling above ground and associated extension to lower ground floor along with the creation of a basement level. Following the approval, a Non-Material Amendment ref. HGY/2022/2162 was granted on 11/07/2022. With the following amendments: excavation of lightwell to rear, reposition external wall at basement and lower ground floor level, fenestration alterations and additions within lightwell, new balcony and green roof at 1st floor level and alterations to 2nd floor level dormer and alterations to roof.

The proposed works are considered to have an acceptable visual and neighbour impact and the development is in accordance with the relevant Development Plan policies.

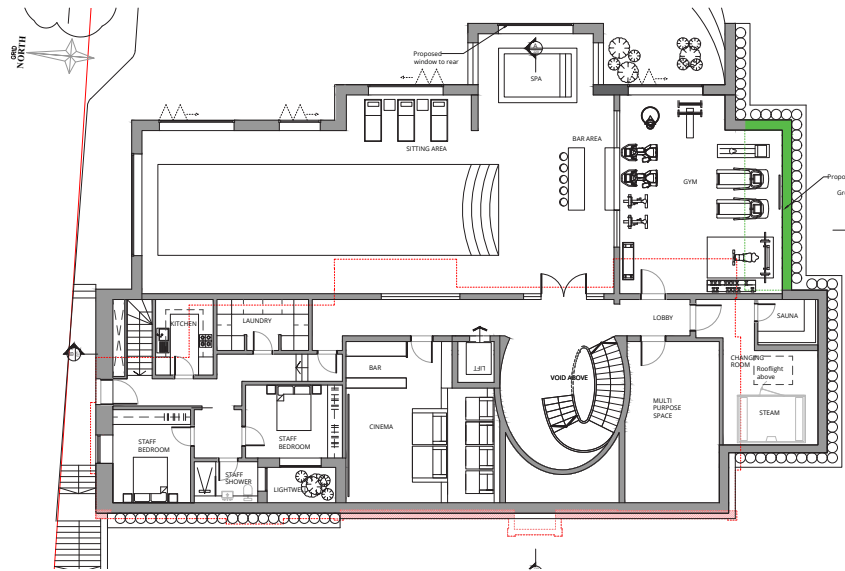
The large majority of the existing rear garden would be retained providing a suitable setting for the replacement house.

The excavation of lightwell to rear and the reposition of the external wall at basement and lower ground floor level will allow more light to the interiors.

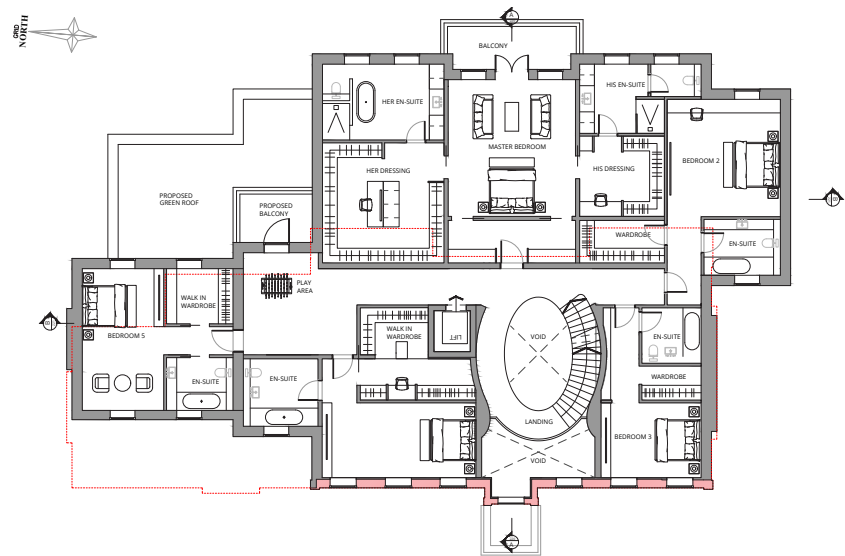
Internally, through the shifting and changing of its shape each floor plan has uncovered a huge amount of space that has been able to be redistributed to different room functions and the redesign of the primary circulation stair. This has allowed more generous bedroom layouts.



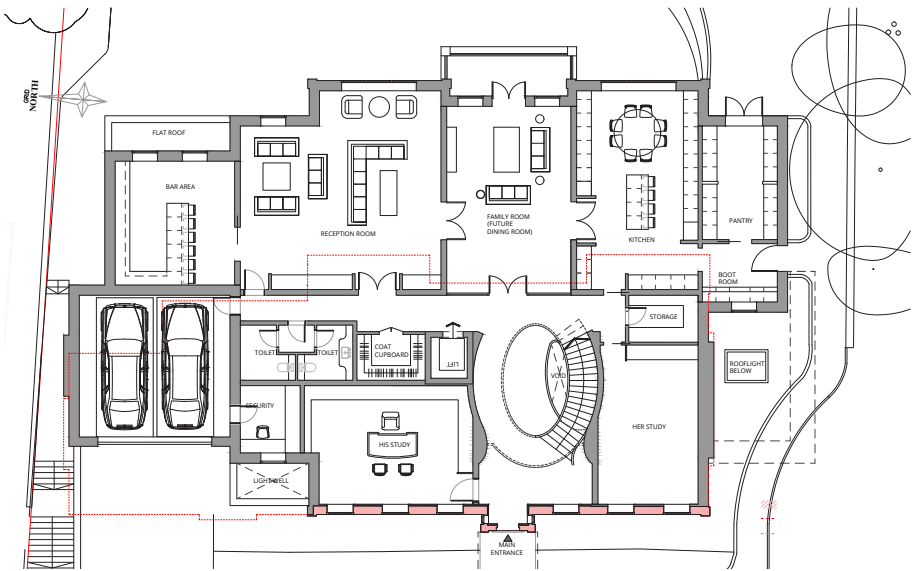
Basement Floor



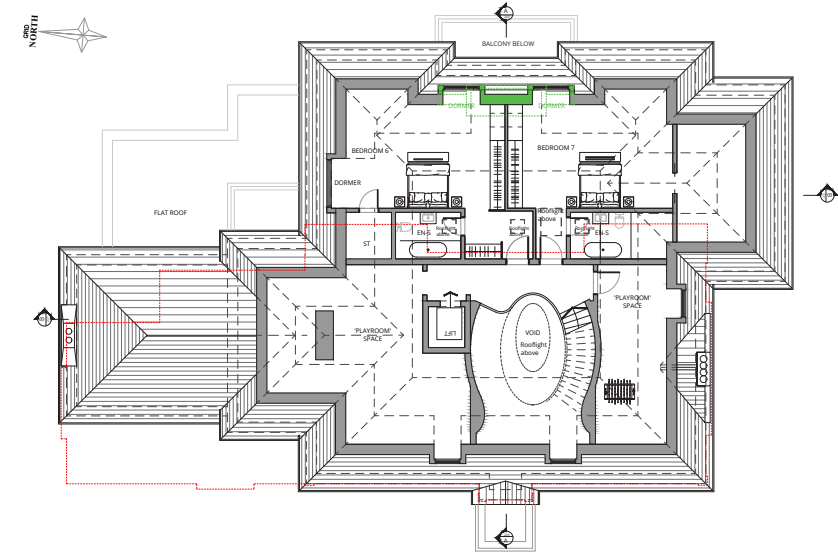
Lower Ground Floor



First Floor



Ground Floor



Second Floor

Original outlined in RED

Retained facade fabric in PINK



APPROVED ELEVATIONS

The approved scheme aimed to preserve the primary facade (Facade retention) of the front elevation while replacing unsympathetic side extensions with a more suitable stepped back extension to the north and a symmetrical hipped extension to the south.

The balancing effect of the south extension would centre the retained facade and complement its symmetrical composition.

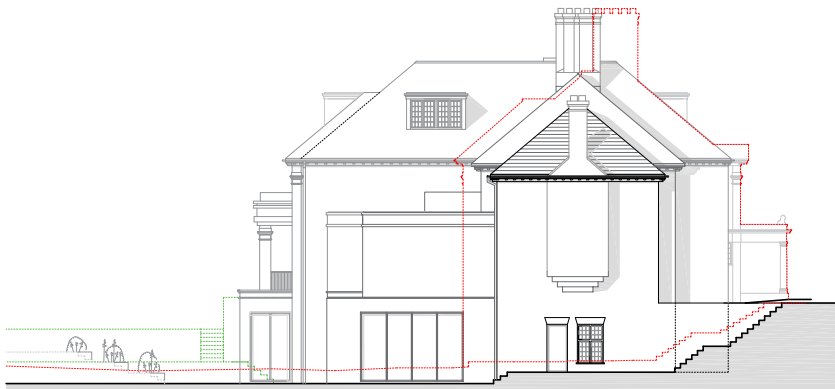
The overall proposal takes into account the guidelines set out in the Character Appraisal for the Highgate Conservation Area (sub-area 7) and seeks to emulate a Neo Georgian country dwelling with Arts and Crafts features in an open and rural landscaping preferred for the Avenue.



