
F/YR25/0347/F

Applicant: Mr Chris White

**Agent: Mr G Boreham
Morton & Hall Consulting Ltd**

20 Nene Parade, March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 8TD

Erect 2x self-build/custom build dwellings involving demolition of existing dwelling and garage within a Conservation Area

Officer recommendation: Approve

Reason for Committee: Deferral from 25th June 2025 Committee

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This application proposes the redevelopment of a site within the March Conservation Area to provide two self-build dwellings. The scheme has undergone significant design revision following Committee deferral in June 2025, and subsequent engagement with the Conservation Officer. Amendments include reductions in scale, revised roof pitches, narrowed dormers, removal of an integral garage and adjustments to improve proportions and the relationship with surrounding development.
- 1.2 While the resulting design does not wholly reflect the traditional character of Nene Parade, the existing dwelling is itself uncharacteristic and the revised scheme now sits more comfortably within its context. No substantial harm to the detriment of the Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area is identified. The delivery of two self-build dwellings offers minor additional benefit, despite the Council already meeting local self-build demand.
- 1.3 The development is judged to accord with relevant Local Plan policies and national planning guidance.

2 Update

- 2.1 On 25 June 2025, Committee members resolved to defer the application to allow officers to work with the Agent to secure a scheme acceptable in terms of design and its impact on the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings. The original officers report is appended to this update.
- 2.2 Following this, discussions took place in liaison with the Conservation Officer, resulting in a series of revisions. These seek to balance the requirements and aspirations of the Applicant with the statutory duty to preserve and enhance the Conservation Area.
- 2.3 The design has subsequently been amended in the following ways:
- A detached garage introduced to serve Plot 1 (previously integral)

- Reduction in the overall width and depth of both dwellings.
- Narrowing of dormer windows.
- Reduction from double to single garages.
- Steeper roof pitches.
- Minor adjustment to the red line boundary to reflect ownership accurately.
- Addition of a gable projection to the rear elevation of each dwelling.
- Addition of a chimney to Plot 2.
- Proposed materials now include Weinerberger Weathered Gault blend brick, Lincoln Clay interlocking pantile and Cedral cladding, with Plot 1 to have a green door and Plot 2 to have a blue door.

2.4 As amended, each dwelling would now have a maximum height of 7.67 m, a width of 8.53 m and a maximum depth of 11.4 m (including the gabled rear projection). Previously, the dwellings had a maximum height of 7.75 m, with Plot 1 measuring 8.1 m by 10.7 m and Plot 2 measuring 8.5 m by 10.7 m.

3 Consultations

3.1 A statutory re-consultation was undertaken and the following comments were received:

3.2 FDC Conservation Officer:

The increased width is welcome and more proportionate but I still consider that the scheme would appear significantly better as a connected pair, thereby reflecting the characteristic rows of cottages that front Nene Parade and West End.

A low level of less than substantial harm is identified in accordance with paragraph 213 of the NPPF, which requires clear and convincing justification for any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset. While the existing dwelling provides limited contribution to the Conservation Area, the revised scheme still falls short of fully conserving and enhancing the area or making a positive contribution as required by paragraph 210. In particular, opportunities to achieve a more traditional form and proportion, including reduced gable depths and a more characteristic connected appearance, have not been explored within the design. Notwithstanding this, certain material choices are acceptable in principle and detailed elements can be refined to better reflect local character.

3.3 Local Residents

An additional objection comment has been received from a resident on Elwyn Road and is summarised below:

Objecting Comments	Officer Response
Out of character with the surrounding Conservation Area, particularly along Nene Parade.	Comments noted and discussed within the original officers report and below.
The objector considers that insufficient weight has been given to the	Comments noted.

Conservation Officer's professional advice.	
They dispute the Agent's claim that the proposal is inspired by existing traditional and modern dwellings, noting that properties in this location are generally wider and positioned on, or very close to, the highway boundary.	Comments noted and discussed within the original officers report and below.
It is argued that approval of the current layout would undermine the effective application of Conservation Area policies and guidance in the future.	Comments noted and discussed within the original officers report and below.
In contrast, the proposed dwellings would be set back approximately 5.9–6 metres, which is considered inconsistent with the prevailing street scene.	Comments noted and discussed within the original officers report and below.
Reference is made to previous consultations from the Conservation Officer raising similar concerns and highlighting the statutory duty to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the March Conservation Area.	Comments noted.

4 ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 Given that the proposed amendments relate solely to the design and scale of the dwellings, it is not considered that they materially affect other planning considerations. These include the principle of development, neighbouring amenity, amenity for future occupiers, landscaping and ecology, parking and highway safety, flood risk or biodiversity net gain, as assessed within the original report appended to this update. The proposal is therefore reassessed below on design grounds only.

Design and Impact on Character and Appearance of the Area

- 4.2 Policies LP12 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan, sets out several criteria in which proposals are required to meet, to ensure that high quality environments are provided and protected. Policy LP12 focuses on development in rural areas with Policy LP16 focusing specifically on design criterion. This stance is also supported by Policy H2 of the March Neighbourhood Plan. The site sits within the March Conservation Area and therefore the requirements of Policy LP18 in respect of preserving and enhancing the special character of the Conservation Area are relevant.
- 4.3 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities when considering development to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 4.4 The surrounding area is characterised by residential development, including single-storey cottages with attic dormers and two-storey terraced properties. Surrounding dwellings generally abut the road and occupy relatively narrow, long plots. The existing site is somewhat unusual given its scale, form and set-back from Nene

Parade. It sits at odds with the 1.5 and 2-storey traditional cottages that stand directly on the back edge of the footway and which give Nene Parade its distinctive character. The existing building is a mid-twentieth century bungalow and is not considered architecturally or historically significant.

- 4.5 The proposed dwellings have been revised to address previously raised design concerns. In particular, the removal of the integral garage from Plot 1 and its replacement with a detached structure provides a more active and positive frontage. The overall width and depth of both dwellings have been reduced and the dormers have been narrowed, improving their proportion within the roofscape. The change from double to single garages further reduces visual dominance and incongruity.
- 4.6 Steeper roof pitches have addressed the earlier shallow, chalet-style appearance and now better reflect the established character of Nene Parade. The overall dimensions of the buildings have also been reduced.
- 4.7 Collectively, these amendments improve the relationship of the scheme with its surroundings, allowing the dwellings to better reflect the scale, rhythm and proportions of nearby development. However, opportunities to further reinforce the traditional form, including reducing gable depths and adopting a more characteristic connected appearance, have not been fully realised. As such, the design does not wholly align with the expectations of paragraph 210 of the NPPF, which seeks development that conserves and enhances the Conservation Area and makes a positive contribution to local character.
- 4.8 Notwithstanding this, the resulting harm is assessed as low less than substantial, consistent with paragraph 213 of the NPPF, which requires clear and convincing justification for any harm to a designated heritage asset. Given the limited contribution of the existing dwelling and the improvements secured alongside the provision of two additional self-build dwellings which also carries minor positive weight, despite the Council meeting its current self-build obligations, it is considered on balance, that this low level of harm is outweighed by benefits.
- 4.9 On balance, whilst the development is considered to result in a low level of less than substantial harm to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, it is considered that the minor benefits of two additional self-build dwellings, alongside securing architectural detailing and materials would weigh in favour of the scheme, and therefore the proposal complies with Policies LP16 and LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan and relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.
- 4.10 Given the sensitive nature of the area, it is considered necessary and reasonable to impose conditions removing permitted development rights relating to extensions and roof alterations for each dwelling. This will ensure that any future works of this nature can be appropriately assessed, particularly in relation to their impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area and on neighbouring amenity.

Other Matters

Unilateral Undertaking

- 4.11 Recent appeal decisions have consistently dismissed proposals where there was no enforceable mechanism in place to ensure that the approved dwelling would be delivered and occupied as a genuine self-build or custom-build project. These

decisions reinforce the importance of securing the self-build nature of such developments through a legally binding agreement.

- 4.12 In line with best practice and national policy guidance, it is therefore considered essential that a legal agreement; typically in the form of a Section 106 obligation, is secured to guarantee the delivery of the dwelling as self-build. Without such a mechanism, there is no means by which the Council can ensure the dwelling will meet the requirements of self-build housing as defined by the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended).
- 4.13 As the application is recommended for approval, discussions have taken place between the Officer and Agent to secure this obligation. However, in the interests of expediency, this does not prevent the Committee from reaching a decision, subject to completion of the agreement.

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Overall, on balance, the less than substantial harm identified is considered to be outweighed by the minor benefits associated with the provision of two self-build dwellings and the design improvements secured through the revision of the scheme. While the proposal does not fully replicate the traditional character of the surrounding built form, the existing dwelling is similarly unreflective of local vernacular and the amended design reduces the extent of harm to a low level. In this context, the proposal considered to comply with Policies LP16 and LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

6 RECOMMENDATION

Approve, subject to the completion of a legal agreement securing the Self-Build and Custom nature of development and the following conditions or refuse permission if the legal agreement is not completed within 6 months from the date of this committee:

1.	<p>The development permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.</p> <p>Reason - To ensure compliance with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p>
2	<p>No development shall commence until a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan, in accordance with BS5837:2012, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall set out the measures to ensure the protection of all trees to be retained throughout the construction period, including the type and position of protective fencing and the means by which tree protection will be monitored and maintained.</p> <p>The development shall thereafter be carried out in full accordance with the approved Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan, and all protective measures shall remain in place for the duration of the construction works.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure adequate protection of retained trees and to safeguard the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with Policies LP16 and</p>

	LP19 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014).
3	<p>The external materials of the development shall be carried out in full accordance with the details set out within the submitted documents, specifically:</p> <p>Wienerberger Weathered Gault Blend brick Marley Lincoln Rustic Red roof tiles</p> <p>The development shall be completed using these materials unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and to preserve the character and appearance of the March Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan.</p>
4	<p>Notwithstanding Condition 3, the dormer faces and cheeks shall be finished in lead and shall not be clad in uPVC. In addition, the mortar used in all brickwork shall be a cream-coloured mix reflecting the characteristics of traditional lime mortar and shall not comprise grey cement.</p> <p>Reason: To preserve the special architectural and historic character of the March Conservation Area in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) and Policy LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
5	<p>Prior to their inclusion in the development hereby approved, details of windows and doors shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the LPA. The proposed works shall be carried out in accordance with the details as approved and retained as such, in perpetuity.</p> <p>The details should include manufacturers specification (inc. elevation and cross sections) and colour.</p> <p>Reason: In order to preserve the special architectural and historic character of the March Conservation Area and in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) and Policy LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
6	<p>Prior to the first occupation of the development, details of two bat roosting boxes, including their design, specification and locations on the site, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved bat roosting boxes shall be installed prior to first occupation of the dwellings and shall be retained and maintained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.</p> <p>Reason: To protect and enhance biodiversity in line with policies LP16 and LP19 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
7	<p>No dwelling hereby approved shall be occupied until the parking spaces and associated vehicular access to the adjoining highway serving that specific dwelling have been provided in accordance with the approved plans, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The parking spaces provided shall thereafter be retained for the use of occupiers and visitors of the respective dwelling in perpetuity.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure adequate space for parking off the highway is provided in the interest of highway safety, in accordance with Policy LP15 of the Fenland Local Development Plan</p>

8	<p>Elevational windows (whether sash or casement) shall be set back into their reveals from the front face of the brickwork by at least 50mm.</p> <p>Reason: In order to preserve the special architectural and historic character of the March Conservation Area and in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) and Policy LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
9	<p>The brick lintels above elevational windows and doors shall be gauged brick arches maintaining the curvature to the underside as detailed on the drawings.</p> <p>Reason: In order to preserve the special architectural and historic character of the March Conservation Area and in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) and Policy LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
10	<p>Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order amending, revoking or re-enacting that Order) no dormer window alteration or other form of addition or opening shall be constructed in the roof or gable walls of the buildings hereby permitted without planning permission having been obtained from the local planning authority.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the Local Planning Authority retains control over the future extension and alteration of the development, in the interests of its architectural and visual integrity and character of this part of the conservation area in which it is set and to prevent overlooking of neighbouring properties, in the interest of the protection of residential amenity in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
11	<p>Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order amending, revoking or re-enacting that Order) no garages, extensions or separate buildings (other than ancillary outbuildings not exceeding 10 cubic metres in volume) shall be erected within the site without planning permission having been obtained from the local planning authority.</p> <p>Reasons: To ensure that the Local Planning Authority retains control over the future extension and alteration of the development, in the interests of its architectural and visual integrity and character of this part of the conservation area in which it is set in accordance with Policies LP16 and LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.</p>
10	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents</p>

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20 Nene Parade, March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 8TD

Erect 2x self-build/custom build dwellings involving demolition of existing dwelling and garage within a Conservation Area

Officer recommendation: Refuse

Reason for Committee: Number of representations contrary to Officer recommendation

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of an existing five-bedroom bungalow on Nene Parade, March, and its replacement with two chalet-style bungalows. The site lies within the March Conservation Area and is located in a sustainable location within Flood Zone 1.
- 1.2 While the principle of residential development is supported by both the Fenland Local Plan and the March Neighbourhood Plan, the proposed design is considered to lack architectural merit and fails to respond positively to the historic character of the conservation area. The scale, form, and detailing—particularly the use of shallow-pitched roofs, oversized dormers, and integral garages—are not reflective of the traditional built form along Nene Parade. As such, the proposal is considered contrary to Policies LP16 and LP18 of the Local Plan and relevant sections of the NPPF (2024), which seek to protect and enhance the special character of the Conservation Area.
- 1.3 Other aspects of the proposal, including residential amenity, flood risk, ecology, and highways, raise no significant concerns. However, these do not outweigh the identified harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 1.4 Accordingly, the application is recommended for refusal.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site sits to the northern side of Nene Parade and falls within the March Conservation Area. The site is currently occupied by a large, detached bungalow with a detached garage to the western boundary. The existing dwelling benefits from five bedrooms, a kitchen, dining room and living room. The existing dwelling is not listed. To the south of the site is the River Nene and to the west is a public footpath. The surrounding area is predominately residential in nature consisting of terrace dwellings fronting the Road.

