F/YR19/1028/F

Applicant: Mr T Stevens

Agent : Morton & Hall Consulting Ltd Morton & Hall Consulting Ltd

Land North Of March Braza Club, Elm Road, March, Cambridgeshire

Erect 6 no dwellings (2 x single storey 3-bed and 4 x 2-storey 3-bed) involving formation of a new access

Officer recommendation: Refuse

Reason for Committee: Town Council comments contrary to Officer recommendation

### 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This site is in a prominent and well known location within the town and provides an opportunity for a high quality development which respects and enhances the area.
- 1.2 The proposal put forward has an absence of frontage development, resulting in a lack of street presence and a poor relationship with its surroundings, entirely at odds with the prevailing character of the area. In addition, a large bin storage/collection area is located to the front of the site, visible from Elm Road and further detracting from and reducing the quality of the scheme when viewed from this main thoroughfare. Overall the scheme is considered to be significantly detrimental to the character and visual amenity of the area.
- 1.3 There are no issues to address in relation to flood risk or residential amenity and sufficient parking provision is proposed within the site. The Local Highways Authority is content with the access and development layout, however has advised that the access would only be acceptable from a highway safety point of view if the on street parking is removed from either side. This would require a parking prohibition Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and can be dealt with by way of the imposition of a Grampian condition to ensure that this satisfactorily achieved.
- 1.4 The application site adjoins Norwood Nature Reserve and only a biodiversity checklist has been submitted for which all the answers are 'no', hence insufficient assessment has been undertaken and inadequate information submitted to enable the Local Planning Authority to ascertain whether the proposal would impact protected species.

# 2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises of the bowling green and related buildings associated with the Braza Club. It is located on the western side of Elm Road, is presently open to the south adjoining the gravel car park, to the east is a Leyland cypress hedge and there are trees protected via TPO M/2/465/5 to the north and east. The site abuts Norwood Nature Reserve to the north west.

#### 3 PROPOSAL

The application seeks full planning permission for 6 dwellings involving the formation of a new access directly from Elm Road.

- 3.1 Plot 1 measures 13.6m x 10m and 5.4m in height, forming a detached singlestorey 3-bed dwelling
- 3.2 Plot 2 measures 13.6m x 9m and 5.4m in height, forming a detached single-storey 3-bed dwelling
- 3.3 Plots 3-4 and 5-6 measure 9.5m x 12m and 7.5m, forming 2 pairs of semidetached 2-storey, 3-bed dwellings
- 3.4 Full plans and associated documents for this application can be found at:

https://www.fenland.gov.uk/publicaccess/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=docume nts&keyVal=Q1OUJXHE0D800

#### 4 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

F/YR17/0608/TRTPO	Works to a Beech tree covered by TPO M/2/465/5	Granted 18/08/2017
F/YR03/0718/F	Erection of single-storey extensions	Granted 19/08/2003
TP7074	Erection of a building for groundsman's tools	Granted 01/06/1959
TP6241	Extension of staff association club premises and provide bowling green and tennis courts	Granted 11/3/1958

#### 5 CONSULTATIONS

# 5.1 Parish/Town Council

Recommend approval.

#### 5.2 Environment & Health Services (FDC) (23/12/2019)

I refer to the above application for consideration and would make the following observations.

The Environmental Health Team note and accept the submitted information and have 'No Objections' in principle, as it is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on local air quality or the noise climate.

As the proposal involves the removal of existing structures, and is in relatively close proximity to areas containing known ground contamination, the following condition should be imposed in the event that planning consent is granted;

#### UNSUSPECTED CONTAMINATION

CONDITION: If during development, contamination not previously identified, is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the LPA) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted, and obtained written approval from the LPA, a Method Statement detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with.

REASON: To ensure that the development complies with approved details in the interests of the protection of human health and the environment.

#### 5.3 Environment & Health Services (FDC) (24/2/2020)

I note that we did receive a noise complaint last year, but like those from 2013 - 2015 it was not substantiated.

I acknowledge the proposals for a 1.8m timber fence for the external amenity areas and the intention to install double-glazed windows in the proposed dwellings. From experience, it is typical that an acoustic consultant would recommend these measures as a means of suitable attenuation in such circumstances.

If a noise impact assessment was undertaken with the results of which demonstrating that the existing premises is 'unlikely' to have a detrimental effect on occupants of proposed dwellings, and should planning consent then be granted, this would still not indemnify against action being taken in the event that this service received substantiated noise complaints which then warranted statutory nuisance action.