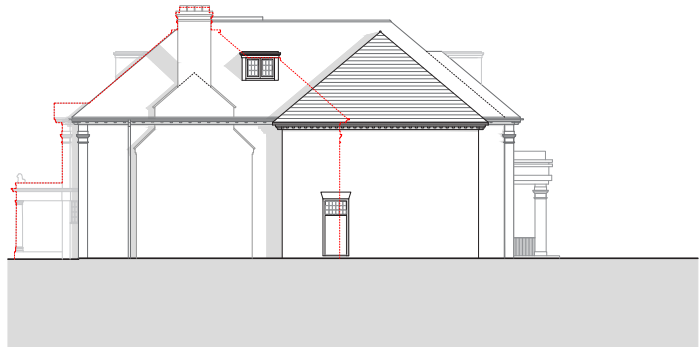
Front Elevation



Rear Elevation



North Elevation

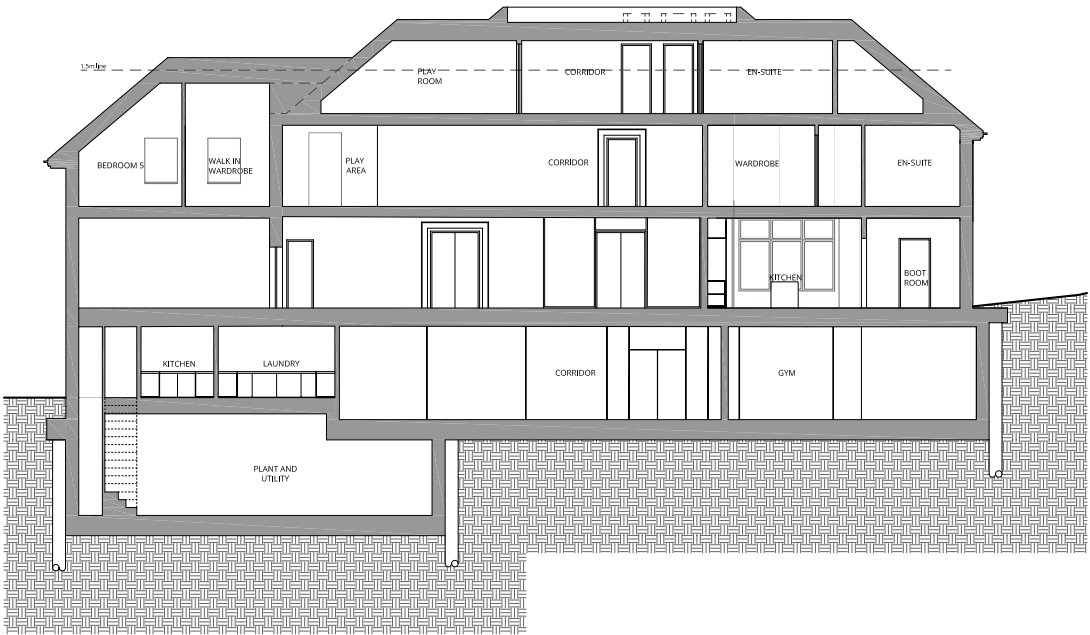


South Elevation

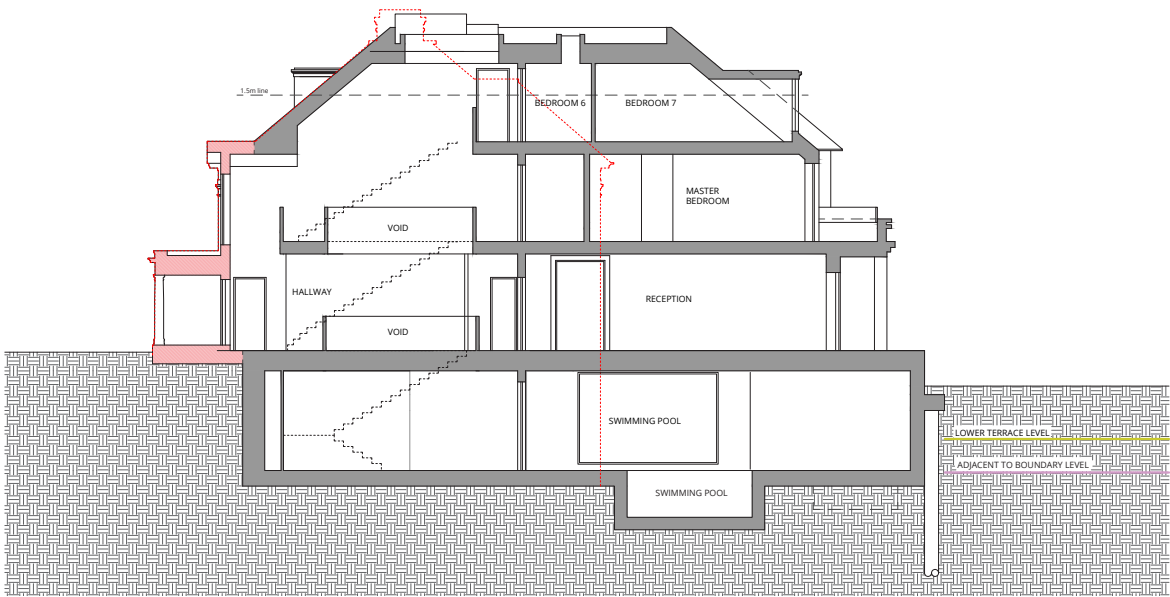
Original outlined in RED

Retained facade fabric in PINK





Long Section



Short Section

Original outlined in RED
Retained facade fabric in PINK



4.0

PROPOSED



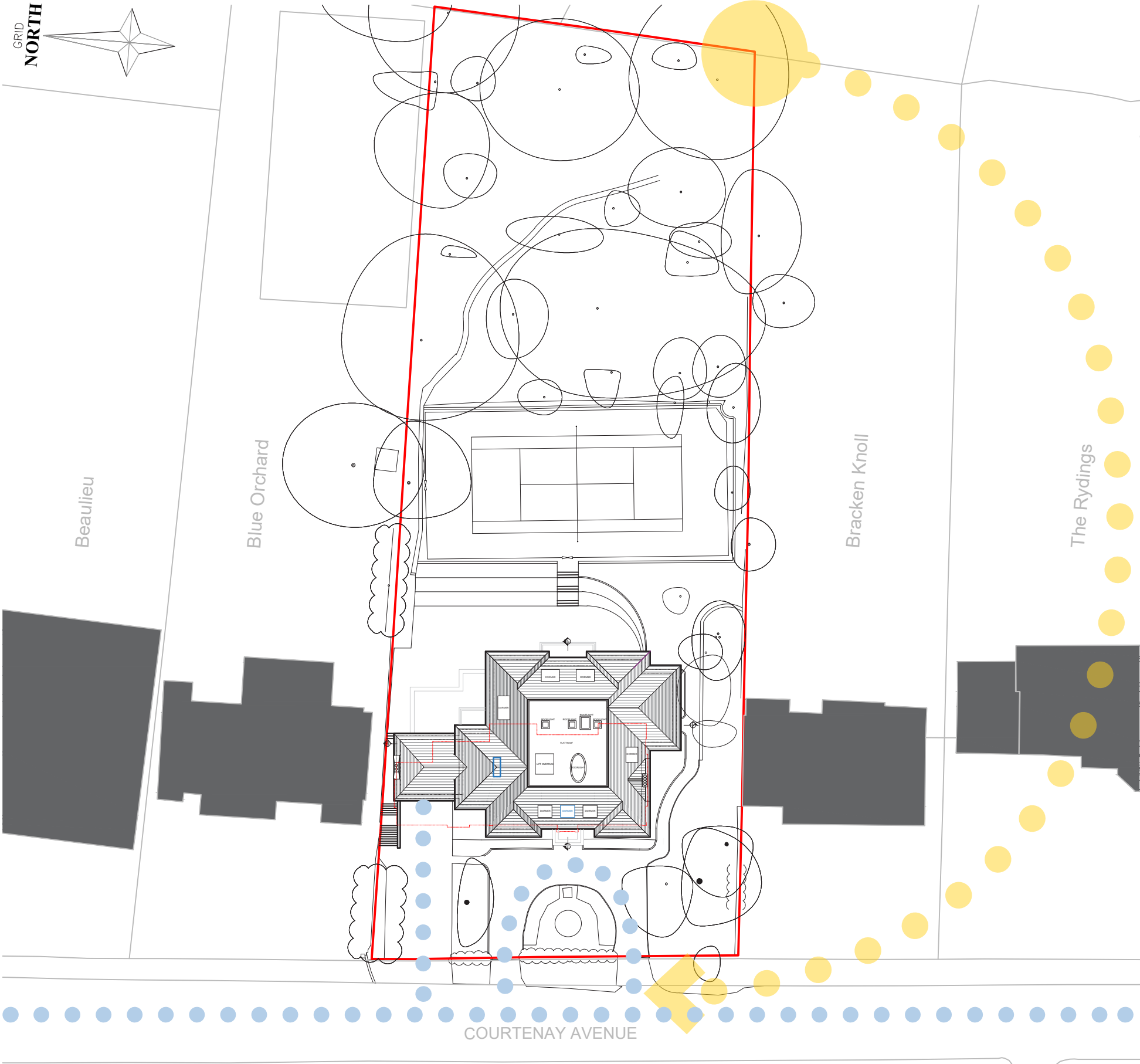
PROPOSED SITE CONTEXT

The outline of the proposed development will stay unchanged from the established approved scheme.

The trees and overall planting will also be kept as current approval to preserve the setting and mature planting.

- KEY:
- Site outlined in red.
 - Existing vehicular access.
 - Sun Direction
 - Original house outlined in RED
 - Retained

Original property highlighted in RED

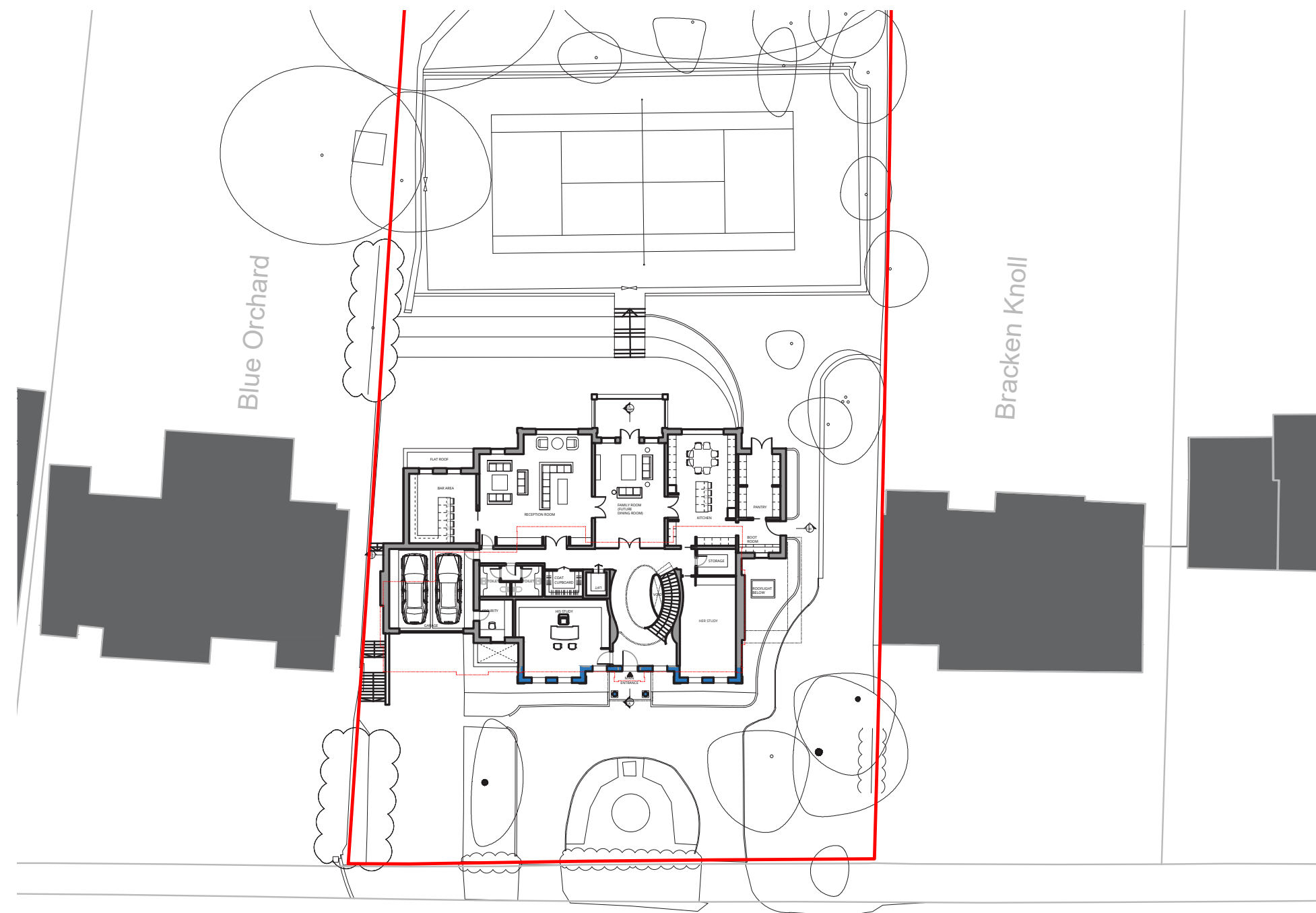


PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT

The proposed scheme sits on the site with the same orientation as the original property and does not significantly alter the front elevation building line, keeping it in a recessed location in relation to the street.