2.2 The site sits in Flood Zone 1 and the March Conservation Area.

3 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Planning permission is sought for the demolition of the existing bungalow and garage and the construction of two residential chalet-style bungalows on the site. These will be set back slightly further than the existing built form on site.
- 3.2 Plot 1 would have a maximum height of 7.75 metres with an eaves height of 3.3 metres, a width of 8.1 metres and a depth of 10.7 metres. Also included is an attached garage to the western side of the dwelling which would have a maximum height of 6.1 metres with an eaves height of 2.95 metres, a width of 6.35 metres and a depth of 7.7 metres. (internally this is 6 and 7 metres respectively). This would provide a lounge, open plan kitchen/diner and utility room at ground floor, alongside the parking of two vehicles with three bedrooms (one en-suite) and a bathroom at first floor. The dwelling itself would benefit two gable dormer roof alterations to the front and two to the rear of the proposed dwelling. With another two to the rear of the garage.
- 3.3 Plot 2 would have a maximum height of 7.75 metres with an eaves height of 3.3 metres, a width of 8.5 metres and a depth of 10.7 metres. This would provide a lounge, open plan kitchen/diner, utility room and integral garage at ground floor with three bedrooms (one en-suite) and a bathroom at first floor. This dwelling would feature two gable dormer roof alterations to the front and two to the rear of the proposed dwelling.
- 3.4 The proposal would utilise the existing accesses off Nene Parade, however, these would be widened. Two parking spaces per dwelling are proposed.

Full plans and associated documents for this application can be found at:

<https://www.publicaccess.fenland.gov.uk/publicaccess/>

4 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 There is no recent site history relevant to the determination of this application.

5 CONSULTATIONS

5.1 March Town Council

Recommends approval although notes serious concerns regarding the structural integrity of the bank, subsequent issues with the road and traffic. Construction traffic would exacerbate these existing issues

5.2 Arboricultural Consultant

No objection to the proposal subject to the inclusion of a suitably worded condition to ensure a tree protection method statement is provided

5.3 CCC Highways

No objection subject to the relocation of the access serving plot 1

5.4 CCC Archaeology

No comment or requirement for the scheme.

5.5 FDC Conservation Officer

Objects to the proposal due to the scale, form and architectural detailing being insufficient and jarring, therefore, detracting from the character and appearance of the conservation area

5.6 FDC Environmental Health

No objection subject to the inclusion of a condition in regard to limiting the hours of demolition/construction

5.7 FDC Ecologist

No objection to the proposal subject to the following informatives:

- If bats are found at any time during the works, this must cease, and advice sought from a qualified person
- 2 x bat roosting boxes should be installed on site, post-completion
- Care should be taken to avoid the spread of Wall Cotoneaster, which has been recorded on site

5.8 Local Residents/Interested Parties

11 letters of support have been received from residents on Berryfield (x2), Elwyn Road, Boundary Drive, Wisbech Road, Pits Lane, Knights End Road, Cypress Close, Upwell Road, Gull Road and Curlew Avenue; these are summarised below:

- The proposal would be of a benefit to Nene Parade given issues with subsidence and potential for it to become derelict drawing on anti-social and homelessness activities.
- Asset to the area/ streetscene
- Better than existing property which is an eyesore
- Benefit to the Town giving opportunity for two families to live next to the river
- No justification to support repair of existing building given how unsafe it is.
- Increases the local housing stock which is desperately required.

One letter of objection has been received from residents on Nene Parade

- The proposal would result in the driveway being inaccessible – this driveway is utilised by other residents to complete 2-point turns to leave the parade in a safe manner.
- Devalue neighbouring properties
- Effects of lorries using Nene Parade – highway safety – vehicular and pedestrian alongside concerns for riverbank

One letter of offering comments on the application have been received from a resident on Nene Parade this is summarised below:

- An agreement needs to be met with the owner regarding retaining the existing use of the driveway as a turning point for other residents and users of the road.

- This is an opportunity for a more appropriate design and build as existing dwelling does not fit in well
- Consideration needs to be given to the construction route to be utilised.

6 STATUTORY DUTY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a planning application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the adopted Fenland Local Plan (2014) the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021) and the March Neighbourhood Plan (2017)

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities when considering development to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

7 POLICY FRAMEWORK

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

Chapter 2 - Achieving sustainable development
 Chapter 4 – Decision-making
 Chapter 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
 Chapter 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities
 Chapter 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
 Chapter 11 – Making effective use of land
 Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed places
 Chapter 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
 Chapter 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
 Chapter 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Determining a Planning Application

National Design Guide 2021

Context
 Identity
 Built Form
 Movement
 Uses
 Homes and Buildings

Fenland Local Plan 2014

LP1 – A Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 LP2 – Facilitating Health and Wellbeing of Fenland Residents
 LP3 – Spatial Strategy, the Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside
 LP4 – Housing
 LP5 – Meeting Housing Need
 LP9 – March
 LP14 – Responding to Climate Change and Managing the Risk of Flooding in

- Fenland
- LP15 – Facilitating the Creation of a More Sustainable Transport Network in Fenland
- LP16 – Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments across the District
- LP18 – The Historic Environment
- LP19 – The Natural Environment

March Neighbourhood Plan 2017

- H2 – Windfall Development
- H3 – Local Housing Need

Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland SPD 2014

- DM2 – Natural Features and Landscaping Schemes
- DM3 – Making a Positive Contribution to Local Distinctiveness and character of the Area

Emerging Local Plan

The Draft Fenland Local Plan (2022) was published for consultation between 25th August 2022 and 19 October 2022, all comments received will be reviewed and any changes arising from the consultation will be made to the draft Local Plan. Given the very early stage which the Plan is therefore at, it is considered, in accordance with Paragraph 49 of the NPPF, that the policies of this should carry extremely limited weight in decision making. Of relevance to this application are policies:

- LP1: Settlement Hierarchy
- LP2: Spatial Strategy for the Location of Residential Development
- LP5: Health and Wellbeing
- LP7: Design
- LP8: Amenity Provision
- LP12: Meeting Housing Needs
- LP22: Parking Provision
- LP23: Historic Environment
- LP25: Biodiversity Net Gain
- LP27: Trees and Planting
- LP28: Landscape
- LP32: Flood and Water Management

8 KEY ISSUES

- **Design**
- **Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area**
- **Residential Amenity and Amenity Space**
- **Landscaping and Ecology**
- **Parking, Access and Highway Safety**
- **Flood Risk**
- **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)**
- **Planning Balance**

9 ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 9.1 Policy LP1 is the overarching policy supporting a presumption in favour of sustainable development; planning applications that accord with the policies within the Local Development Plan (LDP) will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Policy LP3 of the Fenland Local Plan (2014) sets out the settlement hierarchy within the District, setting out the scale of development appropriate to each level of the hierarchy. Furthermore, Policy LP9 confirms that March is a focus for housing, employment and retail growth. This stance is supported in Policy H2 of the March Neighbourhood Plan. The application site is located within March whereby the majority of the District's new housing, employment and retail growth should be directed.
- 9.2 Policy LP5 sets out the housing targets for the District and the Council has undertaken a full assessment of the Five Year Housing Land Supply in the District and has concluded that the Council is able to demonstrate a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide for more than Five Years' worth of housing against the Council's identified requirements. This is a material consideration and means that any application for new development must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Similarly, Policy H3 of the March Local Plan requires all housing proposals to contribute towards meeting local housing need, which includes starter homes, family homes, executive homes and self-build homes; and mixed tenure that will result in a diverse community, where this is reasonably achievable
- 9.3 The Housing Needs Assessment 2021 identified a greater need of 2-3 bedroom market units for the District. The proposal would provide two three-bedroom dwellings and therefore would meet this identified need. Furthermore, the proposal would result in the loss of a five-bedroom property (of which there is not great identified need for in the District).
- 9.4 Given the sites location within the sustainable location of March Town Centre, with good accessibility via sustainable modes of transport to everyday services and facilities, it is considered the principle of development would be acceptable and in accordance with Policies LP1 and LP3 of the LDP. Other Material considerations will be discussed below.

Self-Build and Custom Housing

- 9.5 Policy LP5 of the Local Plan also seeks to ensure that housing solutions are provided which meet market expectations, this includes self-build homes. This stance is reflected by Policy H3 of the March Neighbourhood Plan. Under Section 1 of the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, Local Authorities are required to keep a register of those seeking to acquire serviced plots in the area for their own self-build and custom house building. They are also subject to duties under Sections 2 and 2A of that Act to have regard to this and to give enough suitable development permissions to meet the identified demand.
- 9.6 As set out in the Regulations, Part 1 of a register comprises those people and organisations who meet all the eligibility criteria, including the local connection test. Part 2 comprises those people and organisations who meet most, but not necessarily all, the eligibility criteria. The Council has a duty to 'give suitable development permission in respect of enough serviced plots of land to meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in the authority's area' (i.e. to meet the demand for the number of applicants on Part 1 of their register) within a 3 year period, post the end of the base period.

- 9.7 The permissions granted demonstrate that the demand for self-build and custom housing (as identified by the register) is comfortably being met in Fenland. Therefore, no weight will be given to the delivery of self/ custom build housing at this time.

Design and Impact on Character and Appearance of the Area

- 9.8 Policies LP12 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan, set out a number of criteria that proposals are required to meet to ensure that high quality environments are provided and protected. Policy LP12 focuses on development in rural areas with Policy LP16 focusing specifically on design criteria. This stance is also supported by Policy H2 of the March Neighbourhood Plan. The site sits within the March Conservation Area and therefore the requirements of Policy LP18 in respect of preserving and enhancing the special character of the Conservation Area are relevant.
- 9.9 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities when considering development to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 9.10 The surrounding area is characterised by residential development, featuring both single-storey cottages with attic dormers and two-storey terraced properties. Surrounding properties tend to abut the road and feature relatively narrow long plots. The existing site is relatively unique in its own right given the scale form and set back from Nene Parade. It is somewhat at odds with the 1.5 and 2 storey traditional cottages that sit on the back edge of the footway which gives Nene Parade its character. Furthermore, the existing building is a mid C20 bungalow and not considered to be architecturally or historically significant.
- 9.11 The form and detailing of the proposed dwellings are considered to lack architectural merit, in that they lack architectural detail and would appear awkward within the street scene. The design is neither in-keeping with the single-storey cottages with attic dormers or the two-storey terraced properties that form the immediate and positive character of Nene Parade. The very deep floorplan of the proposed dwellings gives a shallow raking roof which appears very much like a chalet bungalow in terms of form, which is uncharacteristic of the current residential development in the immediate vicinity. Additionally, the dormers are substantially out of scale. Furthermore, integral garaging is not considered to provide positive frontage to the public realm but rather serves to detract from the special character of the conservation area.
- 9.12 There are indeed poor examples of development found along Nene Parade and that the existing dwelling is of limited architectural merit, which is going to be the case for a road that has evolved over the course of several centuries. However, poor examples should serve to guide what should not be perpetuated, rather than seen as a justification for further poor development that does not respond positively to the conservation area. The proposal should take reference from positive traditional buildings along Nene Parade and West End, in relation to scale, proportionality, brickwork detailing (gauged arches, banding, coggled brickwork, recessed windows, proportionate dormers, quality bricks and tiles/slates).
- 9.13 Taking into account the above assessment, it is considered the proposed development by way of form, scale and detailing would fail conserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area, of which the LPA have a statutory

duty to protect. Therefore, the application is considered to be contrary to Policies LP16 and LP18 of the LDP and Paragraphs 210, 212, 213, 215, 216, 219 and 221 of the NPPF (2024).

Residential Amenity and Amenity Space

- 9.14 Policy LP2 of the Fenland Local Plan seeks to promote high levels of residential amenity. Similarly, Policy LP16 requires development proposals to not adversely impact on the amenity of neighbouring users such as noise, light pollution, loss of privacy and loss of light.
- 9.15 Each of the proposed dwellings would benefit from a usable amenity space of at least a third of the plot, in line with the requirements of Policy LP16 (h). This is considered to be sufficient in terms of privacy and usability.
- 9.16 Furthermore, given the proposal relates to the provision of two bungalows, largely utilising the existing footprint of the existing dwelling on site, alongside the degree of separation from neighbouring properties boundaries, it is not considered the proposal would have a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity by way of loss of light, privacy or an overbearing nature. Similarly, each habitable room would be served by sufficient openings, (although the bedrooms would only benefit from a single north facing window) to provide an acceptable level of light and given the orientation of the buildings in regard to the dedicated amenity space, there are no concerns in regard to the amenity to be afforded to the future occupants. Therefore, there are no objections to the proposal on these grounds.

Landscaping and Ecology

- 9.17 Policy LP16 requires all development to contribute to high quality environments; in respect of landscaping criterion c) and d) requires proposals to retain and incorporate nature and historic features of the site, such as trees, hedgerow and field patterns, to retain and preserve landscape character and settlement pattern of the surrounding area.
- 9.18 Furthermore, Policy LP12 (g) requires development proposals to ensure that the site retains and respects ecological, heritage and biodiversity features. Furthermore, policy LP19 requires development proposals to conserve, enhance and promote the biodiversity and geological interest of the natural environment throughout Fenland.
- 9.19 A number of trees which are considered to be of high public amenity value site adjacent to the sites western and northern boundary's, with the tree to the west subject to a Tree Preservation Order. The Arboricultural Officer has been consulted in regard to this proposal and confirms that the supporting arboricultural report satisfactorily identifies the quality and constraints of the existing trees. The only proposed arboricultural intervention is minor crown lifting to T1, which is considered minimal and acceptable. The report concludes that the development is acceptable within arboricultural parameters, subject to the implementation of appropriate methodologies.
- 9.20 However, a robust Tree Protection Method Statement will be required to set out how works within the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) and associated protection measures will be managed in accordance with BS5837:2012. Therefore, should the application be approved, and confirmation from the Agent that this is acceptable given the trigger point for details would be prior to commencement, it is

considered a suitably worded condition could be included to ensure the retention and protection of trees.

- 9.21 Similarly, the accompanying preliminary ecological appraisal concludes that the proposal would not impact on any protected or priority species, subject to appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures. The Council's Ecologist is satisfied that this is the case and therefore, should the application be approved, a condition would be included to ensure the proposed development is carried out in accordance with the details and recommendations contained within this supporting document.