### 5.4 Environment & Health Services (FDC) (5/3/2020)

I have no adverse comments to make in respect of the above application following receipt of the latest supporting documentation.

Comments made on 23.12.2019 and 24.02.2020 are therefore still relevant from the standpoint of environmental health.

### 5.5 Arboricultural Officer (FDC)

The application is for the construction of 6 dwellings with associated garden areas and off-street parking; a new access road will be required off Elm Road.

The development does not require the removal of any trees but a section of Leyland cypress hedge will be removed to construct the new access.

I have no objection to the development but the developer must ensure all aspects of the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection must be adhered to.

### 5.6 Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Authority (23/12/2019)

The row of parked vehicles along Elm Road will hamper vehicle to vehicle visibility at the access. Parking bay road markings/parking prohibition order will need to be agreed with CCC Policy and Regulation prior to the application being granted. This development will need to fund and implement the agreed scheme to address the visibility and access concerns.

The access road has no turning head. The layout needs to be amended so a small delivery vehicle can turn around. It is unacceptable for a vehicle to reverse out of the access road onto Elm Road.

Defer for amended plans

### 5.7 Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Authority (09/03/2020)

The access will only be acceptable from a highway safety point of view if the kerb side parking is removed either side of the access along Elm Road. Because this requires a parking prohibition TRO, the normal process is for the TRO/parking prohibition scheme to be approved prior to planning consent being granted. To date I have seen no scheme proposal for the double yellow lines. Given this is vital to making the development acceptable, I suggest this is frontloaded.

### 5.8 Anglian Water Services Ltd

The Pre-Development Team provide comments on planning applications for major proposals of 10 dwellings or more, or if an industrial or commercial development, more than 0.5 ha. However, if there are specific drainage issues you would like us to respond to, please contact us outlining the details.

### 5.9 FDC Head Of Environmental Services

The shared collection point at the entrance to the private road would mean that the refuse vehicle would not need to enter the site.

The bin store should be of sufficient size to accommodate up to 12 standard size 240 litre wheeled bins and be within 10m of the public highway. Residents shouldn't be expected to move the bins more than 30m to the collection point and would require notification of collection arrangements.

### 5.10 Local Residents/Interested Parties

A petition has been received from residents of Swan Court objecting to the proposal on the grounds there is insufficient parking proposed which will lead to additional parking on Swan Court where there are already parking issues and there are concerns regarding access for emergency vehicles.

# 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).

### 7 POLICY FRAMEWORK

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

# National Design Guide 2019

Context – C1 Identity – I1 Built Form – B1 Movement – M3 Homes and Buildings – H3

## 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

LP6 – Employment, Tourism, Community Facilities and Retail 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 LP19 – The Natural Environment

# Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments SPD 2014;

DM3 – Making a Positive Contribution to Local Distinctiveness and Character of the Area

DM4 – Waste and Recycling facilities

DM9 – Constraints of existing businesses

### March Neighbourhood Plan 2017

H2 – Windfall Development H3 – Local Housing Need

### 8 KEY ISSUES

- Principle of Development and Loss of a community facility
- Design considerations and visual amenity of area
- Residential Amenity/Health and wellbeing
- Parking and Highways
- Flood Risk
- Biodiversity

### 9 ASSESSMENT

### Principle of Development and Loss of a community facility

9.1 The application site is located within the settlement of March which is identified within the Settlement Hierarchy as a Primary Market Town; Market Towns are identified within Policy LP3 as the focus for housing growth, accordingly there is a presumption in favour of development within this location. This is however on the basis that the development is in keeping with and reflects the character of the area and that there are no significant issues in respect of residential or visual amenity, design, parking, highways, flood risk and biodiversity.

9.2 Policy LP6 of the Fenland Local Plan advises that proposals that would lead the loss of community facilities (such as a bowling green) will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the retention of the facility is no longer financially viable and that there is a lack of community need for the facility. A statement has been provided by the applicants (which remains confidential at their request) providing evidence in this regard, as such this policy is considered to be complied with.

