

fineline

Design & Access Statement

Moorings,
Upper Warren Avenue,
Caversham,
Reading
RG4 7EJ

July 2025



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1.0 Introduction

This statement has been prepared in support of the Full Planning application for a replacement dwelling, garden outbuilding and detached garage at Moorings, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham. This is a more traditional scheme than the previously approved contemporary design under planning approval 221625.

This statement sets out the development process that has led to the current proposals, and the rationale behind the scheme.

Moorings is a detached three bedroom bungalow on a private plot set back from Upper Warren Avenue. The clients purchased the property in 2021, with the site and house having been left in a poor condition by the previous owner. The intention from the outset has been to replace the existing house with a new high quality, sustainable dwelling.

The site is not within the AONB or a Conservation area and is within Flood Risk Zone 1. No other property planning history is listed for Moorings on the online planning portal for Reading Borough Council .

Upper Warren Avenue consists of large properties set within generous grounds. A considerable number of properties along the road have been demolished to make way for substantial replacement dwellings within a variety of styles; incorporating traditional, Arts and Crafts, neo-Georgian to flat roof contemporary homes along the road.

Under Policy H5, new houses are required to have an improvement in the dwelling emission rate to work towards achieving zero carbon homes. The principle of sustainable design has been considered from the start of the project, with renewable technology, sedum roofs and solar shading devices integrated within the scheme.

Accompanying documents include an updated Preliminary Roost Assessment and Protected Species Report by Windrush Ecology, a Tree Survey by LandArb Solutions and Energy Statement by Achieve Green.



1. View of the property from the south.

2. View of the north elevation of the property.



2.0 Context

Moorings is located along the north side of Upper Warren Avenue. The plot is set back from view of the road, with an access gate leading north up the drive to the property. The site is approximately 0.34 hectares with mature trees along the boundaries.