Parking, Access and Highway Safety

- 9.22 Policy LP15 requires all new development proposals to contribute to the delivery of the sustainable transport network by providing well designed, safe, convenient access for all. Development proposals should provide well designed car and cycle parking appropriate to the amount of development proposed, ensuring parking provision is provided in accordance with the standards. Appendix A sets out that two parking spaces are required for a three-bedroom unit. Appendix A also sets out that a garage can be counted as a parking space provided the size of the garage exceeds 7.0m x 3.0m (internal dimensions).
- 9.23 Each dwelling would benefit from a minimum of 2 parking spaces, including the integral/attached garages and therefore, there are no objections to the proposal in terms of parking provision.
- 9.24 Nene Parade is a narrow road, whereby on street parking is common. It is acknowledged that this makes accessibility difficult and may result in congestion and awkward manoeuvres for car users. However, the road does benefit from parking restrictions and given the proposal relates to the provision of one additional unit. It is not considered that the proposal would result in a material intensification of the use of this road by future residents, to the detriment of highway safety. Furthermore, the Highways Authority have raised no objection to the proposal in this respect.
- 9.25 The Highways Authority have raised no objection to the proposal, subject to revisions to the access serving Plot 1. It is therefore considered that the proposal, would be acceptable, subject to minor amendments in this respect, in terms of highway safety. Should this application have been considered acceptable against all other material considerations, amendments would have been sought in accordance with the Highway Authority's recommendations. However, as the application is recommended for refusal, whereby any amendments would result in a significant material change to the scheme, these amendments have not been sought.
- 9.26 It is noted that a number of neighbouring representations have been received which raise concerns in respect of the additional traffic and highway safety which has been discussed above. Given the temporary nature of construction, this is not considered to materially weigh against the scheme. Similarly, reference is also made to road users, including other residents, utilising the current drive to maneuver and turn around to exist the road in forward gear. Whilst this is appreciated and acknowledged, this is an informal agreement with the current occupants/owners and would not form a material planning consideration in the determination of this application.

Flood Risk

- 9.27 Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan and Paragraphs 170-182 of the National Planning Policy Framework set out the approach to developing land in relation to flood risk, with both documents steering development in the first instance towards land at a lower risk of flooding. The application site sits within Flood Zone 1 and therefore, there are no objections to the proposal in this respect.
- 9.28 Furthermore, appropriate details in terms of surface water drainage and foul drainage can be secured by appropriately worded conditions should the application be approved.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 9.29 The Environment Act 2021 requires development proposals to deliver a net gain in biodiversity following a mitigation hierarchy which is focused on avoiding ecological harm over minimising, rectifying, reducing and then off-setting. This approach accords with Local Plan policies LP16 and LP19 which outlines a primary objective for biodiversity to be conserved or enhanced and provides for the protection of Protected Species, Priority Species and Priority Habitat.
- 9.30 There are statutory exemptions, transitional arrangements and requirements relating to irreplaceable habitat which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. In this instance, one or more of the exemptions / transitional arrangements are considered to apply and a Biodiversity Gain Condition is not required to be approved before development is begun because the nature of the development being self / custom build is exempt from statutory net gain.

Planning Balance

- 9.31 In terms of sustainability the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives; economic, social and environmental, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives)
- 9.32 This stance is supported by Local Plan Policy LP1. In respect of the first of these, the current proposal would provide economic benefits, for example in respect of employment during the construction phase, as well as support for existing and future businesses, services, and facilities by introducing additional residents that would make use of them and provide future spend in the local economy. However, given this relates to the provision of two self-build dwellings, with a net gain of just one dwelling, this is considered to be negligible.
- 9.33 In respect of the social objective, it is noted that a number of minor benefits would be provided, including the provision of two three-bedroom units, which meets the identified need for market housing in the district. However, given this relates to just two dwellings this is considered to be negligible. Representations have been made advising that the proposal would be of benefit to the area given subsidence issues alongside potential anti-social behaviour. These are noted however, in the absence of any such reports/evidence, it is not considered this would weigh in favour of the scheme to an extent that would overcome the harm identified.

- 9.34 Lastly, in terms of the environmental objective, as discussed above, it is considered the proposed scheme, it is considered the proposed development by way of form, scale and detailing would fail conserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area, of which the LPA have a statutory duty to protect. Therefore, the application is considered to be contrary to Policies LP16 and LP18 of the LDP and Paragraphs 210, 212, 213, 215, 216, 219 and 221 of the NPPF 2024. It is noted that the drawings provided indicate that solar panels are proposed to the front roof slope of each dwelling, whilst we encourage renewable energy provision, this would not overcome the harm identified above.
- 9.35 It is not considered that the negligible benefits as outlined above, would overcome the identified harm in respect of the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding character and appearance of the conservation area.

10 CONCLUSIONS

- 10.1 Taking into account the above assessment, it is considered the proposed development by way of form, scale and detailing would fail preserve or enhance the special architectural character of the conservation area, of which the LPA have a statutory duty to protect. Therefore, the application is considered to be contrary to Policies LP16 and LP18 of the Local Development Plan and Paragraphs 210, 212, 213, 215, 216, 219 and 221 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.
- 10.2 It is acknowledged that the proposal would result in some minor benefits, however as discussed above, these are not considered to overcome the harm identified.

11 RECOMMENDATION

Refuse, for the following reason:

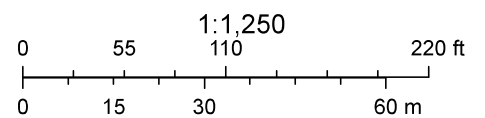
1.	<p>The proposed development, by virtue of its form, scale, and detailing, fails to reflect the established character and architectural quality of the surrounding built environment along Nene Parade. The dwellings are considered to lack architectural merit, presenting dwellings which lack architectural detail and would appear awkward within the street scene and would be at odds with the positive vernacular of the area, including the nearby single-storey cottages with attic dormers and two-storey terraced properties. The deep floorplans and resulting shallow roof pitch give rise to a chalet-style form, which is uncharacteristic of the locality, while the oversized dormers and integral garages further detract from the street scene and fail to contribute positively to the public realm.</p> <p>Rather than drawing inspiration from the area's traditional detailing — such as gauged brick arches, banding, coggled brickwork, recessed windows, and proportionate dormers — the design disregards these qualities, and instead perpetuates poor-quality development that undermines the character of the conservation area. As such, the proposal fails to preserve or enhance the special architectural or historic interest of the Nene Parade Conservation Area, contrary to Policies LP16 and LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan and Paragraphs 210, 212, 213, 215, 216, 219 and 221 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), which collectively seek to ensure high-quality design and the protection of the special architectural or historic interest of the conservation area.</p>
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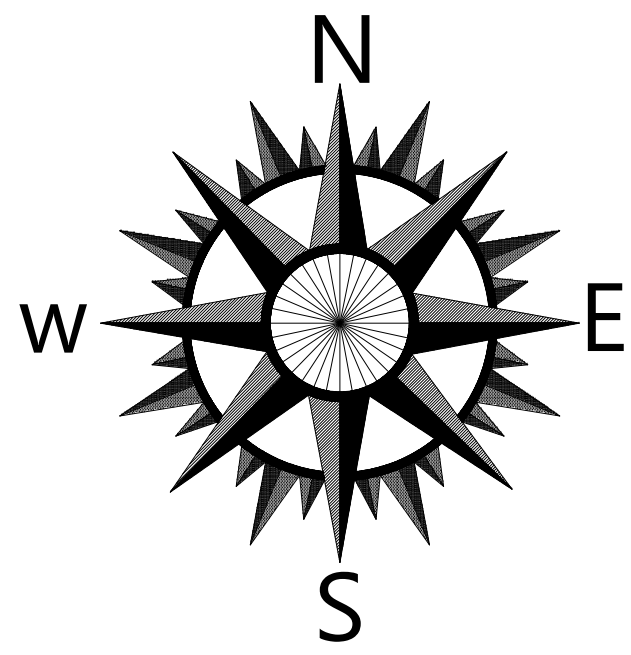


9/2/2025, 3:08:20 PM

 Fenland District Boundary



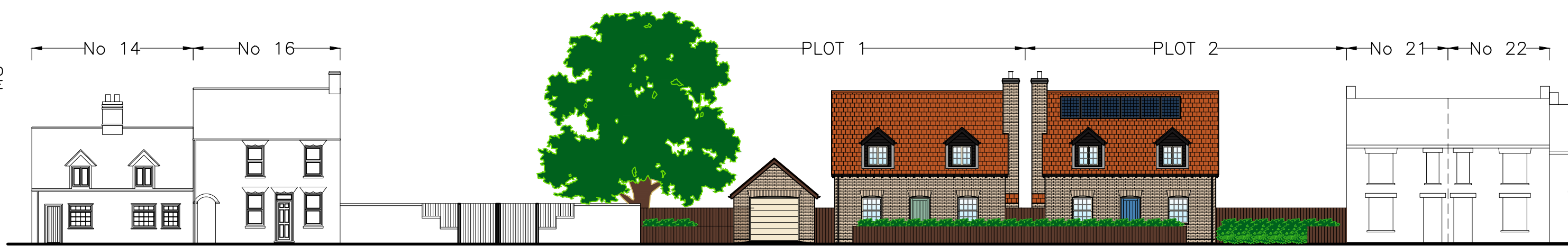
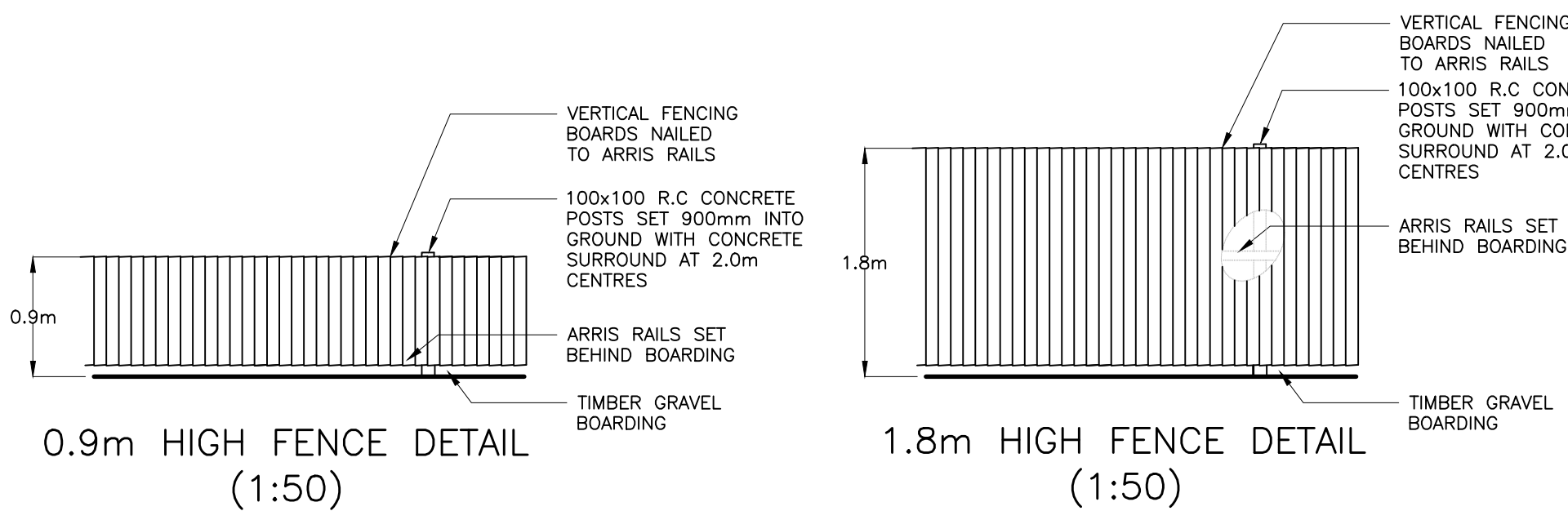
Fenland District Council



PROPOSED SITE PLAN (1:200)

LEGEND:

- PERMEABLE BLOCK PAVING (NON SLIP) PROPOSED DWELLINGS GRASS SLAB PAVING EXISTING BUILDINGS VEGETATION BIN STORE/ COLLECTION



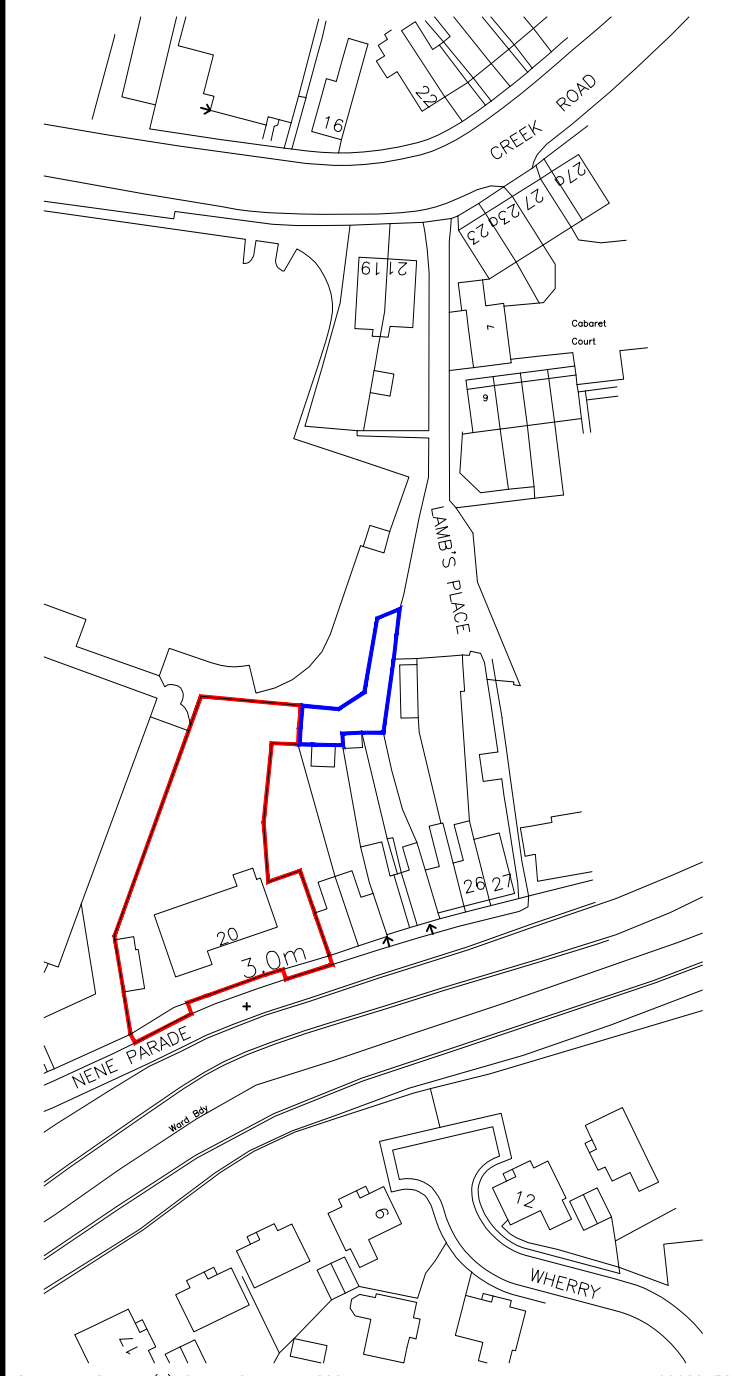
PROPOSED STREET SCENE (1:200)