### Design considerations and visual amenity of area

- 9.3 To the east side of Elm Road extending from the railway line to the properties on Norwood Road are 2-storey semi-detached and terraced dwellings, which have their front elevations facing towards this road and are set back behind front gardens contributing to the open character of the area and forming the prevailing character; whilst there is the in depth development of Peterhouse Crescent, this is set back behind the frontage properties. To the north of the site are the singlestorey dwellings of Swan Court, which provides some in depth development, however the properties along Elm Road have their front elevations facing towards this behind front gardens and open space, the historic terrace of 30-38 Elm Road is the only exception to this and these are considered to have more of a relationship with the dwellings on Norward Road when viewed from the south. The application site is enclosed by a Leyland cypress hedge, and whilst this contributes to the relatively verdant nature of the area is not considered to be of particularly high quality. There are a number of substantial trees which are protected via a Tree Preservation Order and provide a significant contribution to visual amenity.
- 9.4 The application proposes 6 dwellings located off a private drive, with dwellings facing towards this, having no relationship with Elm Road. Whilst there are in depth developments in the area, the dwellings at the entrance to these have principle elevations facing towards Elm Road with front gardens adding to the open character. The proposal has an absence of frontage development, with the side elevations of plots 1 and 6 facing towards Elm Road, behind a high hedge, resulting in a lack of street presence and a poor relationship with its surroundings, entirely at odds with the prevailing character of this area of Elm Road. In addition, a large bin storage/collection area is located to the front of the site, visible from Elm Road and further detracting from and reducing the quality of the scheme when viewed from this main thoroughfare.
- 9.5 This site is in a prominent and well known location within the town and provides an opportunity for a high quality development which respects and enhances the area, attempts to achieve this through proposing frontage development to Elm Road, removing the boundary hedge and providing open front gardens reflecting the prevailing character, have not been successful and as a result the scheme is considered to be significantly detrimental to the character and visual amenity of the area.
- 9.6 The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy H2 of the March Neighbourhood Plan 2017, Policy LP16 (d) of the Fenland Local Plan 2014, DM3 of the Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments SPD 2014, paragraphs 127 and 130 of the NPPF 2019, and C1, I1 and B2 of NDG 2019 which seek to ensure that developments are of a high standard of design, make a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of the area and that the local built environment and settlement pattern inform proposed development.

### **Residential Amenity/Health and wellbeing**

- 9.7 To the north of the site are the single-storey dwellings of 3-7 Swan Court, these properties have limited rear gardens and at present low level boundary treatments. The application proposes 2 single-storey dwellings adjoining these properties at a distance of between 8m and 10.5m from the boundary and a minimum of 14m between dwellings. Overlooking is not considered to be an issue due to the single-storey nature of both existing and proposed dwellings; a 1.8m high fence is proposed to the northern boundary of the site which would ensure sufficient privacy and this could be conditioned to ensure it is provided.
- 9.8 To the east of the site on the opposite side of the Elm Road are the 2-storey dwellings of 21 33 Elm Road, the boundaries are approximately 13.5m distant with existing and proposed dwellings having a separation of at least 26.5m hence the residential amenity of these dwellings is not considered to be significantly affected.
- 9.9 The proposed dwellings have in excess of 1/3 of the plot for private amenity space in accordance with Policy LP16 (h). It is noted that the usability of the amenity space serving plot 1 would be reduced by the presence of a number of substantial protected trees, however due to the size of the plot this is still considered an acceptable provision. The relationship between proposed dwellings in relation to outlook, overshadowing and overlooking is considered to be acceptable.
- 9.10 Policy LP16 (f) of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 and DM4 of the Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland SPD 2014 seek to ensure that developments provide adequate, well designed facilities for the storage and collection of waste. The proposal provides adequate storage and collection facilities, it is acknowledged that plots 2 and 3 would require occupants to carry bins in excess of the maximum accepted distance of 30m; however this is not considered significant enough to warrant a refusal in this regard.
- 9.11 Policy LP2 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 seek to avoid adverse impacts; the application site adjoins the Braza Club and as such there is potential for noise and disturbance. Policy LP16 (o) of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 and DM9 of the Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments in Fenland SPD 2014 seek to ensure that developments do not result in any unreasonable constraints or threaten the operation and viability of existing businesses by introducing 'sensitive' developments such as dwellings. The applicant's agent has provided a statement regarding the potential for noise and Environmental Health do not have any objections to the proposal.

# **Parking and Highways**

9.12 Policy LP15 and Appendix A of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 require 2 parking spaces to be provided for each 3-bed dwelling. The submitted site plan details the required parking provision and sufficient depth behind spaces for these to be exited. The spaces are the minimum required depth and width of 2.4m x 4.8m, however in situations where there are obstructions on one side a width of 2.7m for each space would be required and where there are obstructions on both sides a width of 2.9m, in both cases a depth of at least 5m would be needed in order for these spaces to be considered usable. However as there is additional space before the dwellings, boundary treatments or access road is reached, whilst not ideal, the spaces are considered acceptable.