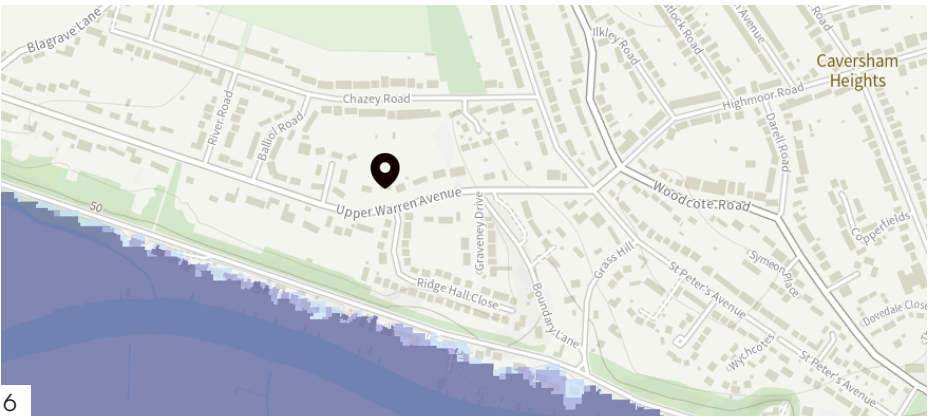
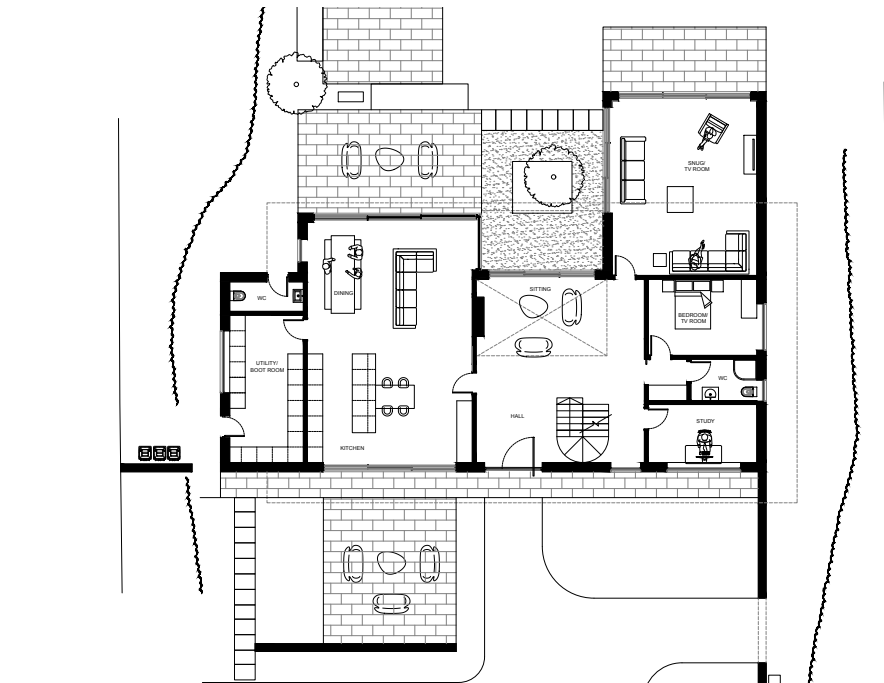
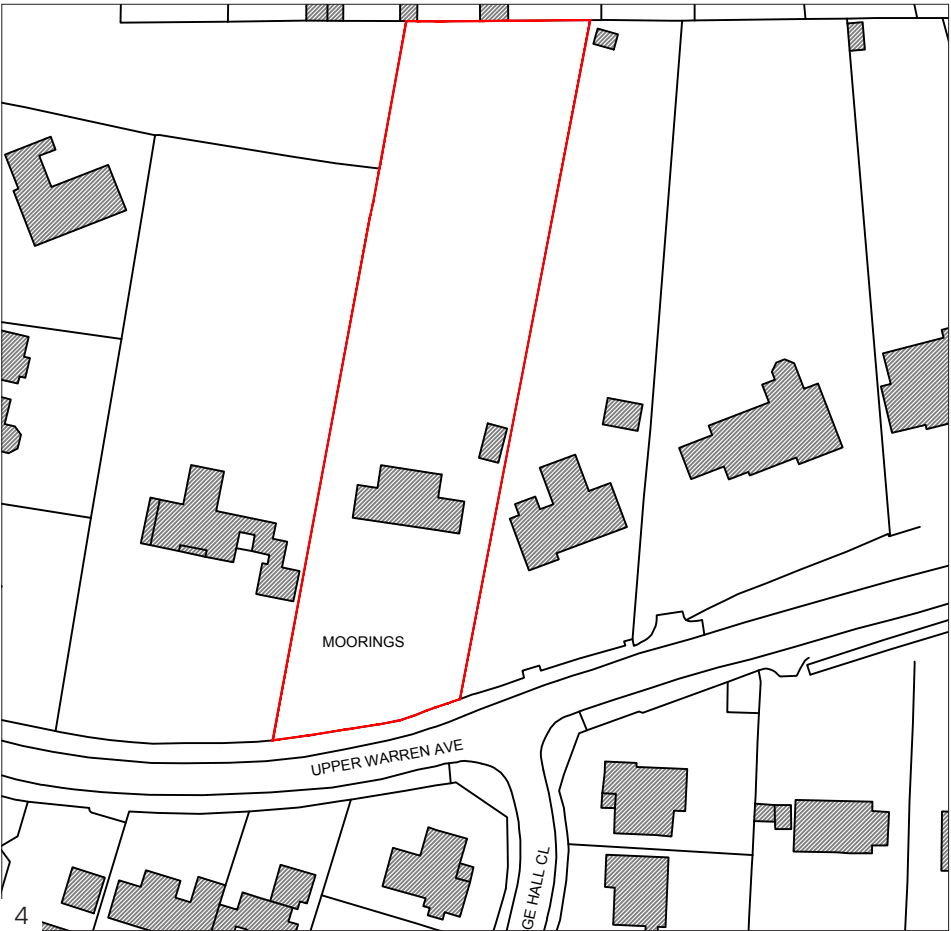
The existing bungalow has a dominant hipped roof with brown clay roof tiles, with white rendered and facing brick walls and white painted windows.

A considerable number of properties on Upper Warren Avenue have received planning approval for substantial replacement dwellings such as Norbrook House, formerly Hilgay (ref 211136), High Ridge (211916), Crawford John (221245).