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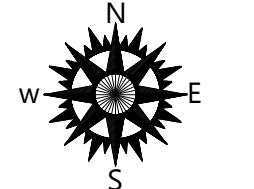
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All finishes, insulation and damp-proofing to architect's details



LOCATION PLAN (1:1250)



B	PLANNERS COMMENTS	OCT 25
A	UPDATED FOLLOWING CLIENT COMMENT	AUG 25

REVISIONS	DATE
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CONSULTING STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS

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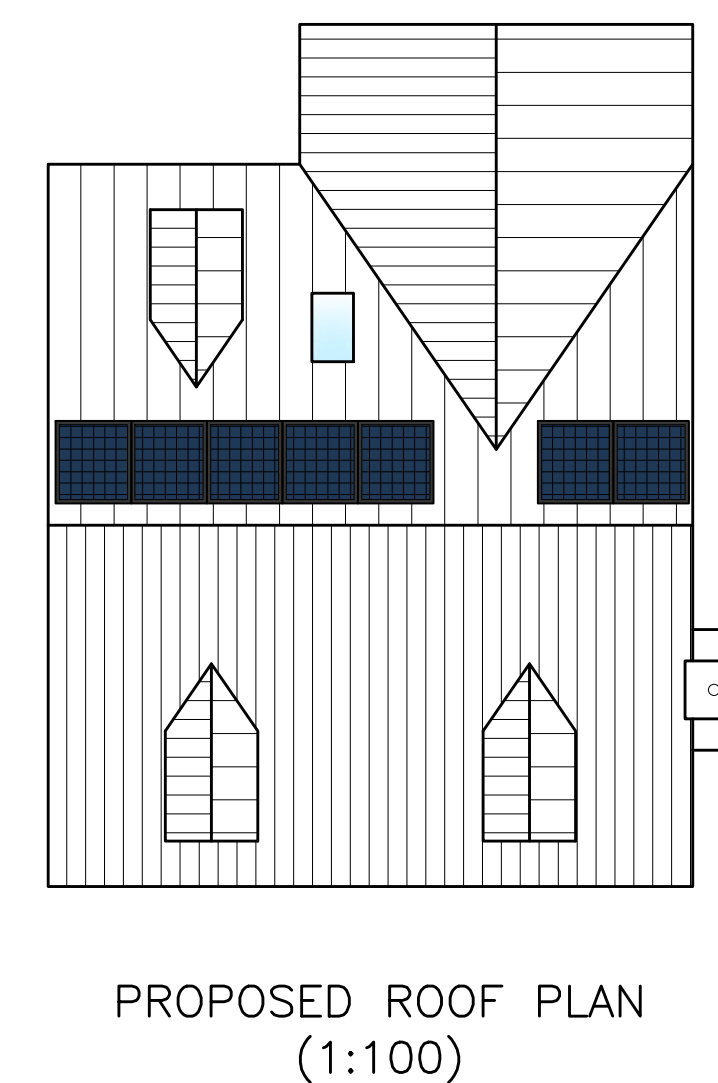
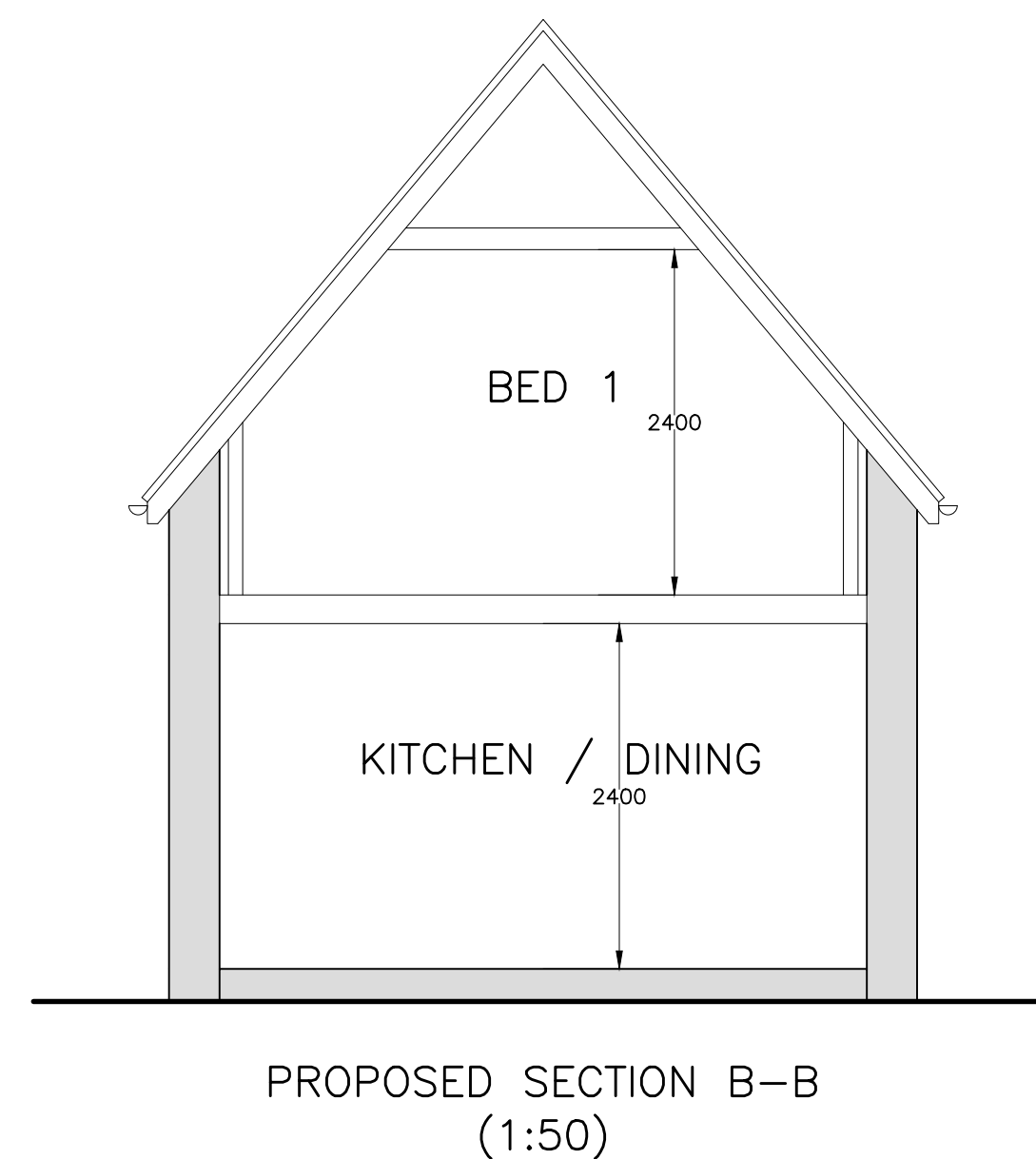
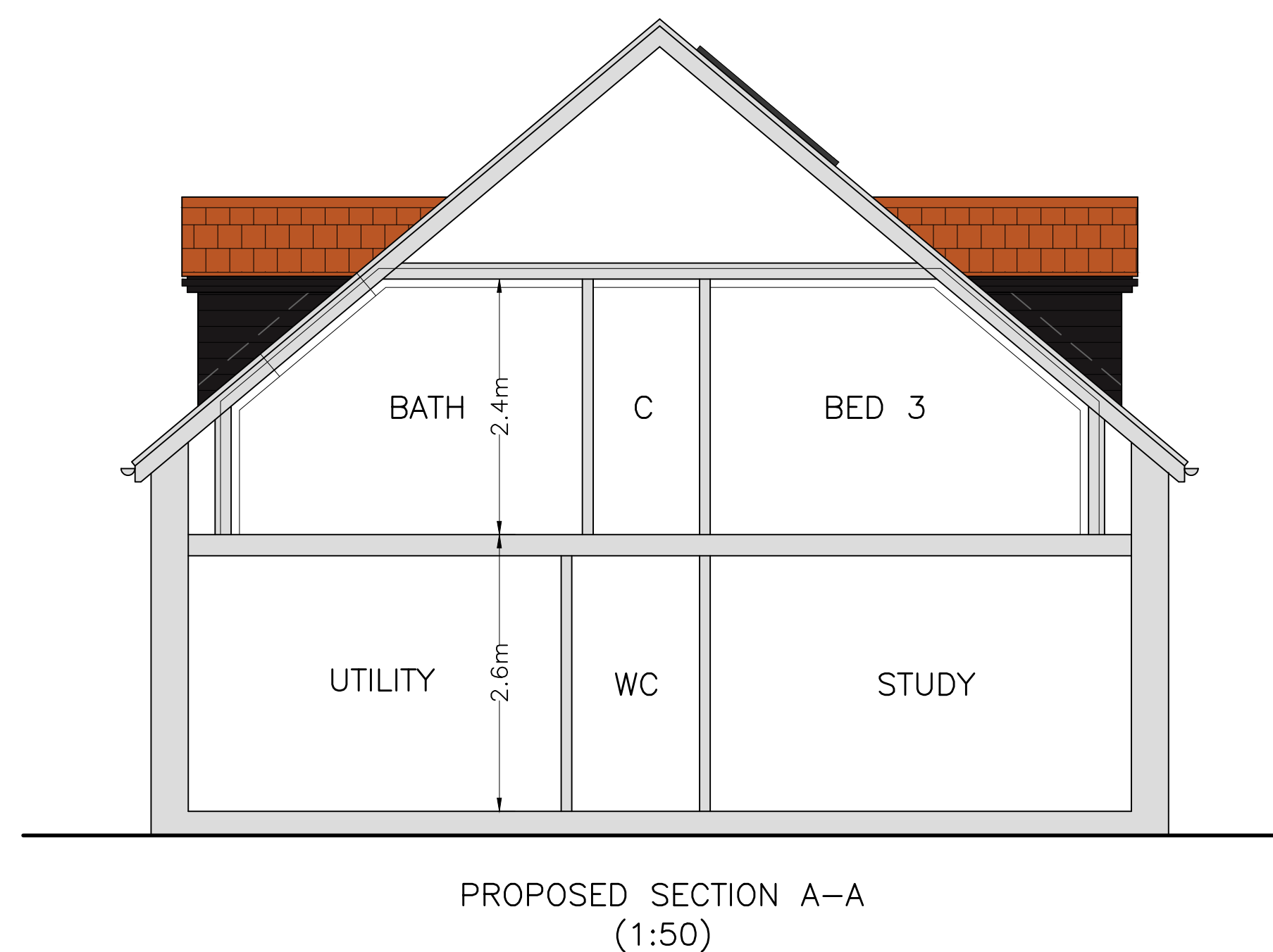
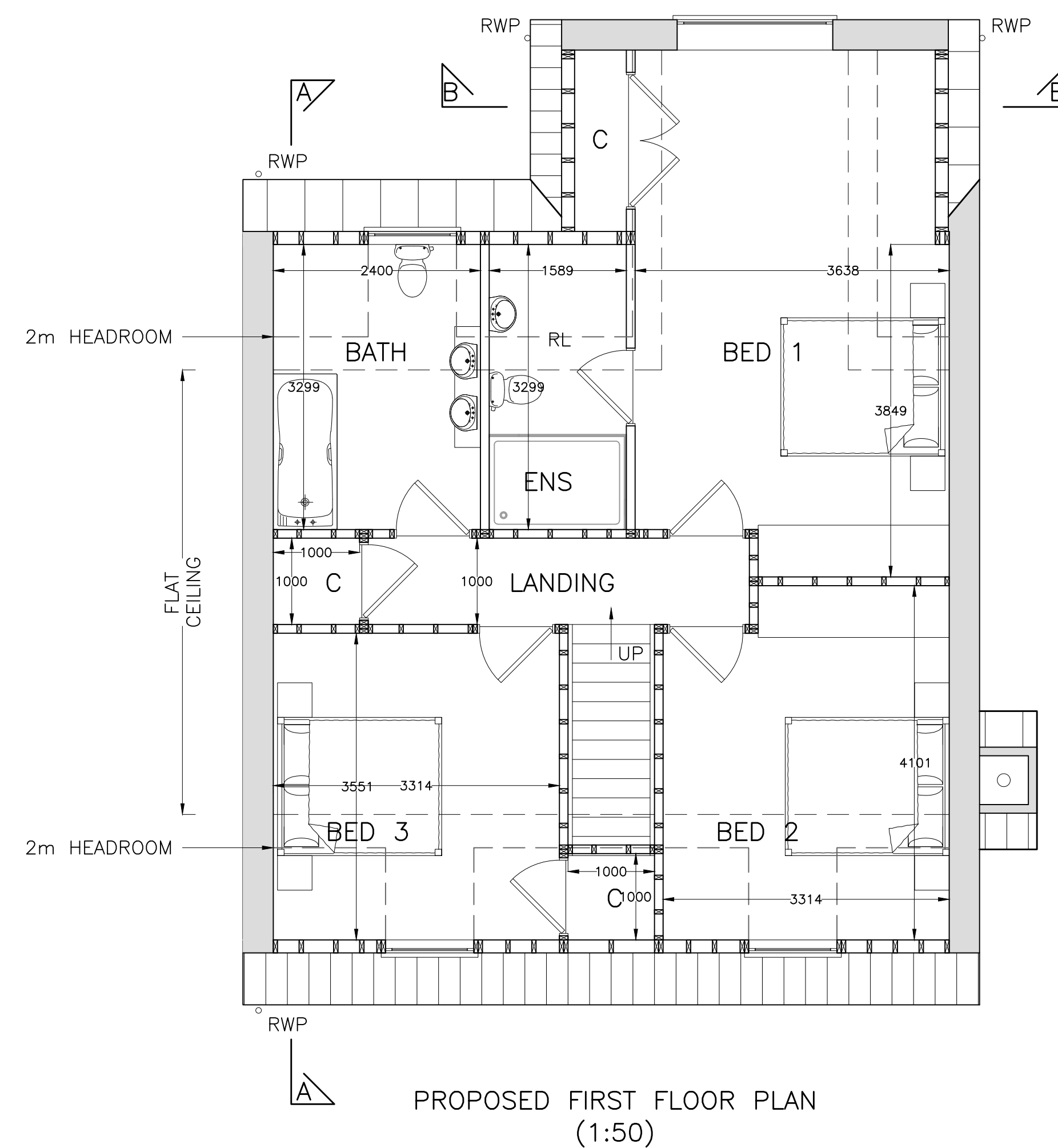
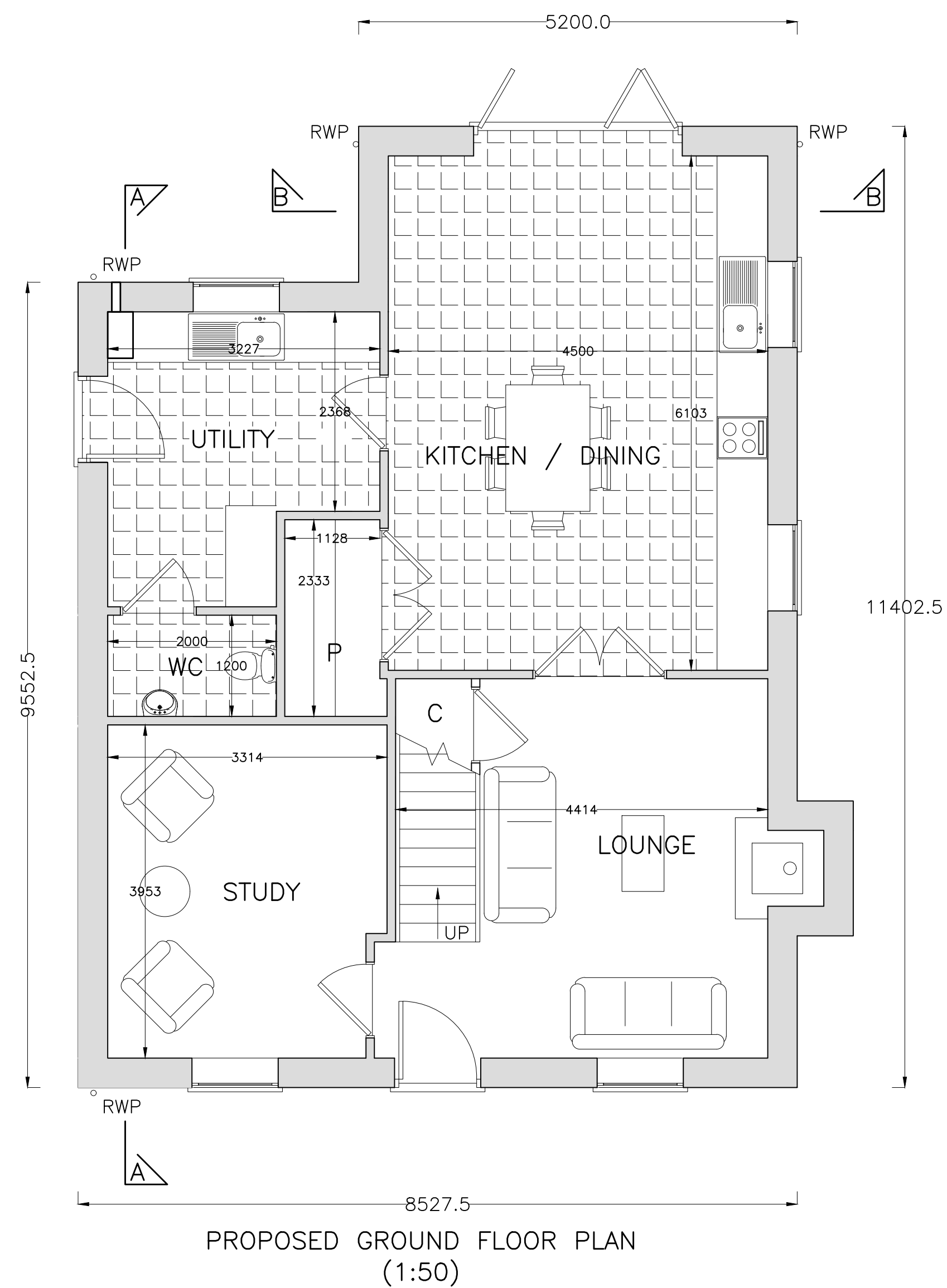
LABC Fenland District Council
Building Design Awards
winner Building Excellence in Fenland