9.13 The Local Highways Authority (LHA) is content with the access and development layout, however has advised that the access would only be acceptable from a highway safety point of view if the on street parking is removed from either side. This would require a parking prohibition Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and could be dealt with by way of the imposition of a 'Grampian' condition to ensure that this satisfactorily achieved. The LHA have advised this should be front loaded, however this is not considered reasonable as the matter could be dealt with by way of a condition.

### 9.14 Flood Risk

The application site falls within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) and as such the proposal is considered to be appropriate development and does not require the submission of a flood risk assessment or inclusion of mitigation measures. Issues of surface water will be considered under Building Regulations; accordingly there are no issues to address in respect of Policy LP14.

#### 9.15 Biodiversity

Public Authorities have a duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 to have regard to conserving biodiversity in policy and decision making.

- 9.16 Policies LP16 (b) and LP19 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 and Paragraph 170 of the NPPF 2019 seek to conserve, enhance and promote biodiversity. Paragraph 177 advises that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where a project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site, unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.
- 9.17 The application site adjoins Norwood Nature Reserve and as such there is potential for protected species to be affected by the proposal, even if there is not a habitat within the application site itself. Only a biodiversity checklist has been submitted for which all the answers are 'no', hence insufficient assessment has been undertaken and inadequate information submitted to enable the Local Planning Authority to ascertain whether the proposal would impact protected species and as such it is considered contrary to the aforementioned policies.

### **10 CONCLUSIONS**

The principle of developing this site is supported by Policy LP3, information has been provided to evidence compliance with LP6 in relation to the loss of the community facility and there are no issues in respect of residential amenity and flood risk. Overall however the scheme is considered to be unacceptable due its failure to respect the prevailing character and settlement pattern in the area, resulting in a development which lacks street presence and has a poor relationship with its surroundings, to the significant detriment of visual amenity and character of the area. In addition insufficient information has been provided in respect of biodiversity to ascertain whether protected species would be impacted or if mitigation would be required.

## 11 RECOMMENDATION

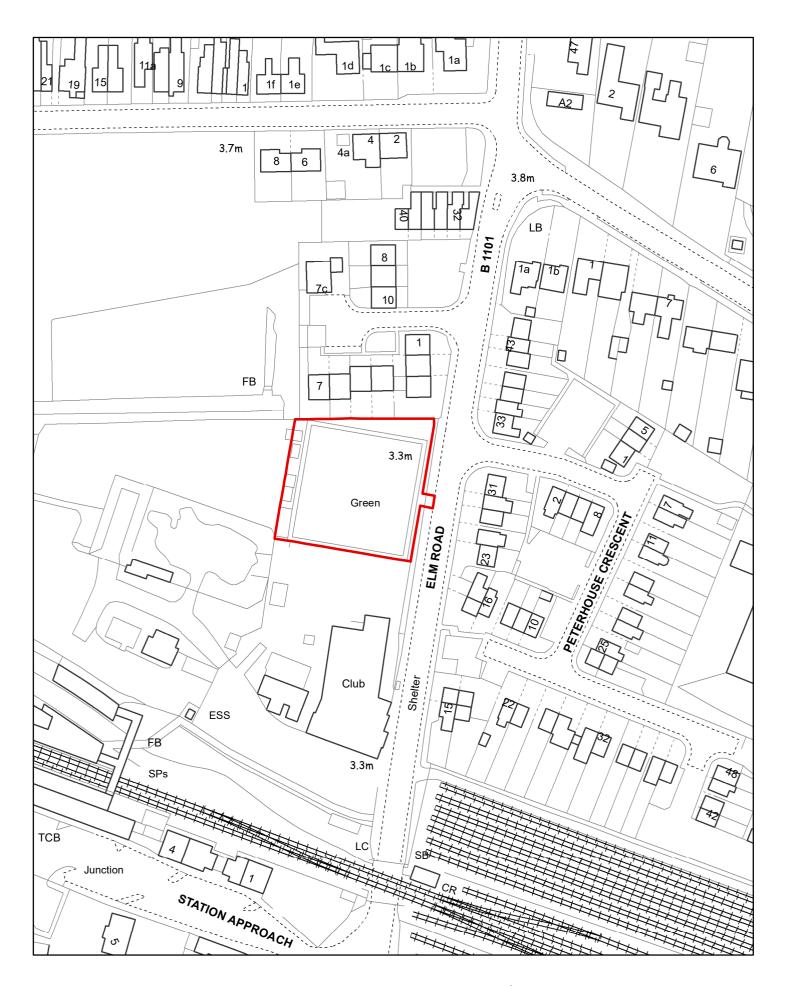
Refuse for the following reasons:

