



Paul Butler Associates

Planning, Development & Heritage Consultants

Mr Chris Cooper

7 Hightrees Drive, Manchester, M20 2JF

Full Statement of Case

27 June 2022

Paul Butler Associates, 31 Blackfriars Road, Salford, Manchester M3 7AQ
t. 0161 835 3530 | e. pba@paulbutlerassociates.co.uk | w. www.paulbutlerassociates.co.uk

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Prepared by:	Ralph Taylor BSc MPLAN MRTPI	Associate Director	22.06.2022
Checked by:	Tom Flanagan MTCP MRTPI	Director	24.06.2022
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Full Statement of Case has been prepared by Paul Butler Associates Ltd on behalf of Mr Chris Cooper. It is submitted in support of an appeal against the refusal of planning application 133193/FH/2022 by Manchester City Council ('the Council'). Application 133193/FH/2022 was for 'Erection of part single, part three storey rear extension to provide additional living accommodation' and was refused under delegated powers on 11 May 2022. This appeal is submitted under the written representations procedure to the Planning Inspectorate.
- 1.2 Planning application reference 133193/FH/2022 was registered by the Council on 16 March 2022. The proposed extension is required to meet the needs of Mr Cooper and his family, and provide additional and more functional living accommodation, including additional bedrooms and an improved the home working environment.
- 1.3 During the application determination process initial feedback was provided by the Case Officer. In response a 'Planning Assessment' was submitted which reviewed the scheme against relevant national and local planning policy, and material considerations. The Planning Assessment does not appear to have been given meaningful consideration and the application was refused without any further dialogue from the Council. The Planning Assessment is provided at Appendix 1 of this Statement of Case and should be referred to when assessing the appeal scheme.
- 1.4 The application was refused by the Council on 11 May 2022. Two reasons for refusal were given, these being as follows:

1. *The proposed development would be detrimental to the visual amenity and character of the area. In particular it would create a visually intrusive feature in the street scene by reason of its location and massing and would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the adjoining properties no.1, 3 and 5 Hightrees Drive. As such the proposal is contrary to saved policy DC1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester, policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document and the National Planning Policy Framework.*

2. *The proposed extension by reason of its projection, scale, height and massing in close proximity to the shared boundary with the adjoining property no.5 Hightrees Drive would result in an unduly overbearing visual appearance of the occupants. The proposal is contrary to saved policy DC1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester, policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document and the National Planning Policy Framework.*

- 1.5 The reasons for refusal allege that the development is contrary to specific Development Plan policies, and the NPPF. It follows therefore that the Council accepts that there is no conflict with any other relevant policy of the Development Plan given that they must specify all policies relevant to the decision in the reason for refusal (article 35(1)(b) of the Town and Country Planning Development Management Procedure (England) Order 2015).
- 1.6 This Full Statement of Case discloses the appellant's case in support of the planning appeal for 'Erection of part single, part three storey rear extension to provide additional living accommodation'. In this statement, on behalf of the appellant, we outline the clear reasons why planning permission should be granted for the proposed development having regard to relevant Development Plan policies and any other material considerations, and having reviewed the Council's Delegated Decision Report.
- 1.7 The statement should be read in association with the supporting appeal documentation (including appeal forms and planning application documentation) submitted as part of the appeal.
- 1.8 The list of drawings upon which the Council made their decision is:
- Location Plan – 1:1250
 - Proposed Block Plan – 1:500
 - 01 'Existing Plans & Elevations'
 - 02 Rev C 'Proposed Plans & Elevations'
- 1.9 To provide a clear understanding of the appeal scheme it is suggested that the reader first reviews the 'Planning Assessment' at Appendix 1 of this statement which describes the

appeal site and the surrounding area; provides a description of the appeal proposals; and includes an overview of the relevant local planning policies (included within the decision notice) and sets out the implications of the NPPF for decision making on this site. The following section provides a specific appraisal against the Council's reasons for refusal and considers the Council's Delegated Officer Report. A conclusion is then provided.