Planning approval 221625 issued on 24th April 2023 permitted ‘*Replacement dwelling and garage outbuilding, alterations to driveway, replacement entrance gate and boundary wall along with new outbuilding in rear garden*’ at Moorings.

Prior to this, a Certificate of Lawful development was approved on 19th July 2022 under reference 221062 for ‘*The erection of a detached outbuilding*’, for a new home office/gym within the rear garden and ancillary in use to the main house. The position and size of this outbuilding was altered slightly within the full planning approval 221625.

The owners have since decided that they would prefer to proceed with a scheme of a more traditional nature, which has resulted in the development of the original proposals into the current scheme.



- 3. Aerial Map
- 4. OS Location Plan
- 5. Proposed Ground Floor Plan from 2023 application 221625 for the originally approved replacement dwelling.
- 6. Flood risk map

3.0 Brief

The clients’ brief was for the new dwelling to be a unique, traditional two storey home with sustainability integrated into the scheme from the start. A high quality design that would embrace the generous nature of the site whilst also providing privacy from the street.

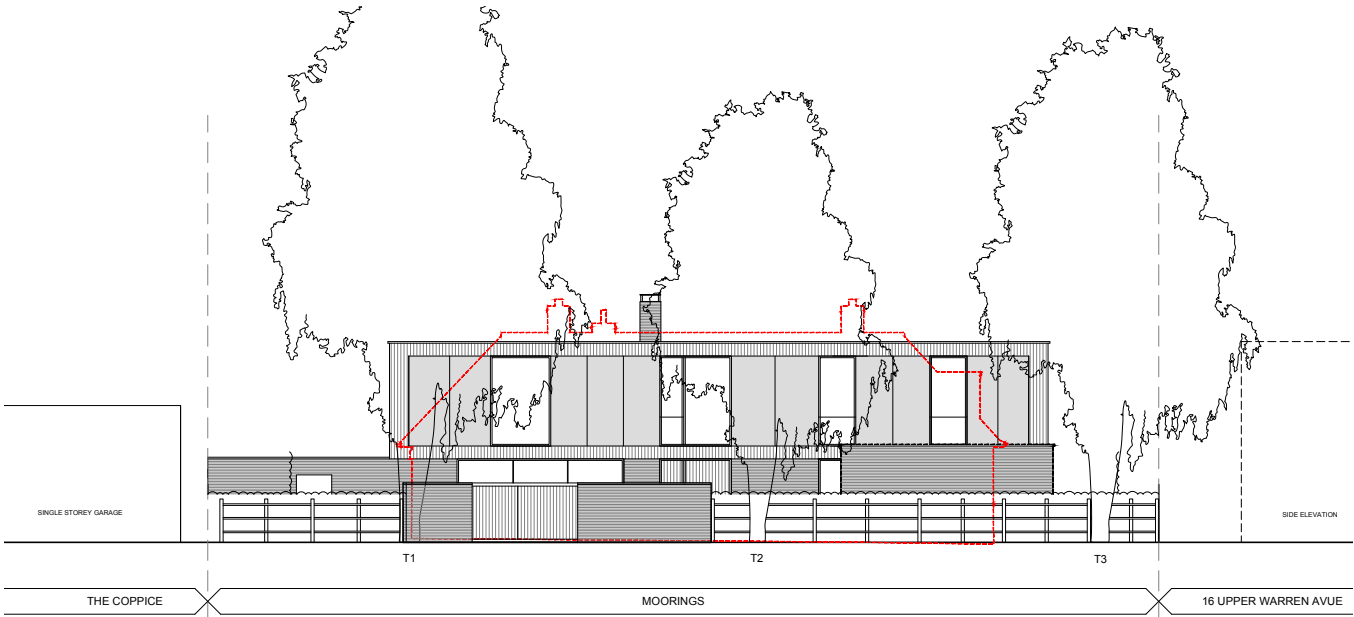
The existing dwelling is in a poor condition and would not be viable to extend and alter to achieve the high thermal efficiency home which the clients are seeking.

The originally approved design was a contemporary design which was selected to match the ridge height of the existing dwelling and delivered a six bedroom house, alongside a garden outbuilding and detached garage.