The scale of the proposed development is restricted to either existing building footprint or areas identified as free from major tree roots and has been established under the implemented permission.

The building line to the rear is kept within the staggered rhythm of the neighbouring properties.



Original house footprint outlined in RED
New elements highlighted in BLUE



PROPOSED PLANS

As previously mentioned, the new scheme is broadly unaltered in a plan form and offers the same proposed floor plans that have previously been consented. Few deviations from the original implemented scheme have been highlighted in blue mainly to address the new front facade.

Proposed Basement

The basement level incorporates plant room and other utility areas. It can be accessed via small, dedicated stairwell leading into the staff area at the lower ground floor available to the north side of the house.

Proposed Lower Ground Floor

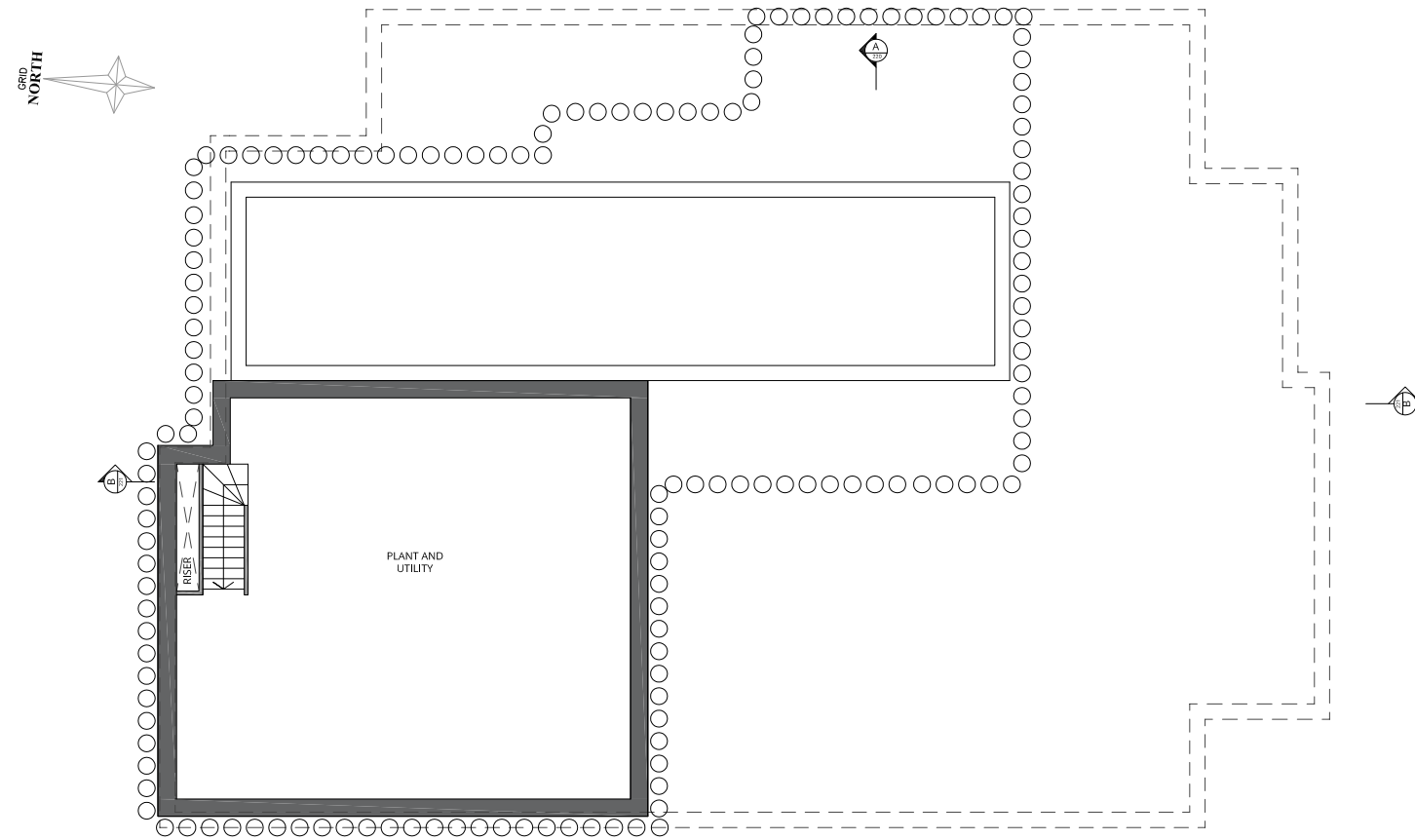
The lower ground floor will be accessed via the main central staircase and the lift, which will be provided to allow access to the rest of the floors.