CLIENT
Mr C White

PROJECT
20 Nene Parade
March
Cambridgeshire
PE15 8TD

TITLE
Location Plan & Proposed
Site Plan, Proposed Street
Scene & Fence Details

DRAWN J. Burrows	DATE OF ISSUE
CHECKED M. Hall	
DATE August 2025	DRAWING NUMBER H9928/10 _B
SCALE As Shown	



PLOT 1

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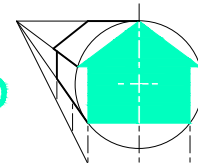



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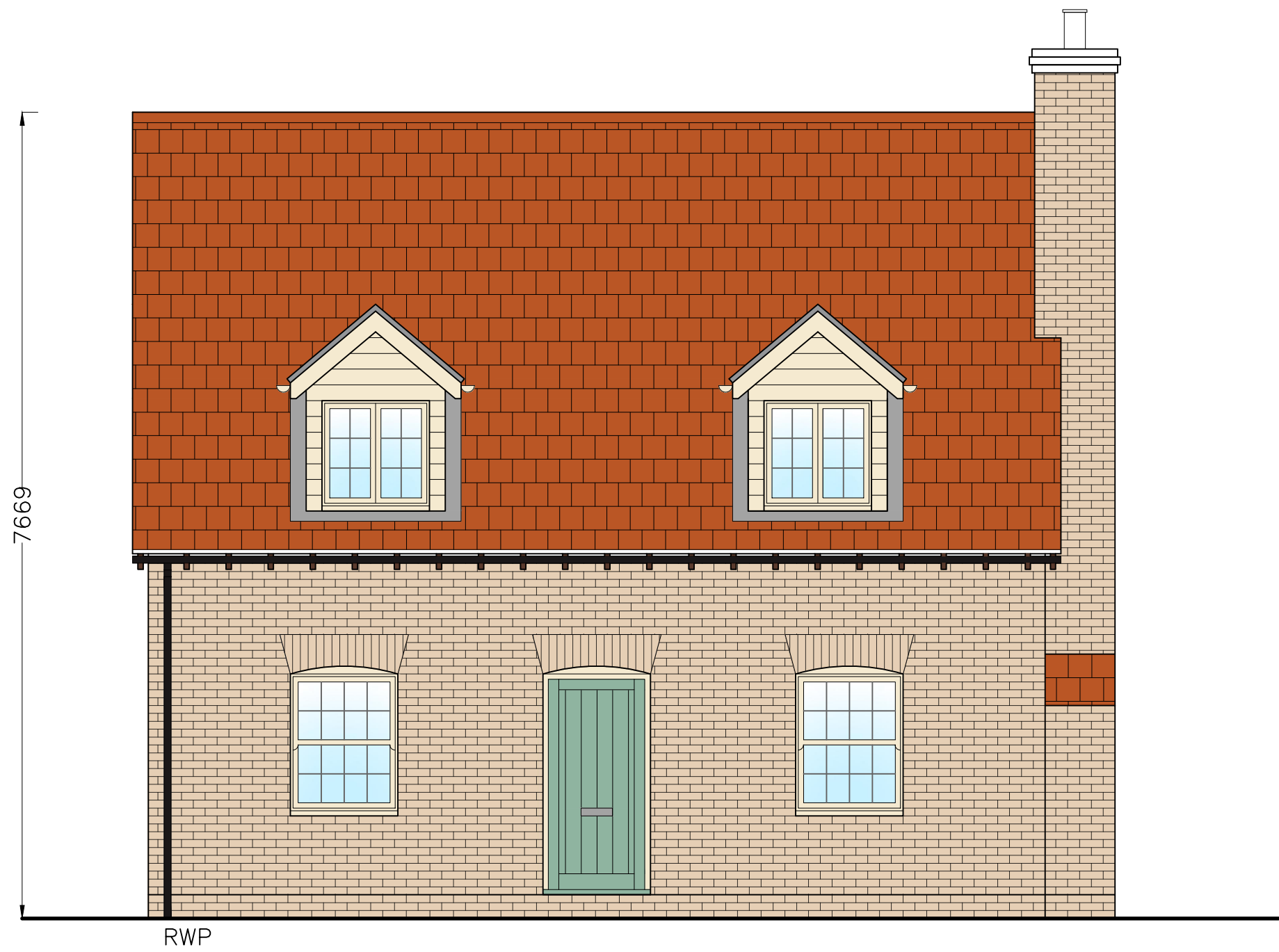
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All finishes, insulation and damp-proofing to architect's details

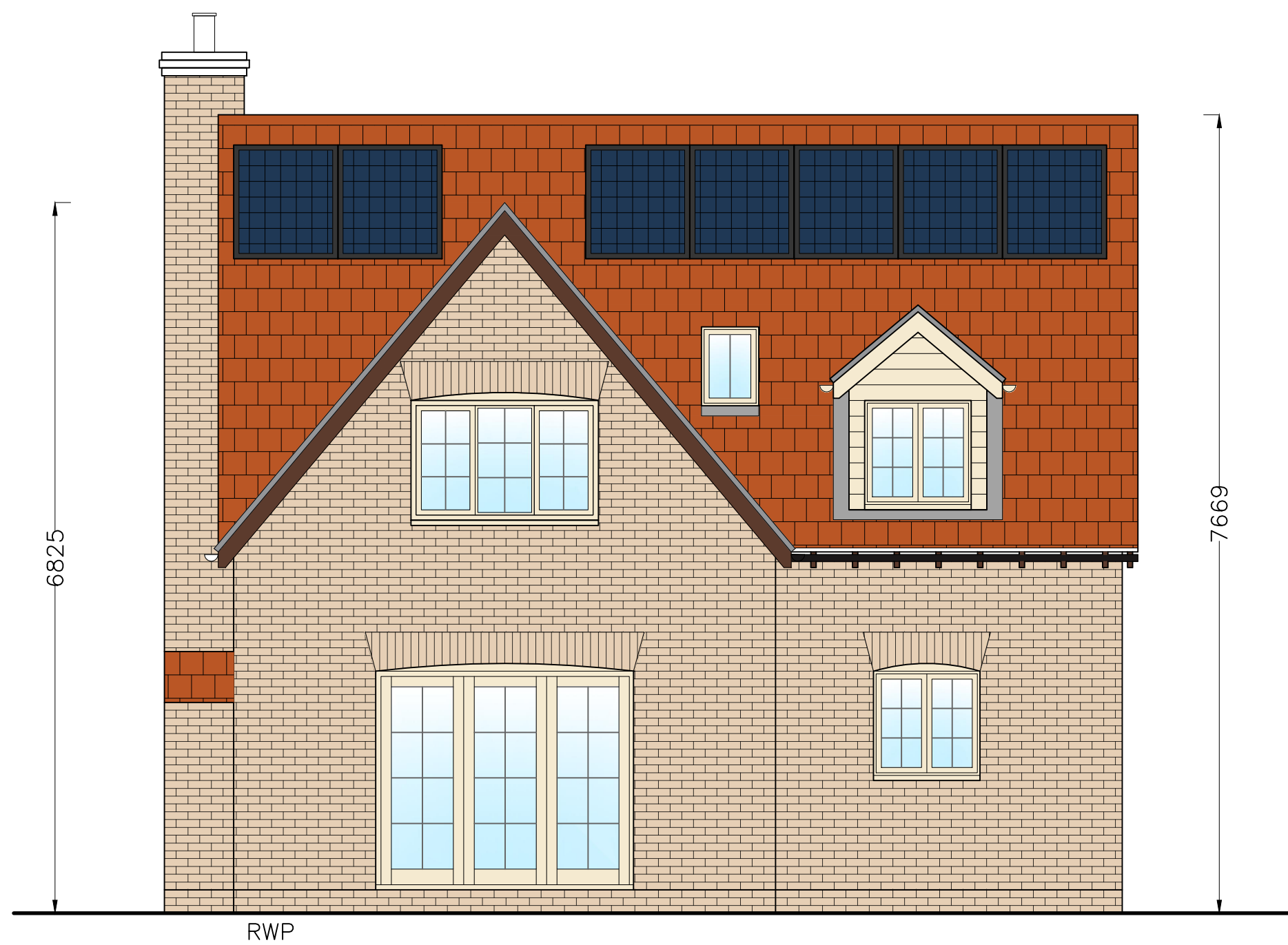
B	PLANNERS COMMENTS	OCT 25
A	UPDATED FOLLOWING CLIENT COMMENT	AUG 25
REVISONS		DATE
 <p>MORTON & HALL CONSULTING LIMITED CONSULTING STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS</p>		
1 Gordon Avenue, March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 8AJ		Tel: 01354 655454 Fax: 01354 660467 E-mail: info@mortonandhall.co.uk Website: www.mortonandhallconsultingengineers.co.uk
 <p>LABC</p>	 <p>LABC</p>	Fenland District Council  <p>Building Design Awards Building Excellence in Fenland</p>
CLIENT		
Mr C White		
PROJECT		
20 Nene Parade March Cambridgeshire PE15 8TD		
TITLE		
Plot 1 Proposed Floor Plans, Roof Plan & Section		
DRAWN J. Burrows	DATE OF ISSUE	
CHECKED M. Hall		
DATE August 2025	DRAWING NUMBER	
SCALE As Shown	H9928/11 B	



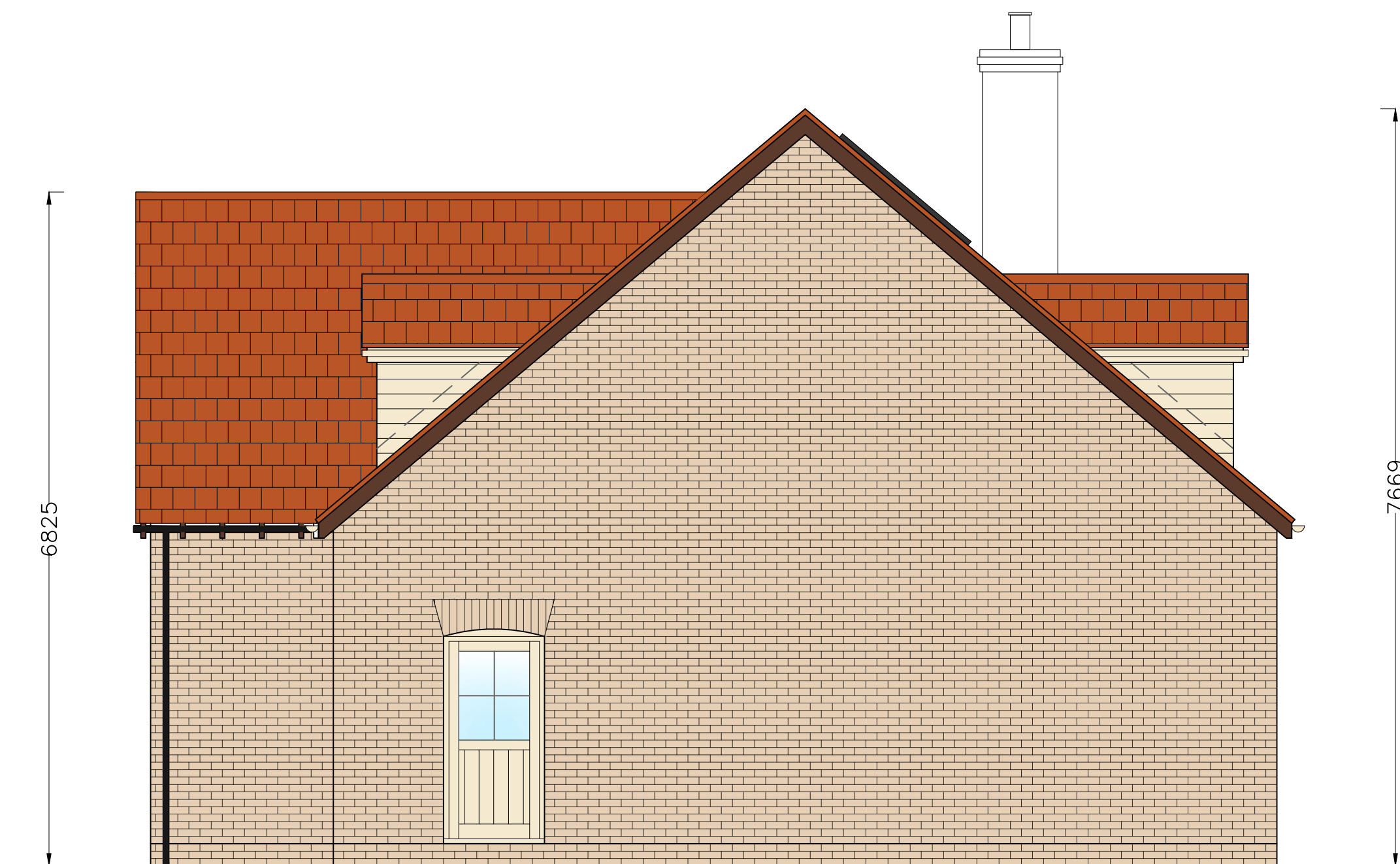
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(1:50)