Policy H2 of the March Neighbourhood Plan 2017, Policy LP16 (d) of the Fenland Local Plan 2014, DM3 of the Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments SPD 2014, paragraphs 127 and 130 of the NPPF 2019, and C1, I1 and B2 of NDG 2019 seek to ensure that developments are of a high standard of design, make a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of the area and that the local built environment and settlement pattern inform proposed development.

The development proposal, by virtue of its design and layout would result in a scheme entirely at odds with the prevailing character of the area owing to its lack of a frontage to Elm Road, and if permitted would be to the significant detriment of the character and appearance of the area and the streetscene of Elm Road, contrary to the aforementioned policies.

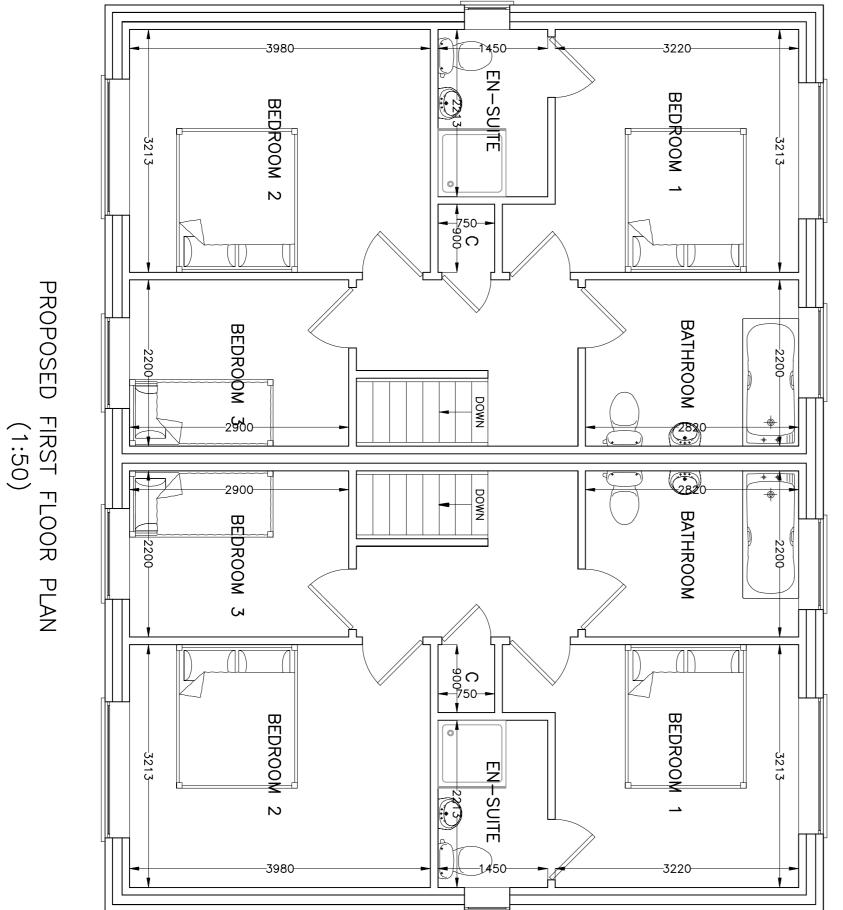
2 Policies LP16 (b) and LP19 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 and Paragraph 170 of the NPPF 2019 seek to conserve, enhance and promote biodiversity and Paragraph 177 advises that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where a project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site, unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