It will predominantly sit under the footprint of the main house above with slight projections to the north and south. One discretely located light-well is proposed to be introduced to the (front) western part to provide natural light and ventilation to the spaces below.

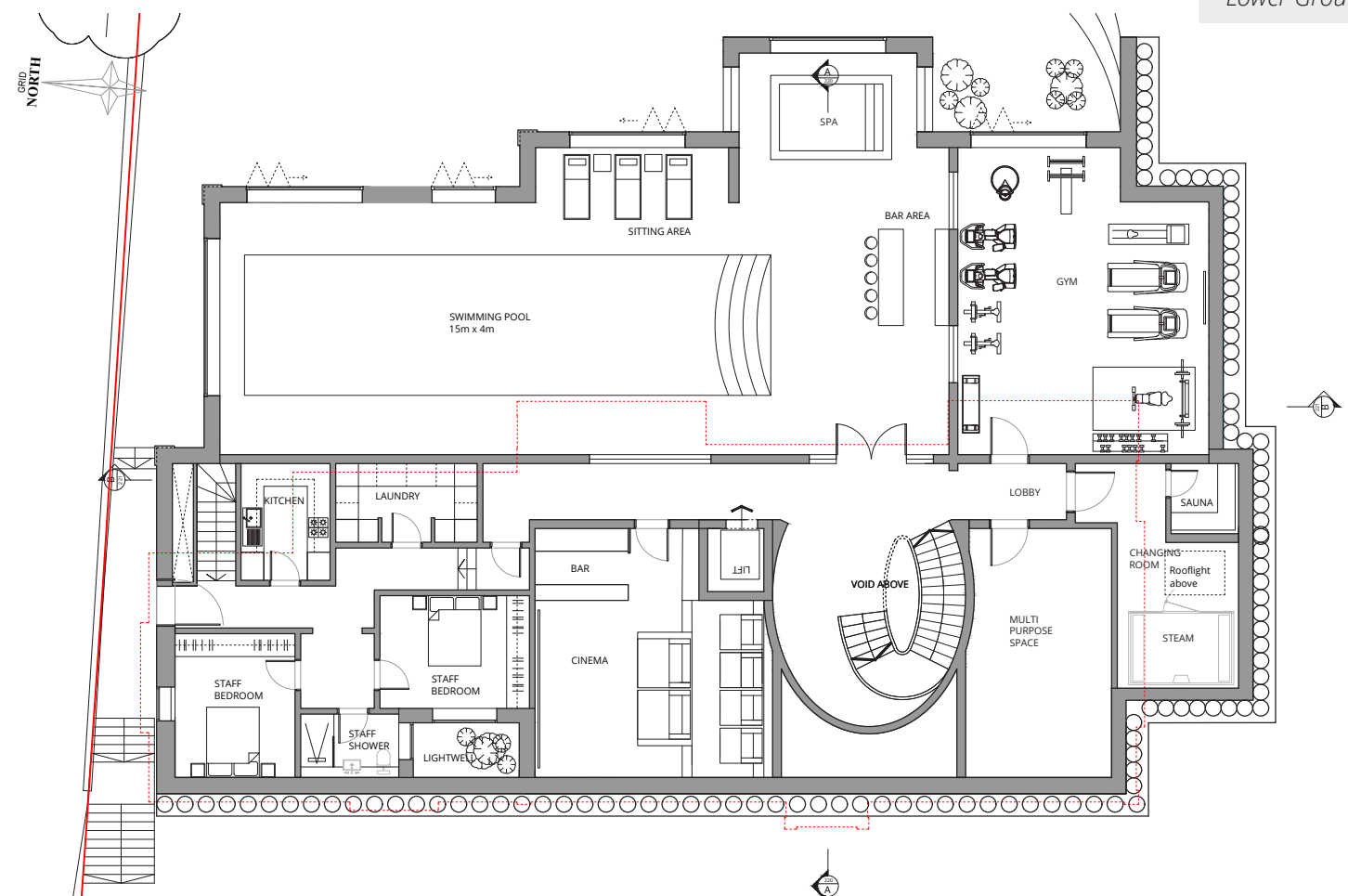
The proposed lower ground floor will accommodate the recreational and leisure facilities including gym, cinema, swimming pool and spa. A back of house facilities such as laundry, kitchen, staff accommodation and a dedicated service staircase will also be incorporated into this floor area as indicated on the floor plan opposite. There is also a dedicated side access proposed to staff accommodation via external stairs to the north side.

Original house footprint outlined in RED
New elements highlighted in BLUE

Basement Plan



Lower Ground Plan



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 reception room, kitchen, family room and a breakfast room, as well as study rooms to either side. The later rooms open out onto a rear terrace. The main staircase and lift will provide vertical circulation to the basement and upper floors. The primary access to the building will remain to the Courtenay Avenue side although an additional side entry door is proposed with a step free access.

Both primary and secondary access doors exceed 850mm clear opening. Circulation hallways on the ground floor and above floor all exceed 900mm clear width, while all doors exceed 800mm clear opening.

There are accessible WCs on the entrance ground floor with doors opening outwards and large bathrooms exceeding minimum dimensions for an adaptable bathroom. All bedrooms have ample space for 750mm clear zone on all three aspects of the bed.

In conclusion, the proposal complies with all requirements for visitable and adaptable dwellings stated in the Building Approved Document M: Part 4 (1 & 2).

The ground floor also includes an integrated garage with two car parking spaces and a dedicated security room.