The brief has now been revised to allow for a five bedroom replacement dwelling. Due to the traditional nature of the revised design, an increase in ridge height is necessary to retain the first floor accommodation with a pitched roof. This is not uncommon among properties along Upper Warren Avenue, with notable approvals such as High Ridge (211916) which received approval for a 2.5m increase in ridge height for the replacement dwelling.

The revised design reduces the width of the first floor by 5 metres, increasing the distance between Moorings and The Coppice. Although the ridge height is increased, the gabled roofs have been design to not incur any impact upon the neighbouring properties’ light or amenity. Existing screening along the east and west boundaries are to be maintained.

A series of layers is proposed within the design to allow for an unveiling of the property throughout the approach, providing a balance of heavily glazed openings to the rear, and more private areas facing the street.



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7. South elevation approved under application 221625

8. Proposed Revised South Elevation (NB: Drawings are not to scale).

4.0 Planning Policy

A number of properties along Upper Warren Avenue have been demolished and replaced with new dwellings, including but not limited to Norbrook House, Heath Point, 10 Upper Warren Avenue and High Ridge. There are a variety of styles to the properties along the road, with no defined character to the appearance of the houses.

Key policies in reference to the proposal are:

- CC1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3 Adaption to Climate Change
- CC5 Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC7 Design and the Public Realm
- CC8 Safeguarding Amenity
- CC9 Securing Infrastructure
- EN12 Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN14 Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- EN17 Noise Generating Equipment
- H5 Standards for New Housing
- H10 Private and Communal Outdoor Space
- TR3 Access, Traffic and Highway-related Matters
- TR5 Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

Principles and Design

The existing property is a small scale bungalow on a large plot, with the rear garden extending over 70 metres to the north. The bungalow does not have particular architectural merit and is not within a Conservation Area. The condition of the property is lacking, without any upgrades to modern standards by the previous owners. The dwelling is single storey with a dominant tiled hipped roof and ridge height of around 6.5 metres from the surrounding ground level within a relatively level site.

Within the delegated report of planning approval 221625 the Planning Officer confirmed that the existing dwelling *‘is not considered to be of any particular architectural merit’* and that *‘the principle of replacing the property, altering its external appearance and the modern replacement set back from the public realm is accepted’*.

The proposed replacement dwelling is two storey in nature with a single storey garage between the property and Upper Warren Avenue. The location of the replacement dwelling is similar to that of the existing bungalow, aligning to the same south elevation position on the site with only the front canopy and bay

window projecting less than 2 metres beyond this. The house is located behind vegetation, screened from the view from the highway. This screening is to be maintained and enhanced through a Landscaping Plan. It is noted within the Planning Officer’s comments for the approval of High Ridge that although the proposed dwelling in this instance is *‘significantly larger than the existing dwelling and extends forward towards the highway in relation to the existing dwelling’* the approval was granted as *‘the size and scale of the proposed replacement dwelling is considered characteristic of the surrounding area and not a intrusive addition to the street scene’*. The Planning Officer goes on to note that *‘There are several examples of large, detached dwellings along Upper Warren Avenue, all with varying designs and materials. There is no commonality amongst the appearance of the dwellings along Upper Warren Avenue. Due to the large plots, extensive vegetation and protected trees along Upper Warren Avenue, the dwelling houses are largely obscured from the highway’*.

The proposed height of the replacement dwelling is circa. 9.2 metres, which is less 2.9m higher than that of the existing dwelling. The previous scheme’s more contemporary design included a flat roof which allowed the scheme to sit below the existing property’s ridge line. The transition to a more traditional scheme, whilst maintaining the new first floor, results in a higher ridge height. A double gable design delivers a softening of the roofline. Although this incurs an increase in height overall, the width at first floor level is 5 metres less than the previous design and in a style that is more in keeping with the streetscene and adjacent properties.

The increase in size of the dwelling proposed is a considerably smaller increase than other replacement dwellings on Upper Warren Avenue and is a sensitive and considered house which is proportionate to the size of the plot.

The proposed garage is under three metres in height and is proposed to be located over 10 metres from the highway. This is in effect, similar to the approved garage at High Ridge which the Planning Officer refers to within the Delegated Report for the application as *‘The combination of existing vegetation to the front of the property combined with the proposed detached garage would result in limited views of the replacement dwelling from the highway. There are examples along Upper Warren Avenue, however, of detached garages forward of the principal elevation of the main house’*.