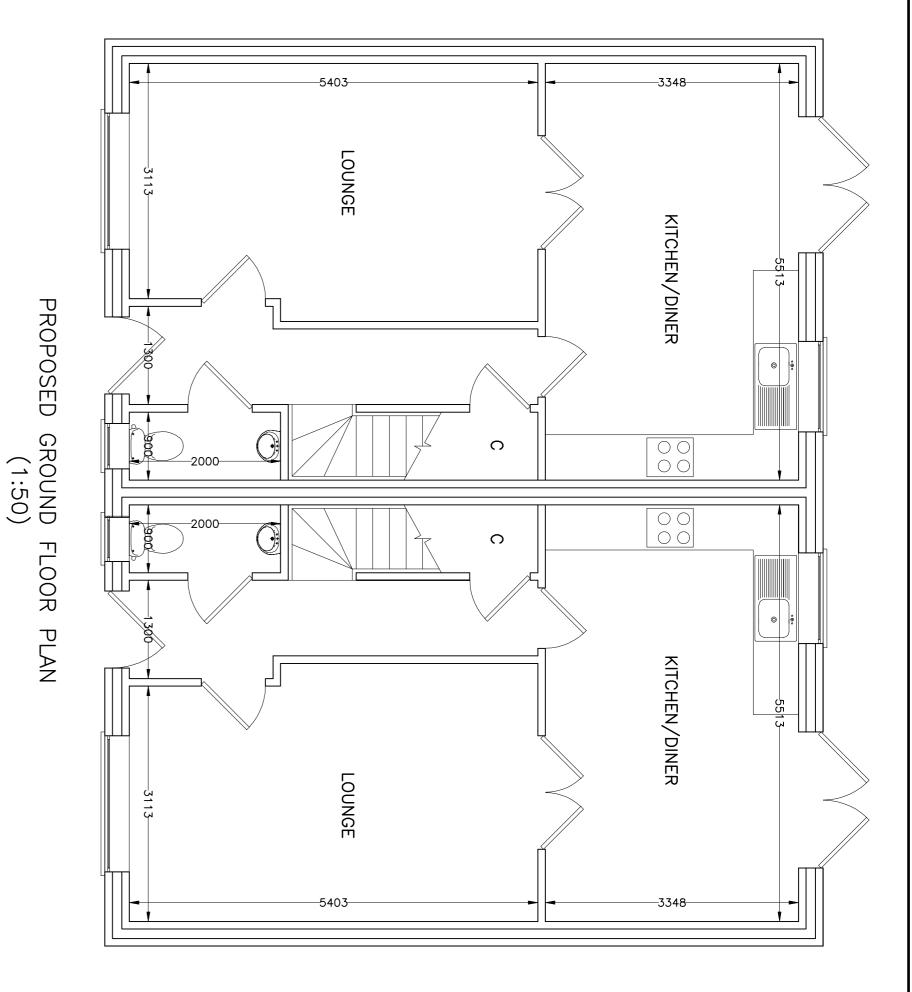
The application site adjoins Norwood Nature Reserve. Insufficient assessment has been undertaken and inadequate information submitted to enable the Local Planning Authority to ascertain whether the proposal would impact protected species. As such the proposal is considered contrary to the aforementioned policies.