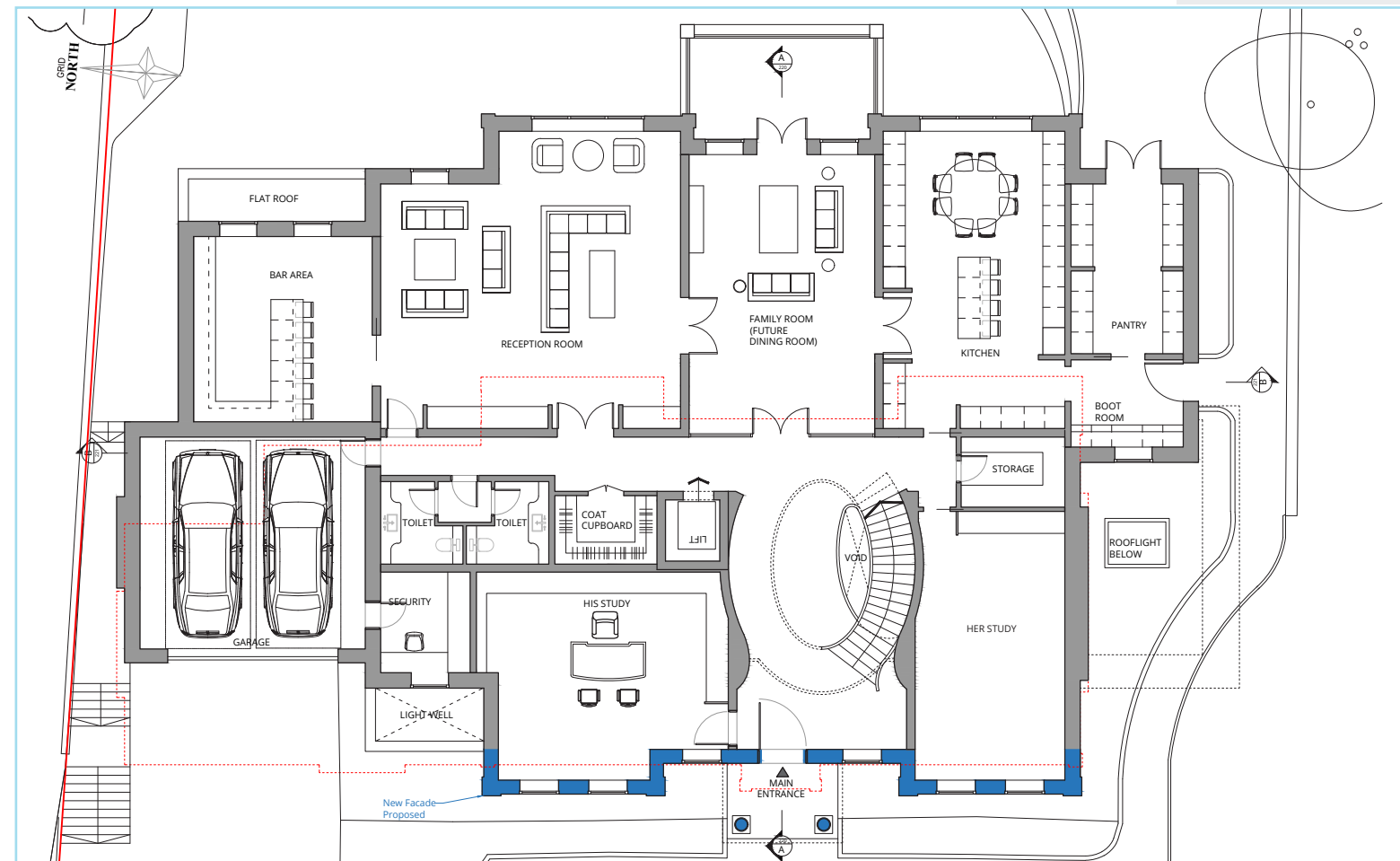
The proposal accommodates an overall four on-site parking spaces; two externally and two internally.

Proposed First Floor

The proposed first floor will accommodate the master suite with Lady's and Gentleman's En Suite and Dressing Rooms and four additional bedrooms. All additional bedrooms have their own dedicated en-suites as indicated on the first floor plan. All key windows are orientated east-west as per existing building. This limits overlooking onto adjacent neighbouring gardens to the north and south.

Original house footprint outlined in RED
New elements highlighted in BLUE

Ground Floor Plan



First Floor Plan



Proposed Second Floor

The proposed second floor is set back within the roof-space and accommodates two further bedrooms for guests with associated en suites and ample storage space. It also houses two additional rooms that offer additional play space. Most rooms benefit from generously sized dormer windows.

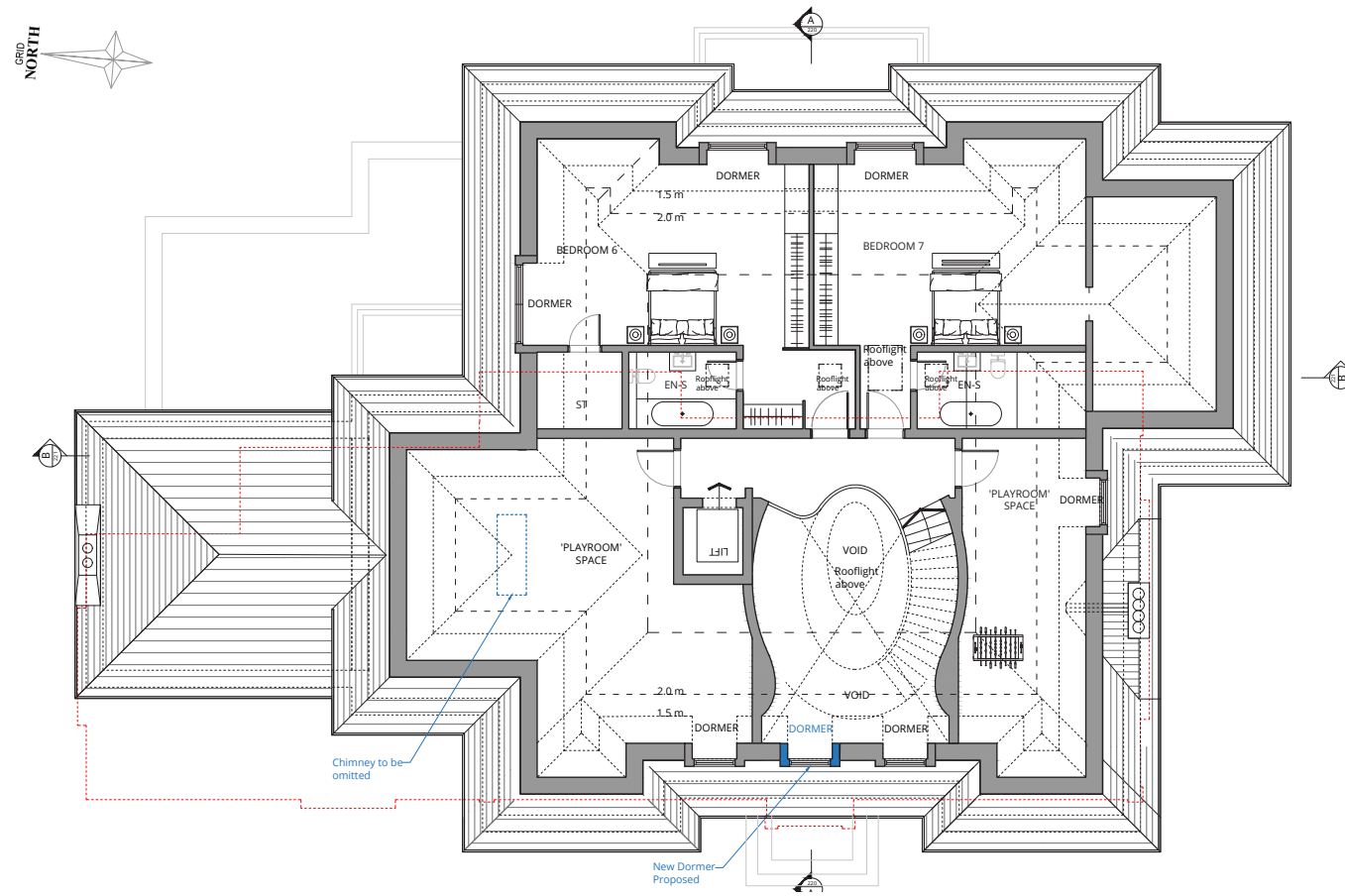
Proposed Roof

The main pitched roof to the new dwelling is to be constructed in handmade clay plain tiles. This gives a more textured weathered in look that will blend with the locality. The details of the eaves, hips, valleys and ridges are to be of traditional construction.