Although the overall approach to the new scheme is traditional in nature, contemporary elements are still included within the design to reflect the

preferences of the clients for a modern property. Large areas of glazing populate the rear of the house, with a screened approach to the more visible front of the property.

The proposal has been designed to sit modestly on the site, with respect to the streetscene and overall characteristics of Upper Warren Avenue, taking into account all considerations that have been raised by the Council with respect to similar replacement dwellings, and noted within the previous approval.

Sustainable Design and Construction (H5)

The proposal has been developed with sustainability integrated within the design from the outset. The spatial layout has been orientated to optimise south light within the social spaces on a north facing plot, which are protected from the summer sun by a projecting canopy to provide shade. Smaller openings allow for greater privacy from the street and reduced solar gain on the south elevation, with the north elevation more heavily glazed in contrast to maximise the cooler north light. This will ensure minimal requirements for artificial lighting, with natural lighting optimised across the dwelling.

A sedum roof will cover the single storey projections and the garage providing improved biodiversity across the building footprint. The areas not occupied by solar panels on the garden outbuilding will also have a sedum roof covering.

Renewable technology is to play a key role in bringing this house to as close to an off-grid use as possible with solar panels proposed on the main house roof and an air source heat pump to power the heating of the property and the water system. The proposal is intended to have greater than the 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the target emission rate as required by Policy H5.

The proposed internal floor areas far exceed that of the H5 Local Plan requirements for minimum gross internal floor areas, and include the built-in storage as per the policy requirements. The proposal also has minimal effect on the existing garden provision due to the extensive size of the garden.

The new driveway will be of permeable gravel construction to allow surface water drainage. High levels of insulation have been allowed for to provide a thermally efficient property, reducing the energy demand of the house.

Rainwater harvesting will be incorporated via an underground tank within the

rear garden to allow for garden irrigation.

7no. Swift boxes are proposed to be integrated into the east elevations of the three structures across the site to provide suitable nesting opportunities. In addition to this a further 3no. integrated bat boxes are proposed to both the garage and the outbuilding's south elevations.

Windrush Ecology have provided a Preliminary Roost Assessment for the property confirming that no evidence of bats have been found at the property and no constraints should be imposed upon the works. A further site visit has been undertaken and the results have been confirmed to align with that of the original report. This also applies to the Protected Species Assessment.

LandArb Solutions have also completed a further visit and updated their Arboricultural Assessment for the site to ensure full protection of the existing trees on the site and we have worked closely with them on the proposals from the start of the design development. T23 is proposed to be removed, but as a low value existing tree, this is not considered to be detrimental to the site.

Access and Highways (TR1)

The proposed garage will provide parking for two cars plus secure cycle storage. The highways access will remain as previous approved, with the replacement of the existing gate with electric gates.

There will be ample space on the new driveway for parking for a number of cars in addition to the double garage. There is also sufficient space for the required turning circles.

Cycle storage will be provided within the garage outbuilding, with ample storage space to accommodate the required provision.

It was noted within the Planning Officer's comments on the approved application that *'Proposed parking and access are considered acceptable in accordance with the approved plans'*.

Safeguarding Amenity (CC8)

The site at Moorings is screened at all boundaries to its neighbouring properties. The proposed dwelling has been sited on the footprint of the existing house, maintaining the line of houses within the streetscene. Although the proposed dwelling is two storeys, the design at first floor level and inset balcony with screening to the Master Bedroom, along with the existing tree

provision, results in no instances of overlooking to the neighbouring properties. Any first floor side windows are for bathrooms only and are proposed to be obscure glazed.

The new footprint aligns predominantly with previously approved scheme, except for a slight increase in footprint of 1.8m across the width of the house at ground floor level in relation to the single storey kitchen volume. The first floor width of the scheme is nearly 5 metres less than the previous proposal.

The new dwelling will maintain a distance of just over 4.5 metres to the adjacent 16 Upper Warren Avenue, with only obscure glazed bathroom windows on this elevation at first floor level. These are smaller in scale than those previous approved under 221625 with an area of 2.2m² in comparison to the previously approved 3.4m². The overall length of the proposal is 2.2m longer than that of the previous scheme, which is a minor 20% increase in length, with a reduced glazing area.