PROPOSED RHS ELEVATION
(1:50)



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION
(1:50)



PROPOSED LHS ELEVATION
(1:50)

PLOT 1

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LEGEND:

BRICKWORK:
Weinerberger – Weathered Gault Blend



ROOF TILE:
Marley – Lincoln Clay Interlocking Pantile,
Rustic Red



CLADDING:
Cedral – Cedral Lap, Black C50



JOINERY:
Tradelink – Clotted Cream UPVC



FRONT DOOR:
Pine Green UPVC



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Mr C White

20 Nene Parade
March
Cambridgrshire
PE15 8TD

Plot 1
Elevations

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DATE August 2025	DRAWING NUMBER H9928/12 _B
SCALE As Shown	



PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION
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PROPOSED LHS ELEVATION
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PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION
(1:50)



PROPOSED RHS ELEVATION
(1:50)

PLOT 2

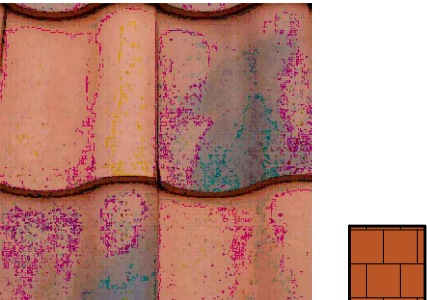
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LEGEND:

BRICKWORK:
Weinerberger – Weathered Gault Blend



ROOF TILE:
Marley – Lincoln Clay Interlocking Pantile,
Rustic Red



CLADDING:
Cedral – Cedral Lap, Black C50



JOINERY:
Tradelinek – Clotted Cream UPVC



FRONT DOOR:
Steel Blue UPVC



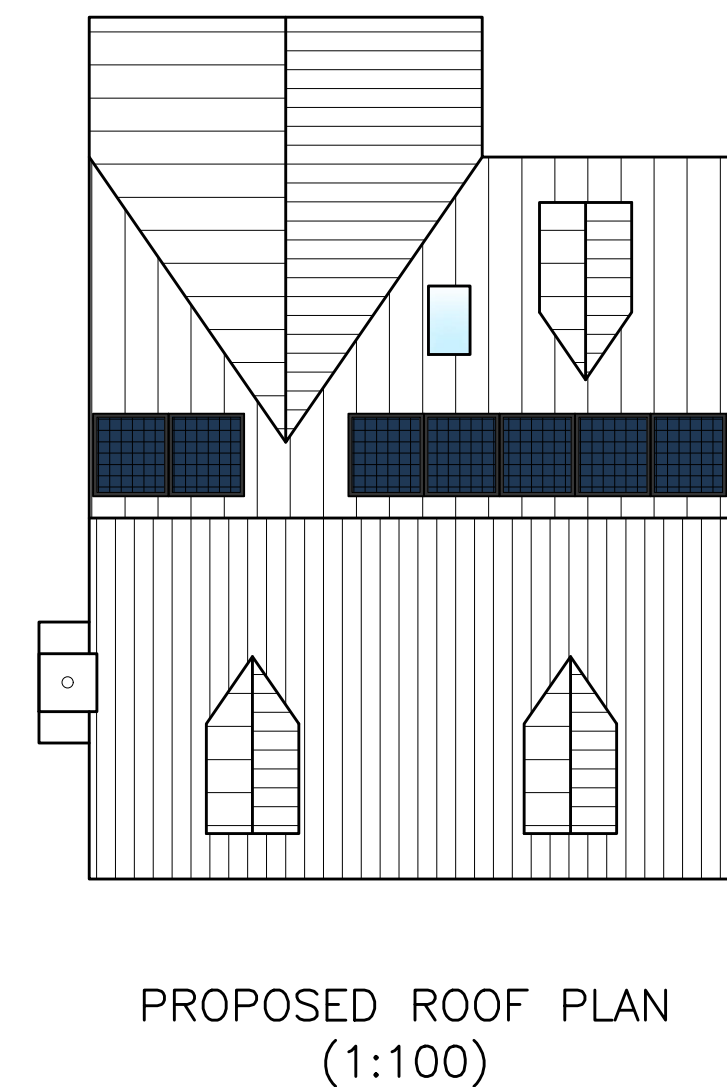
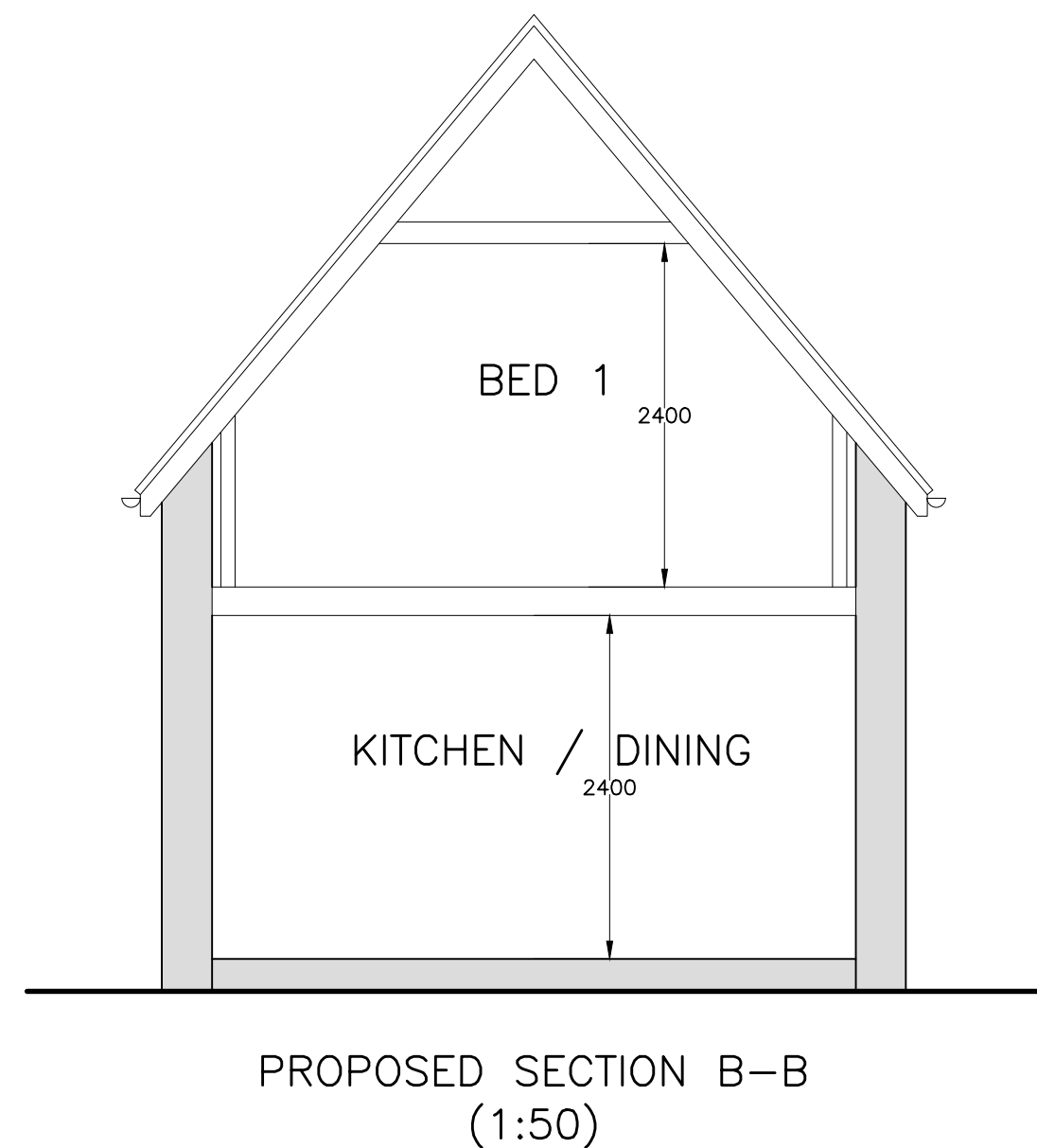
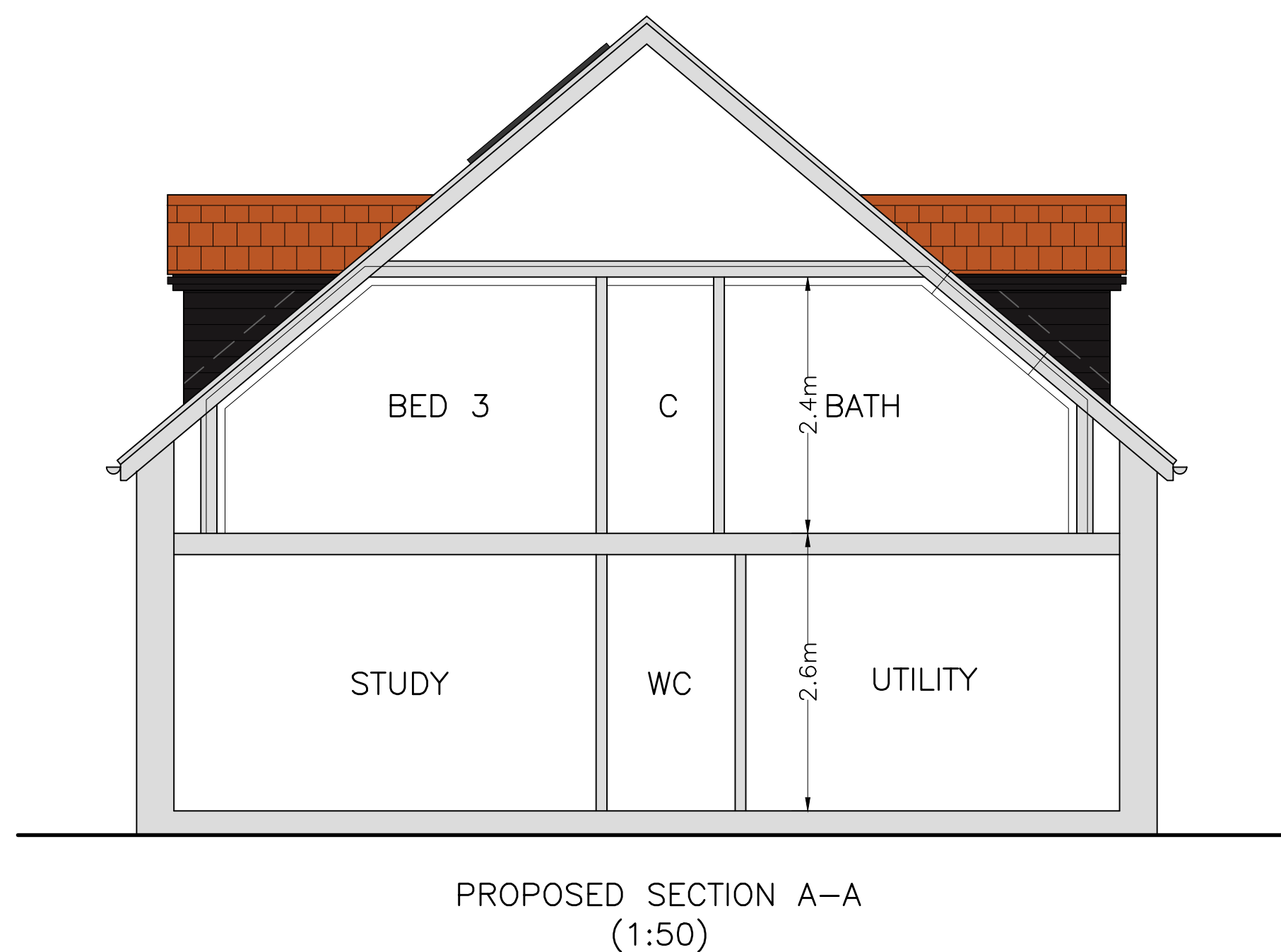
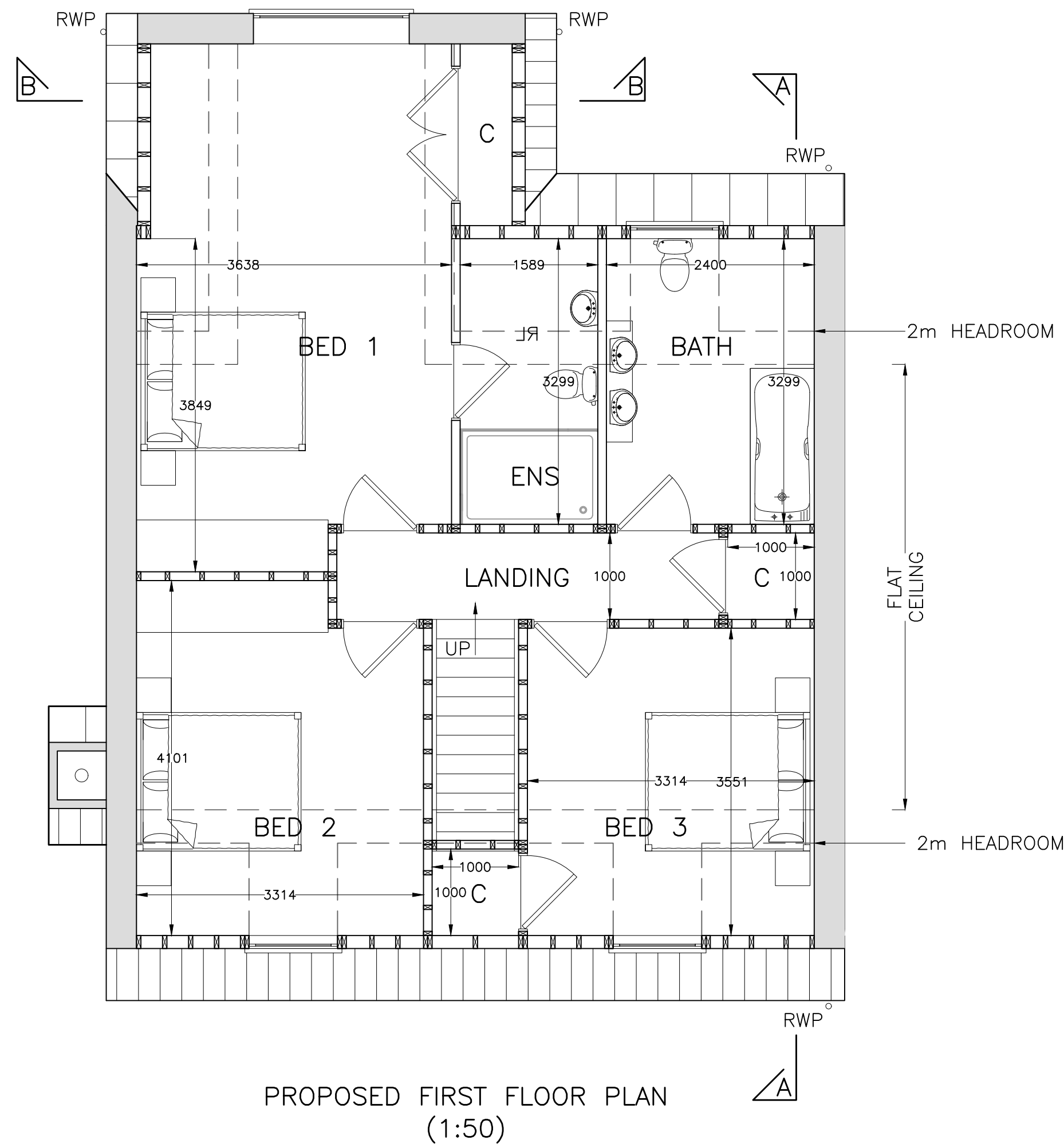
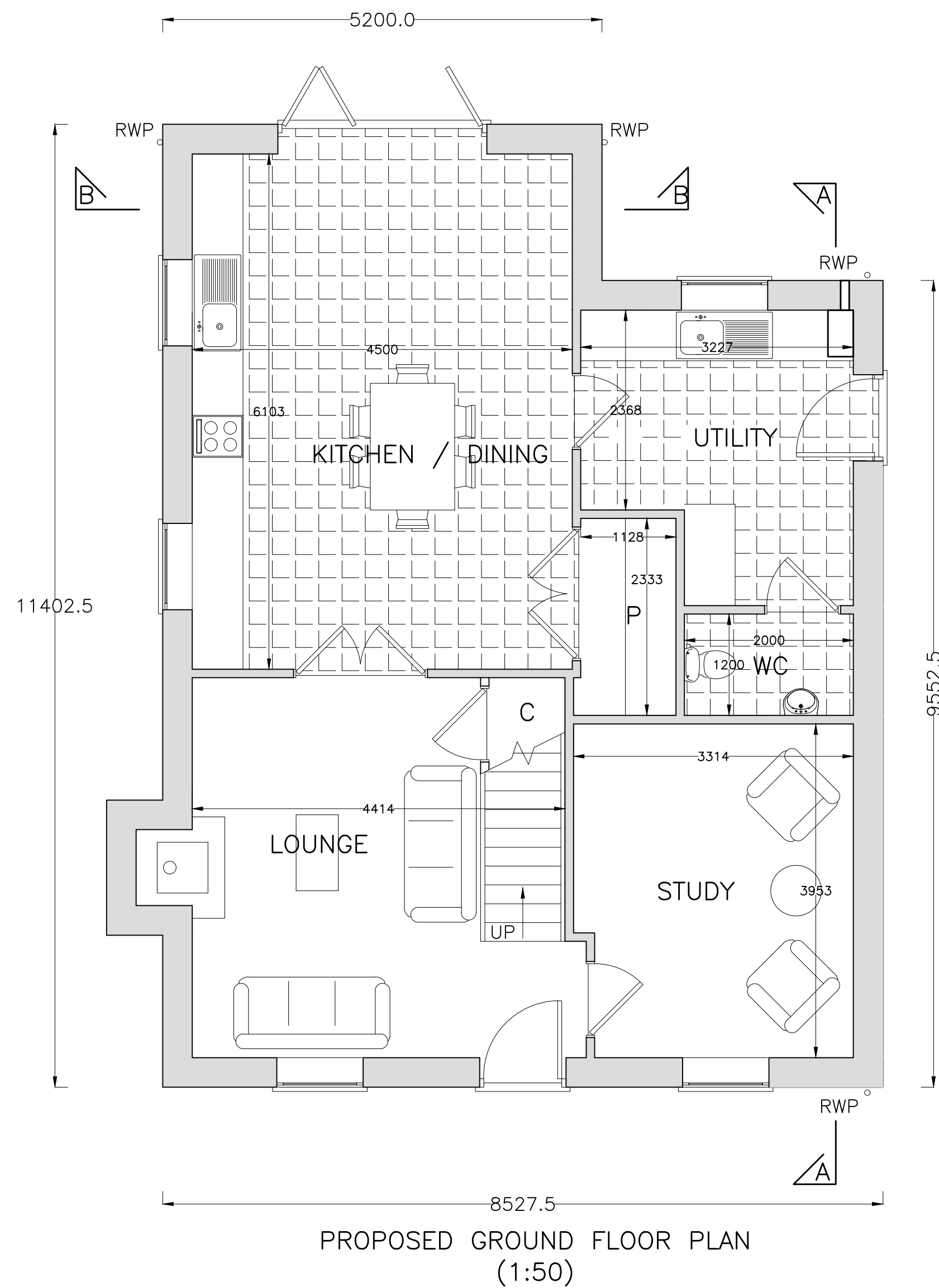
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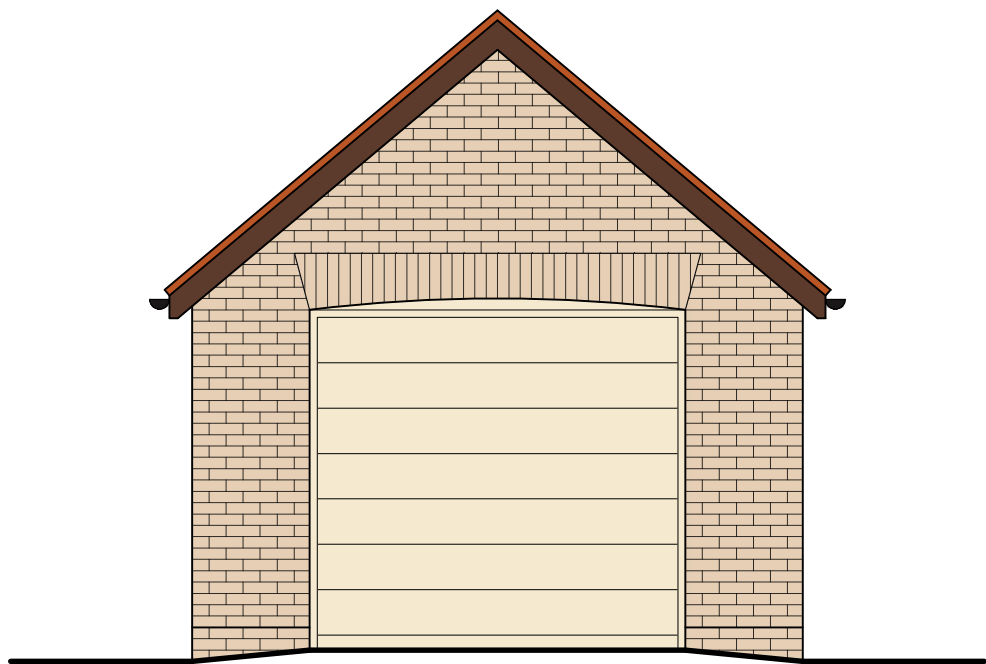
CLIENT	
Mr C White	
PROJECT	
20 Nene Parade March Cambridgeshire PE15 8TD	
TITLE	
Plot 2 Elevations	
DRAWN J. Burrows	DATE OF ISSUE
CHECKED M. Hall	
DATE August 2025	DRAWING NUMBER H9928/14A
SCALE As Shown	