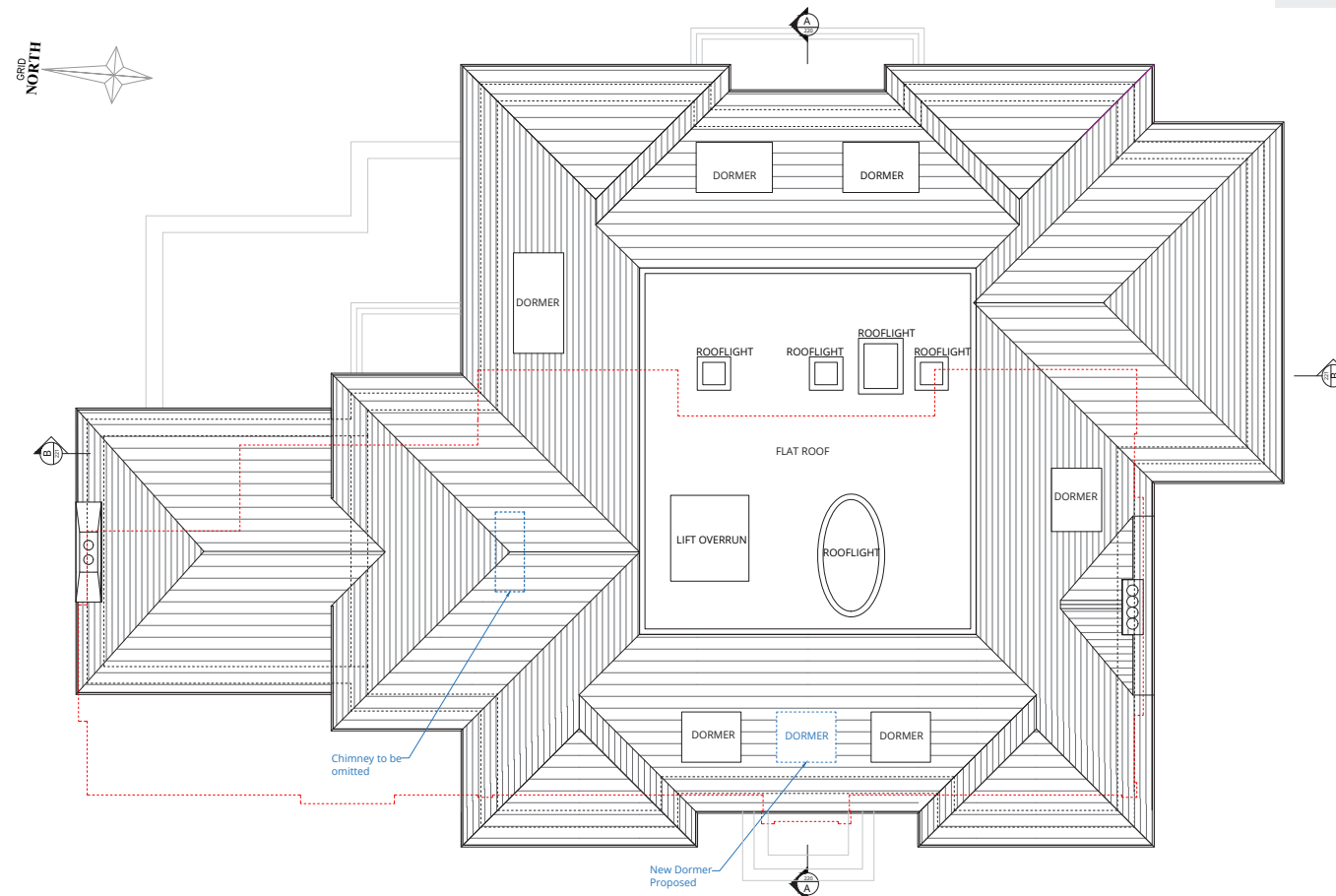
Access hatch will be created through one of the skylights for maintenance of the central flat crown roof.

Original house footprint outlined in RED
New elements highlighted in BLUE

Second Floor Plan



Roof Plan



FRONT ELEVATION

Replacement of the front facade allows for a better proportioned and consistent frontage. The overall proposal takes into account the guidelines set out in the Character Appraisal for the Highgate Conservation Area (sub-area 7) and seeks to emulate a Neo Georgian country dwelling with Arts and Crafts features in an open and rural landscaping preferred for the Avenue.

It also reflects the proportions and detailing of the houses nearby. It is proposed that this replacement dwelling is to be in a traditional style so that it is sympathetic to the locality and provides an enhancement to the area as a whole.

The scale of the windows proposed has been carefully considered to reflect the internal layout of the building whilst ensuring a harmonious exterior to the proposed development. The windows are subdivided into smaller panes to reflect those typically used within the area. These windows will be fitted with low U-Value glazed units to provide a comfortable living environment and to reduce energy use.

The external doors would be hardwood timber framed as indicated on the enclosed drawings. The walls are to be constructed in multi-stock handmade brickwork. It is proposed to use contrasting feature bricks to form the projecting plinth and window surrounds.

The window heads at ground floor level feature flat arch splayed course brickwork. Flemish bond and flush pointing would be utilised to produce a 'traditional' feel to the elevations.

The hipped form of the main roof with dormers is reflective of the predominant roof form found along Courtenay Avenue.

All of the above details will contribute to the aesthetic refinement of the new property, adding to the richness of the overall composition and quality of the building stock in the area.

Original house footprint outlined in RED
Permitted application highlighted in GREEN



PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

The rear elevation has mostly remained unaltered and matches the one already approved. Proportions have been readdressed to reflect the new height and window levels.

The same pallet of materials from the existing property will be used at the rear with similar visual keys and proportions. The only difference is at ground level where more glazing is introduced to make the most of the outlook onto the garden.

The two side wings are equal in width with the roof set lower than the main section of the building in order to define the bulk of the main house. Brick details will be similar to the original house.

Generally, the fenestration has been kept simple and the openings are intended to be in proportion to the size and scale of the building. The chimneys are to match the same style and detail to what currently exists.

The use of a traditional brick and stone detailing will integrate effectively with the prevailing material palette of the existing local context and will complement the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Overall, the building is intended to have a cohesive appearance, that is well proportioned and balanced for the plot and is intended to fit comfortably within the surrounding neighbourhood as well as being a positive contribution to the area.

Original house footprint outlined in RED
Permitted application highlighted in GREEN