The rear Master Bedroom covered balcony remains inset and without any opportunities to overlook or impact upon the privacy of either neighbouring property of their amenity garden space.

The rear garden outbuilding remains the same size as previously approved, although rotated to align with the boundary to allow for improved views of the garden from the house.



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9. Sedum roof



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10. Built-in swift box



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11. Built-in bat box



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12. Below ground rainwater harvesting tank

5.0 Proposal

A process of considered site analysis and design development led to the current proposal. The existing property is a poor fit to optimise the views, and the new dwelling takes advantage of the opportunities presented by the generous plot.

This replacement dwelling proposal results in a small increase in the existing external footprint on the existing property whilst providing, not only a significant improvement in the spaces delivered due to the constraints of the existing structure being removed, but also a high quality, sustainable design.

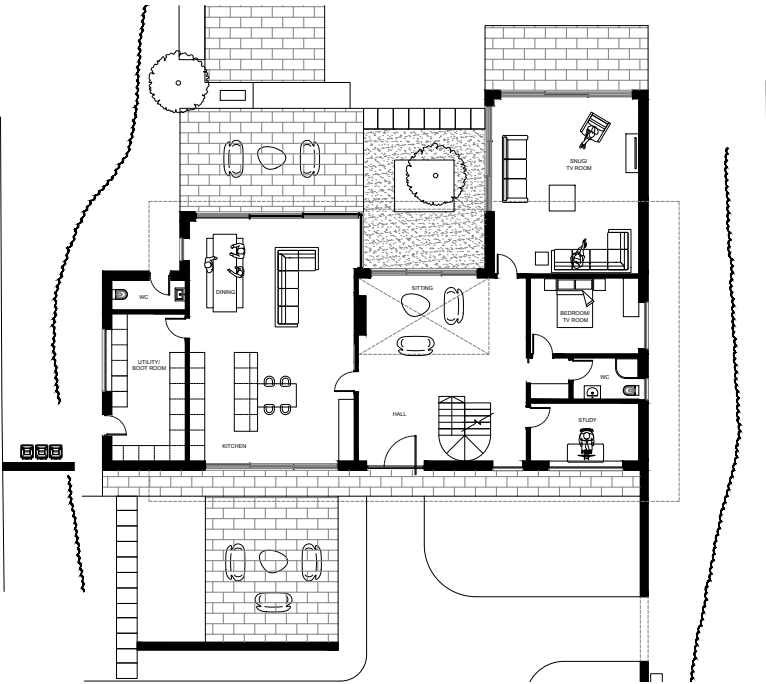
The new property is two storey, across a continuous level throughout the ground floor of the dwelling. The location of the new dwelling is on the site of the existing house, centrally positioned in the width of the plot. This maintains the line of the dwellings on the street, remains out of the root zone of the mature trees on the site as far as reasonably possible of the adjacent trees, whilst maximising the mature garden to the north.

The existing driveway from Upper Warren Avenue is to retain the existing entrance point from the road, with replacement gates. The driveway will follow a similar line to the existing

The proposed garage outbuilding is to be relocated forward of the street elevation of the house, in line with those along Upper Warren Avenue. The outbuilding will provide parking for two cars, bicycles and external storage.

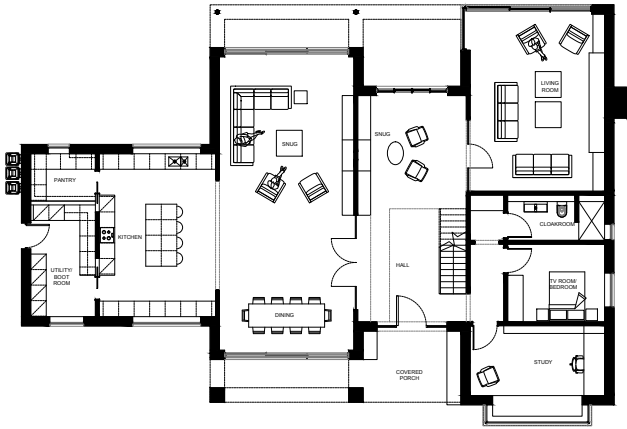
The new dwelling is orientated on a central east-west axis, with a difference in the approach to the north and south elevational treatments to enable privacy to the south, with greater optimisation of views to the north.