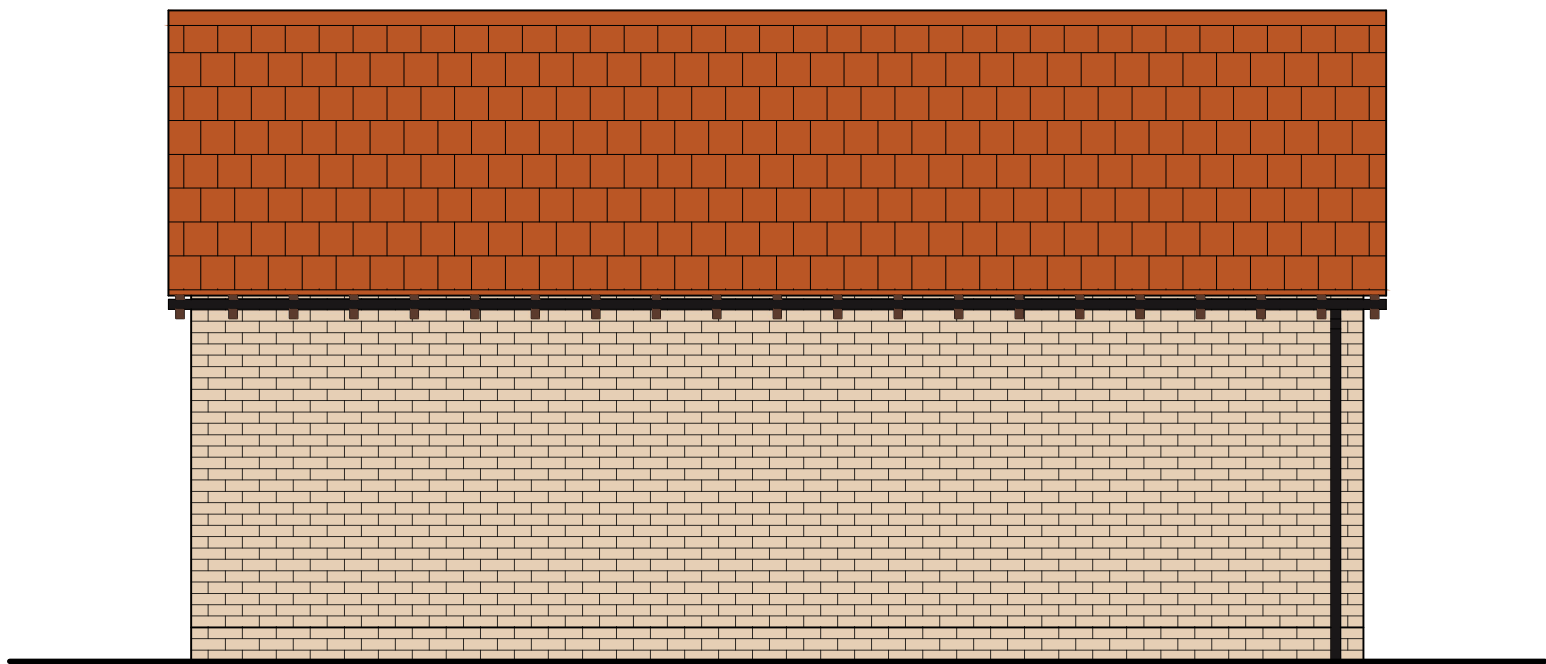
PLOT 2

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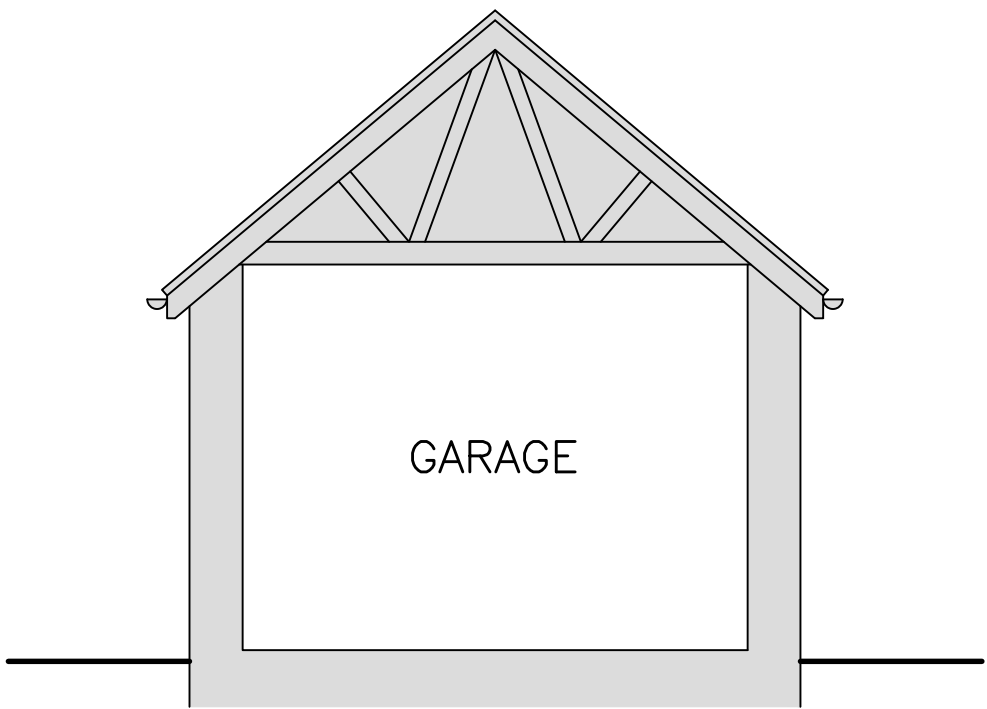
A		PLANNERS COMMENTS	OCT 25
REVISIONS			DATE
MORTON & HALL CONSULTING LIMITED CONSULTING STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS 1 Gordon Avenue, March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 8AJ Tel: 01354 655454 Fax: 01354 660467 E-mail: info@mortonandhall.co.uk Website: www.mortonconsultingengineers.co.uk LABC LABC Fenland District Council BEST BUILDING EXCELLENCE AWARD winner Building Design Awards Building Excellence in Fenland			
CLIENT Mr C White			
PROJECT 20 Nene Parade March Cambridgeshire PE15 8TD			
TITLE Plot 2 Proposed Floor Plans, Roof Plan & Section			
DRAWN J. Burrows		DATE OF ISSUE	
CHECKED M. Hall			
DATE August 2025		DRAWING NUMBER	
SCALE As Shown		H9928/13A	