NEW BUILD

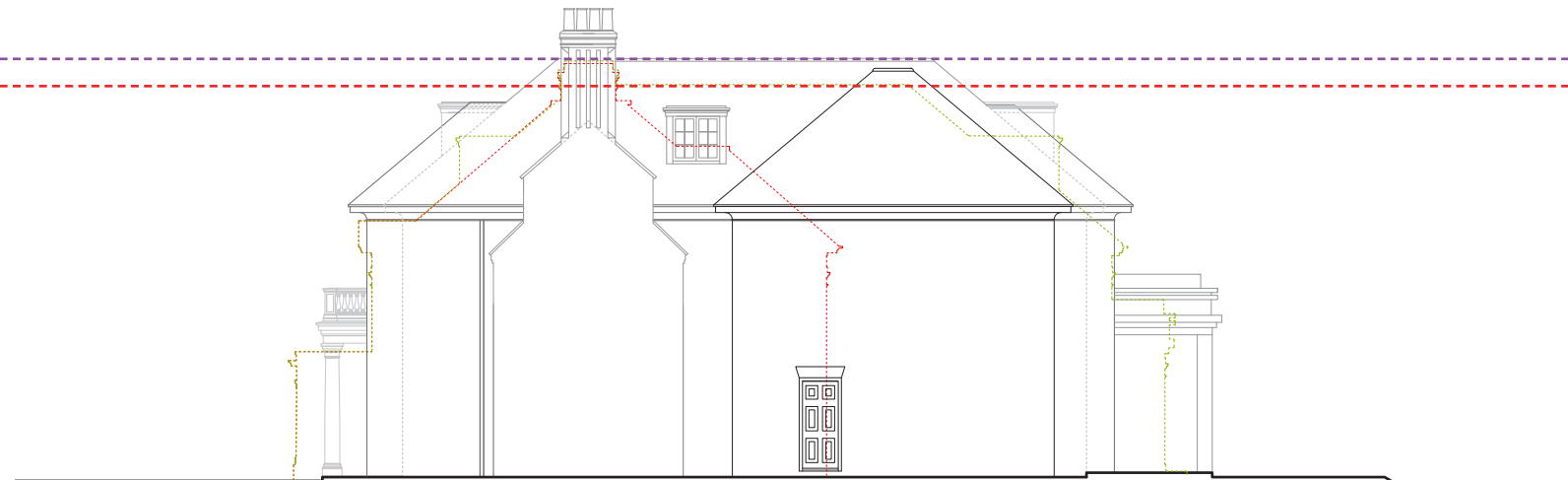
APPROVED



Rear Elevation

NEW BUILD

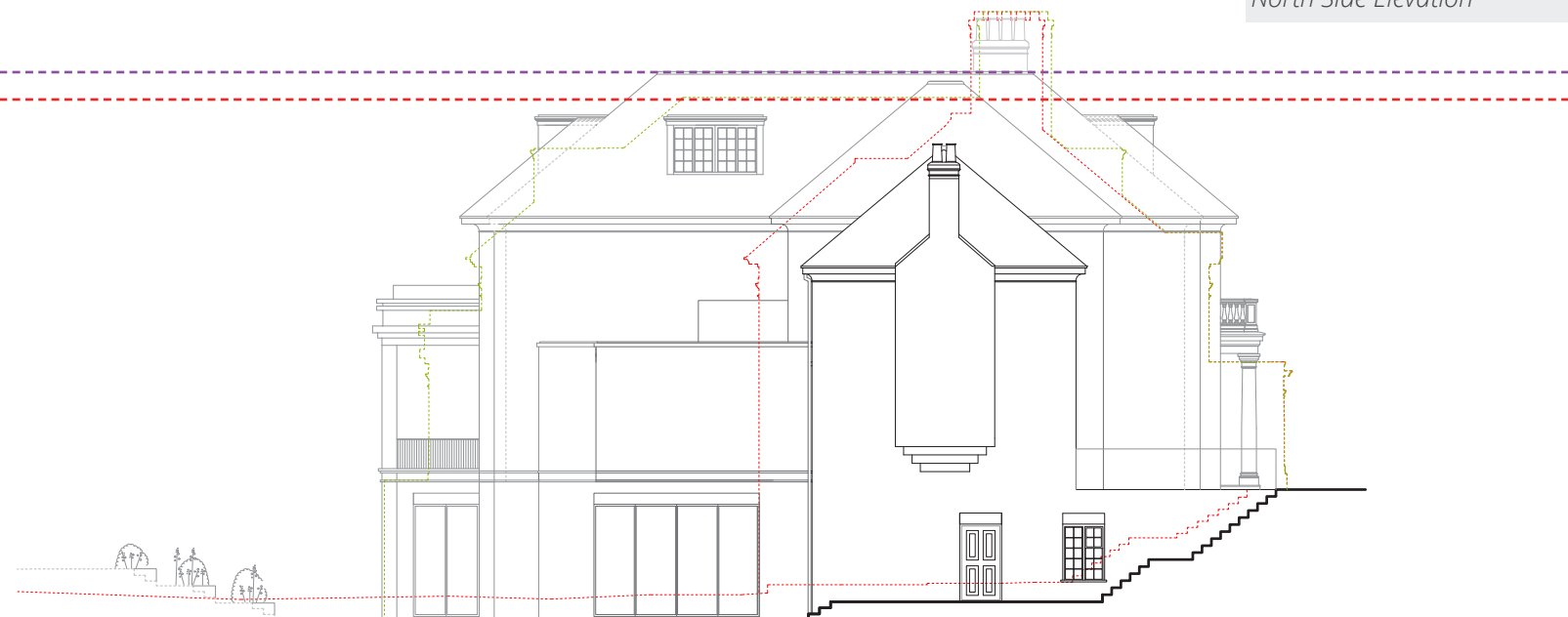
APPROVED



South Side Elevation

NEW BUILD

APPROVED



North Side Elevation



PROPOSED STREET
ELEVATIONS

The character of Courtenay Avenue is made up of many new houses significantly rebuilt or replaced over the past years, all of which offer a taller and grander frontage.

The street line slopes down naturally from south to north which is reflected on the street elevations shown opposite.

Each house placed on its plot naturally steps down in line with the street levels creating rather consistent roof line.

As highlighted in the table below Guildens has been redesigned to match these new ridge levels.

Property name	MAX RIDGE HEIGHTS
Somerlese	11565
Ridgefeild	11431
Branksome	11920
Beaulieu	12051
Blue Orchard	10218
Braken Knoll	11118
The Rydings	11760
Guildens New Build	11135

Average
(excluding extremes highlighted in red) 11571

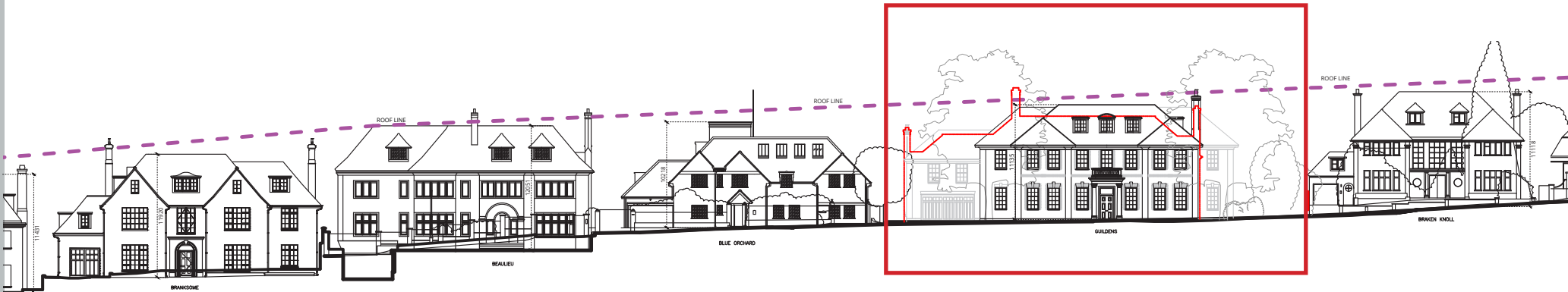
Original house footprint outlined in RED

Established roof line highlighted in PURPLE

The elevations below show the proposal's height in relation to its neighbours.