Glazing has been carefully placed to optimise views of the gardens beyond from every position within the house. Each space is carefully lit to ensure good levels of natural daylight and access to the garden.



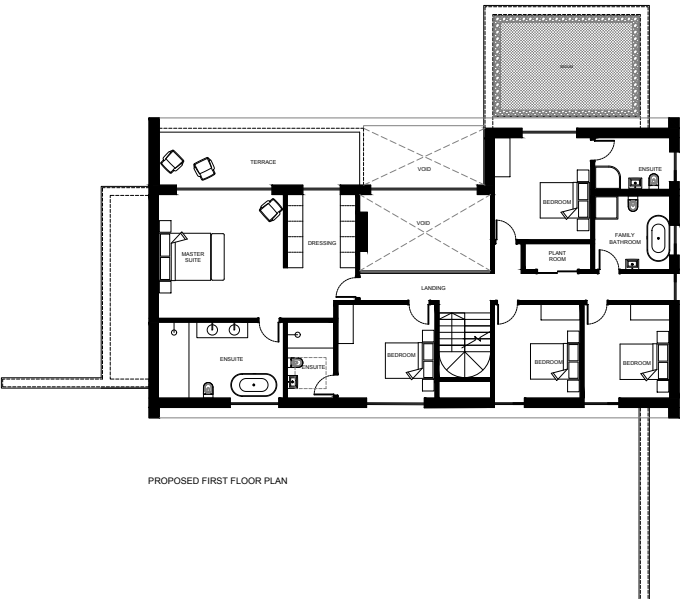
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13. Ground Floor Plan approved under application 221625

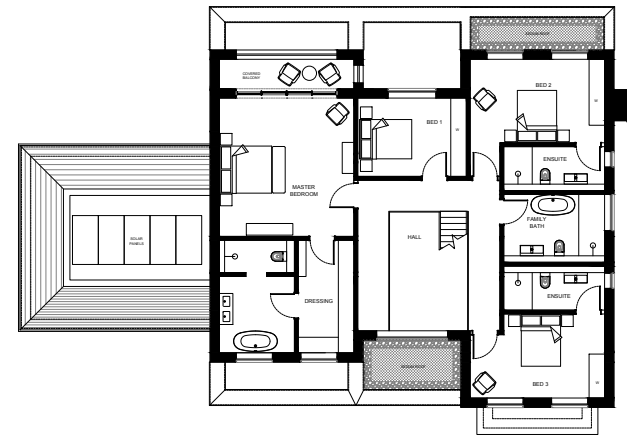


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14. Proposed Revised Ground Floor Plan



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15. First Floor Plan approved under application 221625

16. Proposed Revised First Floor Plan (NB: Drawings are not to scale).

6.0 Materials

The materials proposed for the replacement dwelling are a cream facing brick with aluminium glazing and a slate roof. Stone cills will add further detail to the new window proportions, with brick detailing across the proposed canopies. Stainless steel rainwater goods provide a further contemporary detail within the finishes.

A sedum roofs will top the single storey roofs, improving biodiversity and reducing surface water run-off.

The same material palette is continued across both the garden outbuilding and the detached garage.



Proposed Street Elevation

7.0 Trees & Landscape

The clients are looking to maintain and protect the existing trees on the site and this has been considered from the outset of the project. T23, a low value tree is proposed to be removed as part of the works.

LandArb Solutions tree survey and report accompany this application.

8.0 Summary

Careful consideration has been made during the design development of this scheme to provide a high quality proposal for the revised design of the replacement dwelling so that the scheme is complementary to the site and neighbouring properties.

Local policy has been reviewed to result in a comprehensive strategy to form a proposal within these guidelines as a sustainable and well-designed scheme.

The owners and the project team are looking to pro-actively engage with the Council to ensure an open discussion throughout the process of this application.



Proposed Rear Elevation



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17. Cream tone brickwork

18. Minimal frame sliding doors

19. Sedum roof

20. Neutral tone aluminium glaz-