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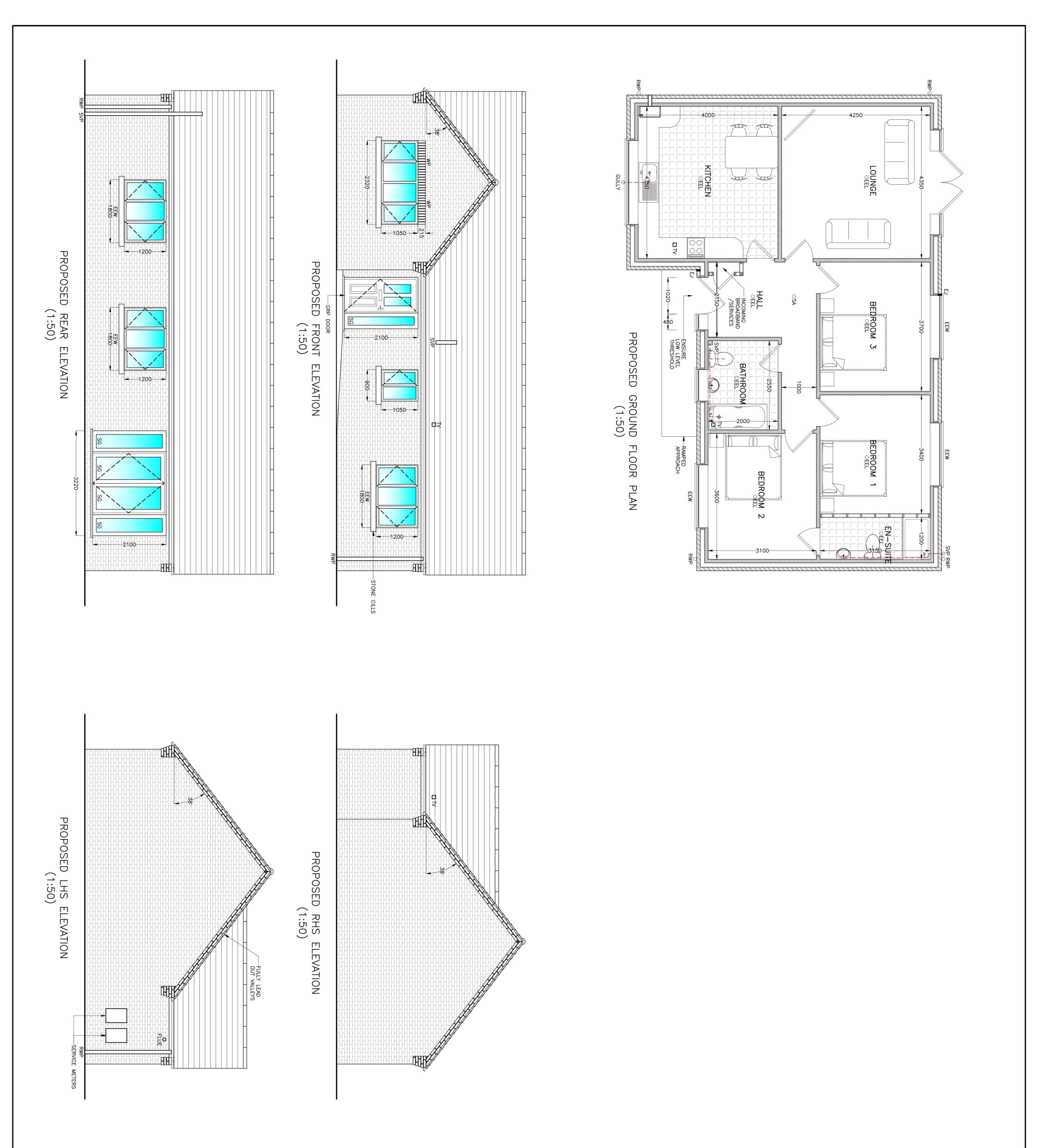