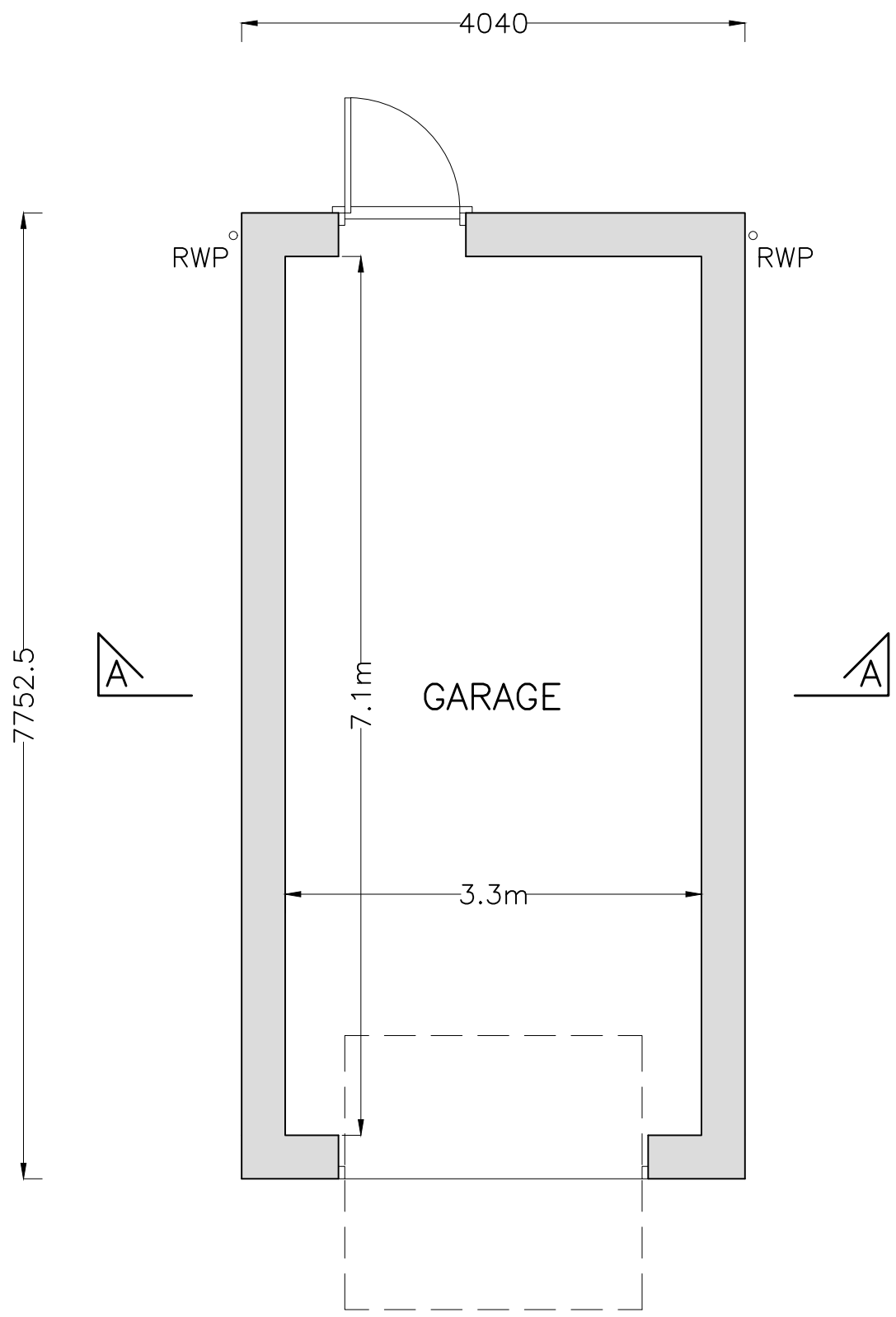
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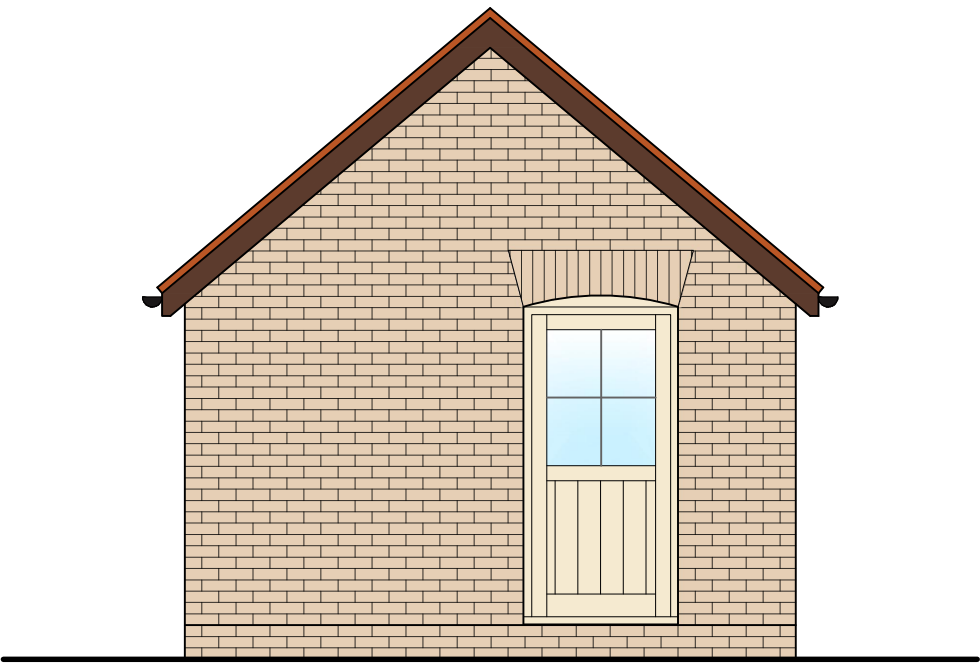
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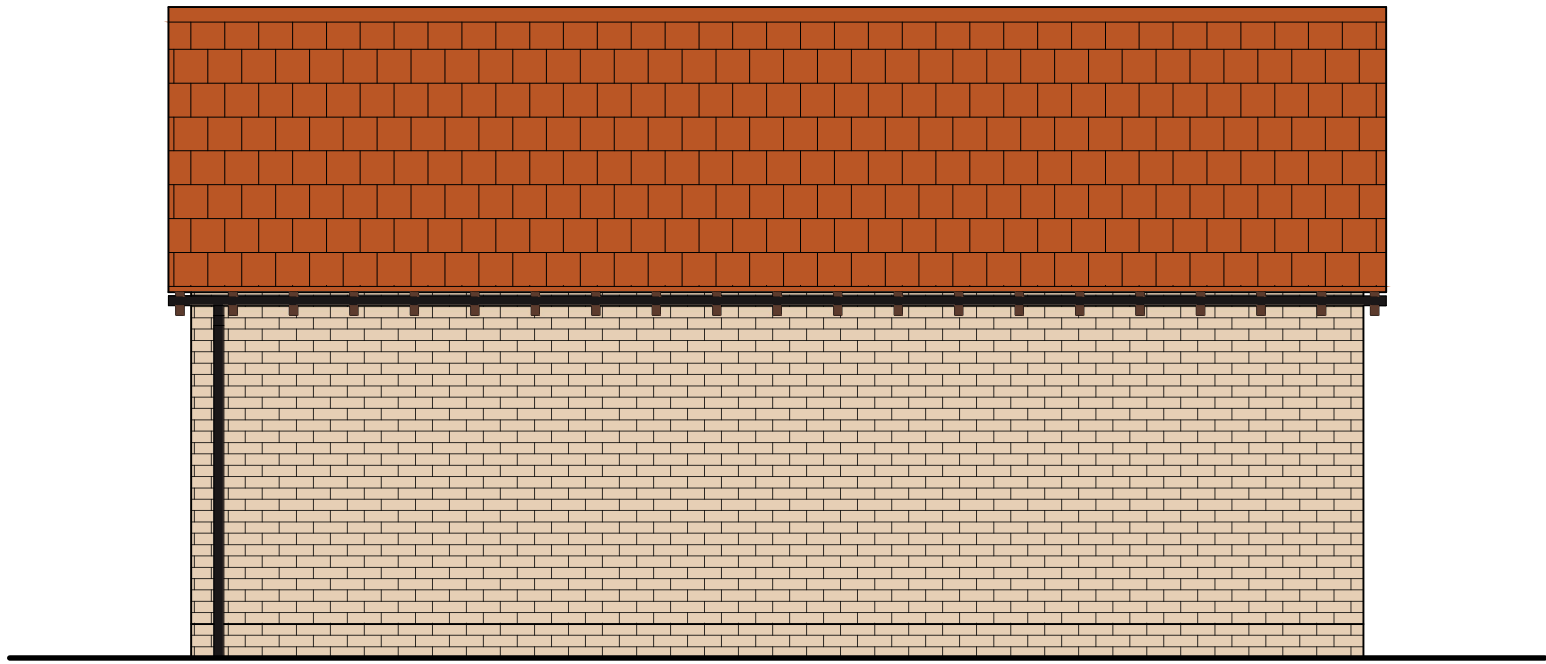
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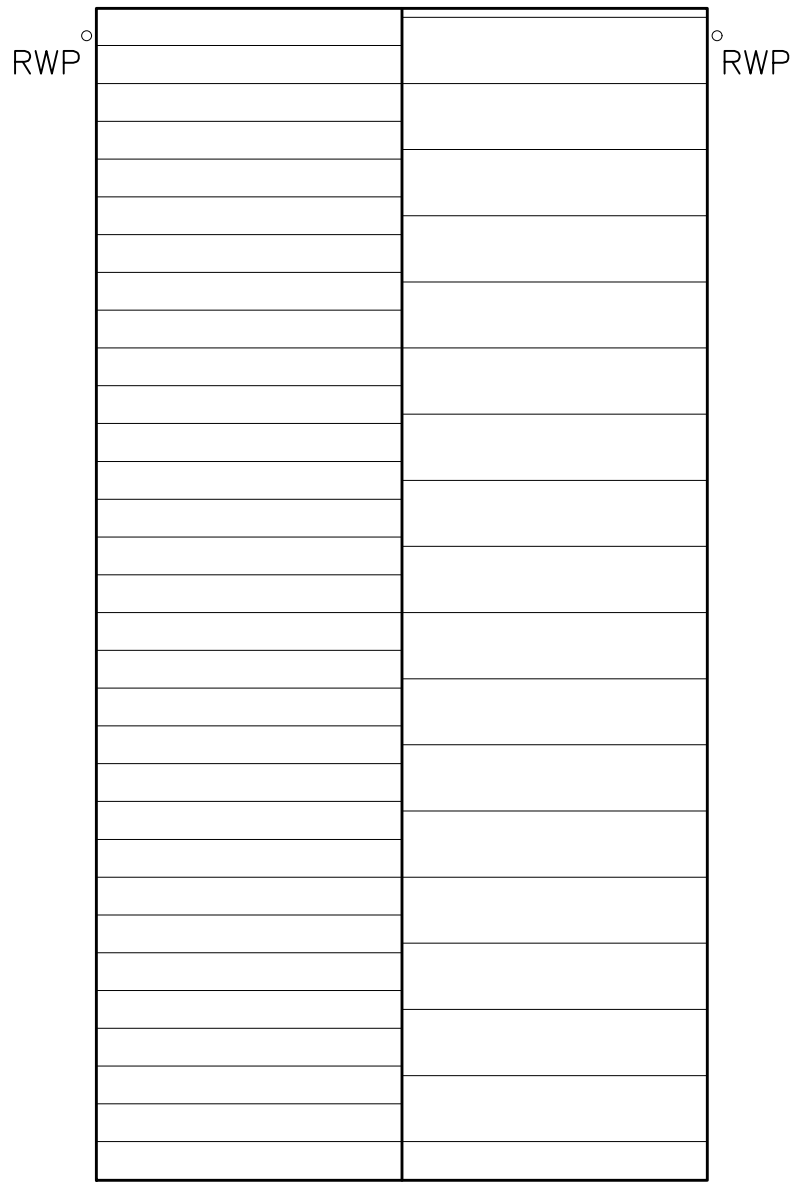
PROPOSED GARAGE FLOOR PLAN
(1:50)



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION
(1:50)



PROPOSED LHS ELEVATION
(1:50)



PROPOSED GARAGE ROOF PLAN
(1:50)

PLOT 1

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The contractor is to arrange inspections of the works by the BCO (or NHBC) as required by the Building Regulations and is to obtain completion certificate and forward to the Engineer
All finishes, insulation and damp-proofing to architect's details

A	PLANNERS COMMENTS	OCT 25
REVISIONS		DATE
<div><div><div><div><div><div></div><div>MORTON & HALL</div><div>CONSULTING LIMITED</div><div>CONSULTING STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS</div></div></div><div><div>1 Gordon Avenue, March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 8AJ</div><div><div>Tel: 01354 655454 Fax: 01354 660467 E-mail: info@mortonandhall.co.uk Website: www.mortonconsultingengineers.co.uk</div></div></div><div><div><div><div><div></div><div>LABC</div><div>THE BUILDING EXCELLENCE AWARD</div><div>winner</div></div><div><div><div><div></div><div>Fenland District Council</div><div>Building Design Awards</div><div>Building Excellence in Fenland</div></div></div></div></div></div></div></div></div></div>		
CLIENT		
Mr C White		
PROJECT		
20 Nene Parade March Cambridgrshire PE15 8TD		
TITLE		
Plot 1 Garage Floor Plan, Elevations & Section		
DRAWN	J. Burrows	DATE OF ISSUE
CHECKED	M. Hall	
DATE	August 2025	DRAWING NUMBER
SCALE	As Shown	H9928/15 _A