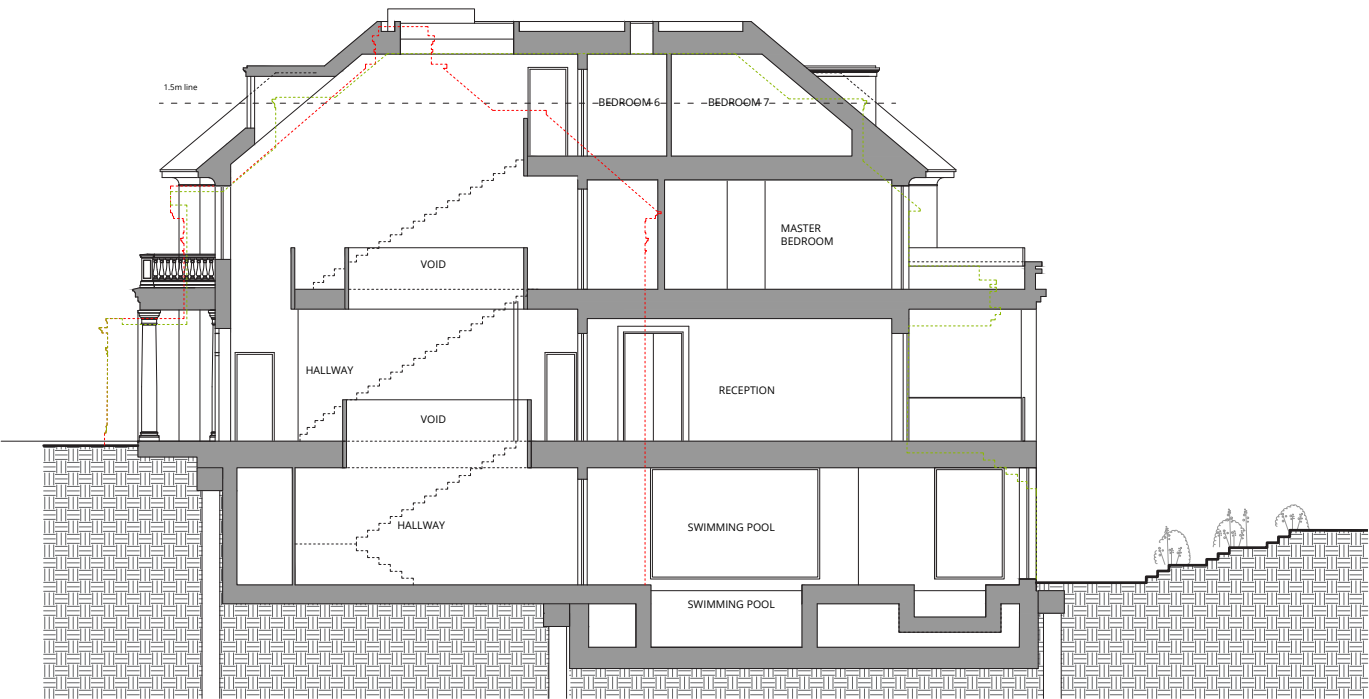
Long Street Elevation



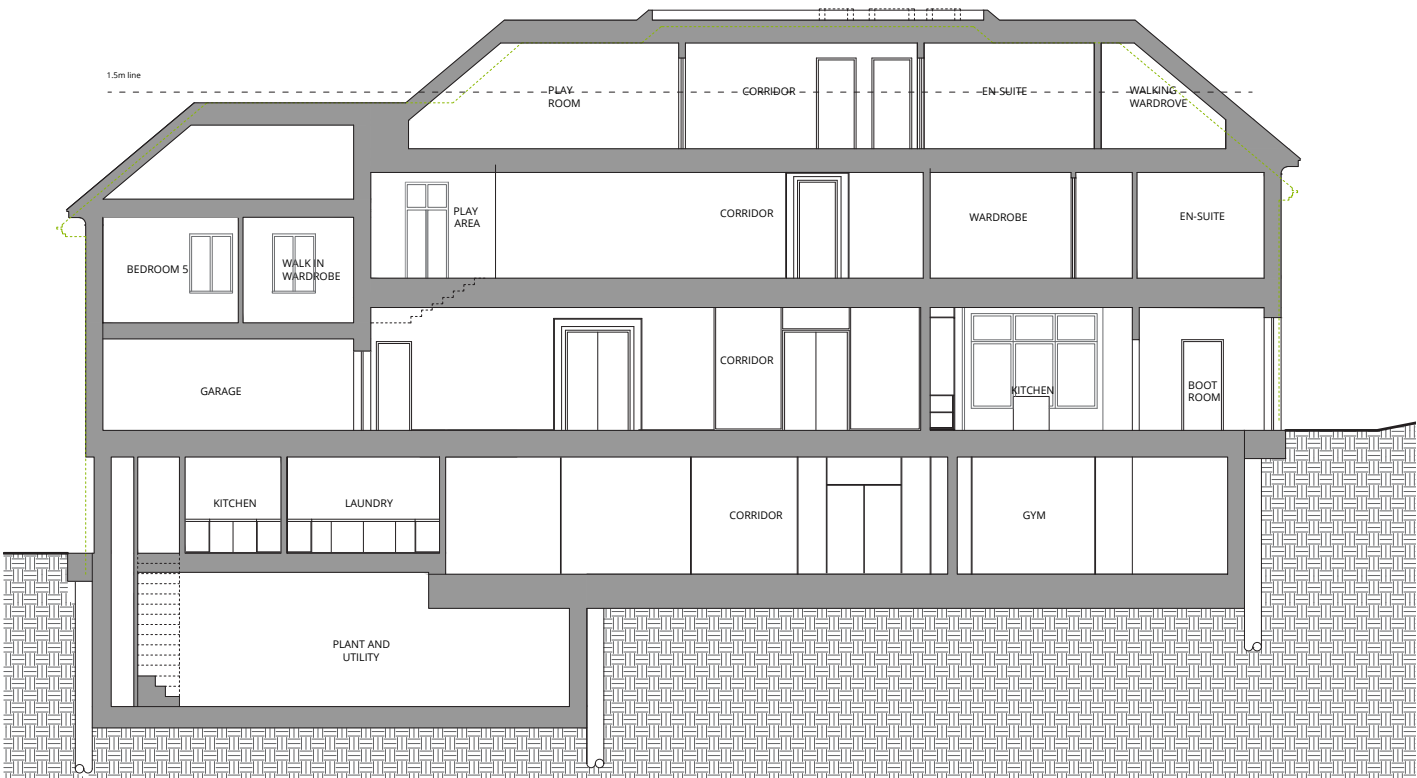
Street Elevation



Short Section



Long Section



Original house footprint outlined in RED
Permitted application highlighted in GREEN



Changes from the initial design submitted in response to subsequent PPA meetings include the lowering of the main ridge line by 500mm and a few other minor alterations to the facade. These changes are shown on the adjacent comparison drawings of the front facade.

1. The main alteration is the lowering of the roof eaves and removal of the brick lintels above first floor windows. These brick lintels have been removed and the roof lowered so that the roof eaves sit right above the top of the window frames. This change is visible on the rear, North side and front elevations.

2. The second change is to the front dormer windows. All three windows have narrowed and the middle dormer has changed to an arched roof that is typical of neo-georgian style houses.

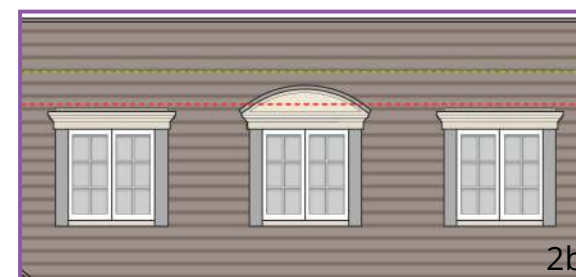
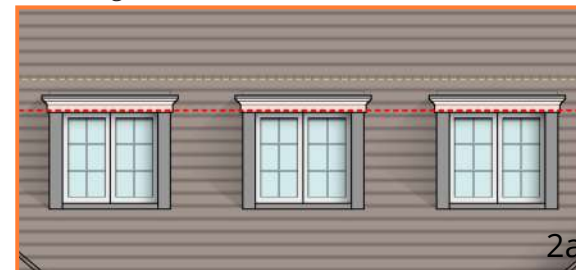
3. The third and final change is to the front door transom window. This window has been enlarged so that the top of the frame now sits in line with the top of the other ground floor window frames.



1 Change to the 1st Floor brick lintel and roof eaves



2 Change to Front Dormer Windows



3 Change to Front Door transom window



The building was originally constructed using Flemish bond brickwork. This construction method will be retained with multi-stock handmade bricks, with the use of extruding feature bricks on the edge of each bay. Feature bricks will be used to define the window openings with a splayed brick feature lintel and keystone placed above the ground floor windows and garage door. These features can be found on 14 Templewood Avenue, which is considered a precedent of significance as it was also designed by C.H.B Quennell. The external doors would be hardwood timber framed. The sash windows are subdivided into smaller panes to reflect those typically used within the area.

The portico will be constructed using stone to break up the predominant use of bricks along the front facade. The stone portico will preserve and enhance the aesthetic of the original building and the character of the street. Stone will be used for the cills, cornice, chimney crown and as a feature piece on the central dormer. The front facade seeks to emulate a Neo Georgian country dwelling with Arts and Crafts features. To further retain the authentic Arts and Crafts look, the tall decorative brick chimneys will be enhanced at both sides of the front facade, similar can be found on neighbouring properties.

A black cast iron metal railing will line the boundary of the rear terraces. This type of railing can be seen locally within Courtenay Avenue and on the front facade of 14 Templewood Avenue. The design takes inspiration from C.H.B. Quennell, as many of his designs showcase the eaves directly above the window head.

The design is rooted within the local context and draws inspiration from work by architect C.H.B. Quennell.

LOCAL VERNACULAR



ORIGINAL FRONT FACADE - GUILDENS



HOUSE BY C.H.B. QUENNEL



REAR OF 14 TEMPLEWOOD AVENUE - QUENNEL

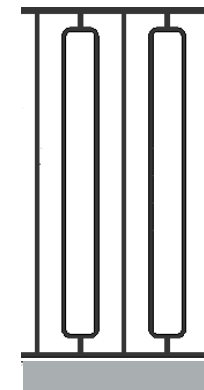


FRONT OF 14 TEMPLEWOOD AVENUE - QUENNEL

PRECEDENTS:



Local example of black cast iron railing



Proposed railing design



Extruding brick plinth featured on 14 Templewood Avenue



Sash vertical sliding windows seen at 14 Templewood Avenue, with Flat arch splayed course brickwork



Black metal railing featured on front terrace at 14 Templewood Avenue



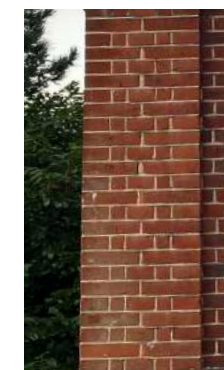
PROPOSED FRONT FACADE - GUILDENS



Curved central feature dormer



Flat arch splayed course lintel with brickwork defining window edges



Extruding brick work on bay edges as seen on 14 Templewood Avenue



Guildens original decorative brick chimney



Tuscan styled stone columns with stone cornice, frieze and fascia



This proposal seeks to replace the existing single dwellinghouse on the site with an alternative family-sized property. We believe that the proposed replacement dwelling sits comfortably within the site and responds positively to neighbouring dwellings.

The proposed replacement dwelling is designed to respond to the broad architectural themes of properties in the immediate local area.

The materiality of the proposal seeks to harmonize with the surrounding area.

There is little material change in terms of public views in and around the site given that there are only very limited views of the property on the private road.



Front Elevation



South -Front Elevation



North - Front Elevation



Back Elevation



CONCLUSION

The proposed new build development seeks to improve the building condition. It will help to meet the normal market requirements for this area, bringing the internal arrangement of rooms and facilities up to the standard required by prospective owners.

The redevelopment will provide a high quality design fit for modern living and, also, will balance the structure more comfortably in the streetscape.

The proposal closely follows the guidance set out for Courtenay Avenue and the Highgate Conservation Area as a whole to enhance its overall local context with informed complimentary design.



STREET VIEW OF FRONT FACADE