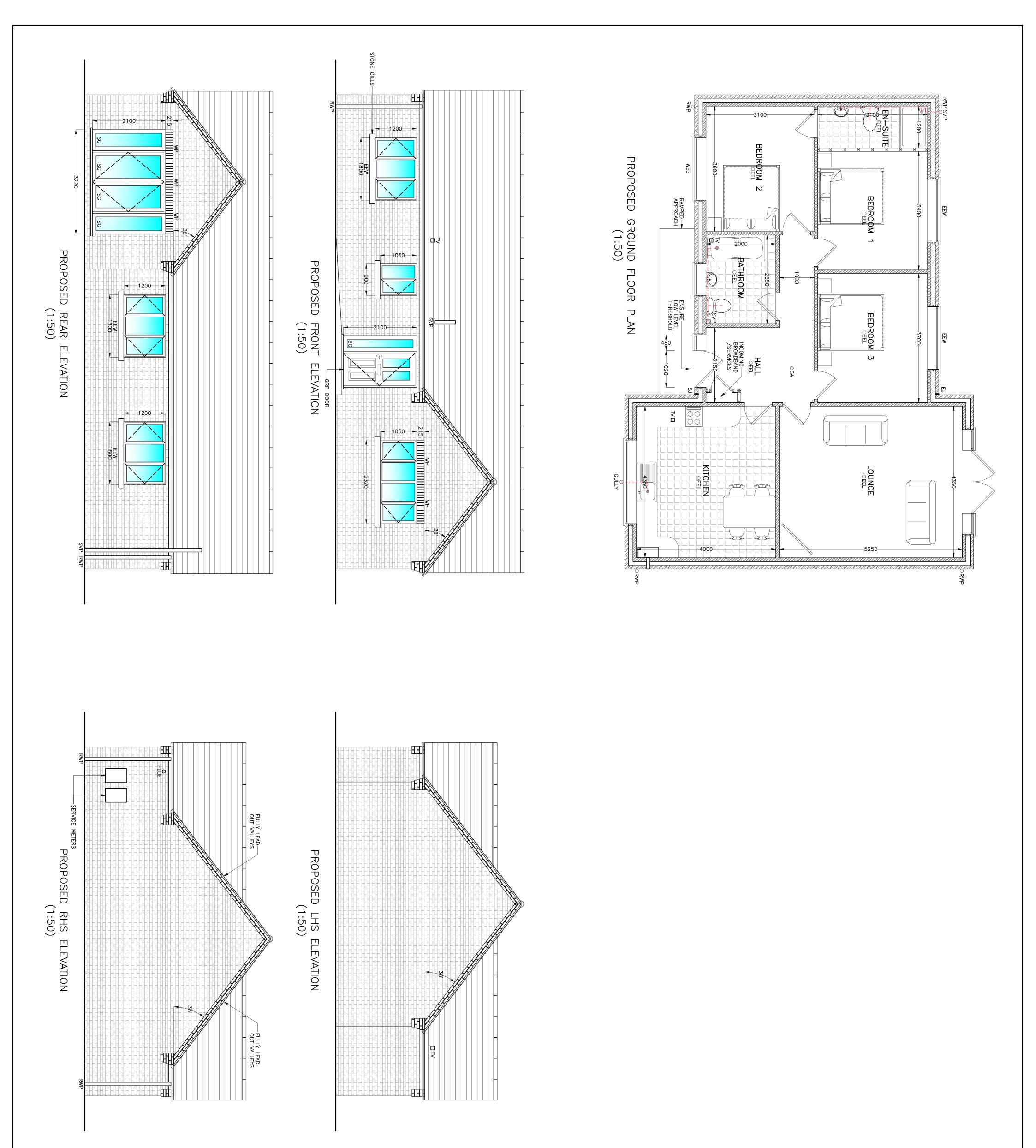




HS ELEVATION				MATERIALS WALLS : RED BRICK (SANDRINGHAM ROOF : MARLEY MODERN PAN TILE JOINERY : WHITE UPVC GUTTER : BLACK UPVC & DOWNPIPES
DRAWN     J.Scotcher     DATE OF ISSUE       CHECKED     DATE     Sept 2019       DATE     Sept 2019     DRAWING NUMBER       SCALE     1:100 1:1250     H6520/405B	Land North of March Braza Club Elm Road, March Cambridgeshire, PE15 8NZ PLOT 3-4-5-6	B DRAWING UPDATED PLANNERS COMMENTS FEB 20 NOV 19   REVISIONS REVISIONS NOV 19   REVISIONS NOV 19 DATE   MORTON & HALL CONSULTING STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS DATE DATE   Narch, Cambridgeshire. E15 BAJ II-I: 01354 655454 Fax: 01354 660467 E-meil: inte@mortonenduli.co.uk website: www.mortonensutingengineers.co.uk II-I: 01354 660467 E-meil: inte@mortonenduli.co.uk website: www.mortonensutingengineers.co.uk   NORC II-I: 01354 600467 E-meil: inte@mortonenduli.co.uk website: www.mortonensutingengineers.co.uk II-I: 01354 600467 E-meil: inte@mortonenduli.co.uk website: www.mortonensutingengineers.co.uk   NORC II-I: 0100 EXECUTION II-I: 0100	Copyright on all drawings prepared by Morton & Hall Consulting Limited is their property. Drawings and designs may not be reproduced in part or in whole without their written permission. Please read, if in doubt ask. Change nothing without consulting the Engineers. Contractor to check all dimensions on site before work starts or materials are ordered. Do not scale, if in doubt ask. All dimensions are in mm unless stated otherwise. Where materials, products and workmanship are not fully specified they are to be of the standard appropriate to the works and suitable for the purpose stated in or reasonably to be inferred from the drawings and specification. All work to be in accordance with good building practice and BS 8000 to the extent that the recommendations define the quality of the finished work. Materials products and workmanship to comply with all British Standards and EOTA standards with, where appropriate, BS or EC marks. All products and materials to be handled, stored, prepared and used or fixed in accordance with the manufacturers current recommendations. 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	SHAM RED BLEND) OR SIMILAR TILE GREY



reasonably to be inferred from the drawings and specification. All work to be in accordance with good building practice and BS 8000 to the extent that materials products and workmanship to comply with all British Standards and EOTA standards with, where appropriate, BS or EC marks. All products and materials to be handled, stored, prepar current recommendations. 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 A DRAWING UPDATED FEB 2 REVISIONS FEB 2 CONSULTING LIMITED FEB 2 CONSULTING STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS	Copyright on all drawings prepared by Morton & Hall Consulting Limited is their property. Drawings and designs may not be reproduced in part or in whole without their written permission. Please read, if in doubt ask. Change nothing without consulting the Engineers. Contractor to check all dimensions on site before work starts or materials are ordered. Do not scale, if in doul ask. All dimensions are in mm unless stated otherwise.	
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