2. Planning Assessment Against the Reasons for Refusal

- 2.1 This section examines the Council's reasons for refusal making reference to the Delegated Officer Report, and discusses why the appeal should be upheld and planning permission granted.
- 2.2 The Council do not raise issue with the principle of the development and indeed the principle of allowing homeowners to extend and adapt their homes is well-established, and recent changes to permitted development rights have further emphasised this. Accompanying recent changes (former) Housing Minister Robert Jenrick said *'The bold changes to the planning process will make a real difference to people up and down the nation. All too often the planning system proves complicated, outdated and bureaucratic and is too complex and costly for people and small businesses to navigate. This is a barrier to building the homes that we need... I want to give families the freedom they need to expand their homes and ensure small developers get a fair chance to succeed.'* It is in this spirit that proposals for homeowner extensions should be considered and policy applied. The Delegated Officer Report confirms *'The principle of an extension to the property is acceptable especially if it is to adapt to changing household needs.'*
- 2.3 Manchester City Council have not adopted any specific supplementary planning policy or guidance documents relating to householder extensions. Such documents can be useful in guiding development that is brought forward and set clear criteria that can be worked to. In the absence of such supplementary policy the key policies are Saved UDP Policy DC1, and Core Strategy Policies SP1 and DM1. These policies are reviewed in section 4 of the Planning Assessment (Appendix 1).
- 2.4 The reasons for refusal relate to the following matters which are assessed below:
- Visual Amenity and Character of the Area (including to the streetscene and adjoining properties no. 1, 3 and 5 Hightrees Drive (Reason for Refusal 1).
 - Overbearing visual appearance due to proximity to the shared boundary of No. 5 Hightrees Drive (Reason for Refusal 2).

Visual Amenity and Character of the Area (including to the streetscene and adjoining properties no. 1, 3 and 5 Hightrees Drive (Reason for Refusal 1)

- 2.5 The proposed extension is located completely to the rear of 7 Hightrees Drive. The extension will not be visible from Hightrees Drive when standing directly in front of the property and will not alter the streetscene. The extension will have some visibility from Hightrees Drive when approaching from the west however this would be within an existing developed context which comprises two four storey apartment buildings on either side of the road, and extensive three storey townhouse development. Furthermore, any views of the extension from Hightrees Drive would be seen against the backdrop of existing townhouse development located on Nell Lane, hence it will not be visually prominent or detrimental to the streetscene. Additionally, the extension is subservient to the existing dwelling and appropriately proportioned with a lower ridge height and set back at first and second floor levels, whilst the second floor accommodation is partly within the roofspace.
- 2.6 It is noted that Houseman Crescent to the rear of the site would allow views of the extension. To the rear of the property Houseman Crescent mainly facilitates access to car parking and the rear of properties, and is not a main pedestrian route. It does not have a discernible streetscene at this point and is fronted by tall boundary fencing, tall brick walls, and other buildings which 'turn their back' to the street. Views of properties are of the rear of the upper floors.
- 2.7 A greater degree of variation is typically associated with the rear of properties although this is less of a feature currently due to the limited age of the residential estate. Variation does however exist in terms of the different property types, whilst an extension to 123 Nell Road is also present. A staircase / circulation area on the apartment building to the rear is also a feature in the streetscene. Given the above features of Houseman Crescent it is considered that the proposed extension will readily assimilate into the context and will not be a dominant or harmful feature within the streetscene. The subservient design of the extension further ensures this is the case with the height, scale and massing being appropriate, whilst it is confirmed within the Delegated Officer Report that there are 'no concerns with the design of the proposed extension and the proposed materials are considered to be inkeeping with the character of the property'.

- 2.8 The above paragraphs have considered impact on the streetscene and have demonstrated that there will not be a harmful impact. With regards to the relationship with neighbouring properties it is considered that any visual impact of the proposed extension will be limited and cannot be regarded as materially harmful.
- 2.9 The extension will have visibility from the rear gardens of No. 1, 3 and 5 although this is to be generally accepted for a rear extension to a property in an urban context. The scale of the extension (footprint and height) is in proportion with the house and garden and it will not appear overly big or dominant when viewed from within the garden of No. 5, and even less so from with the gardens of No. 1 and 3. The extension will be positioned 20mm off the shared boundary with No. 5. It can be observed that projecting elements are a common feature throughout the estate as demonstrated through the Planning Assessment at Appendix 1. This generally adds relief and interest to buildings, preventing otherwise flat / bland elevations to buildings. It is also commonly associated with rear extensions and is not usually judged to be harmful.
- 2.10 In terms of visibility of the extension from within No. 5 internally, this will be limited (and even more limited from No. 1 and 3). The ground floor extension will be largely unseen and hidden by existing timber fencing. In addition the ground floor window / patio doors serving the kitchen/dining space of No. 5 are situated away from the shared boundary with No. 7 thereby further reducing any impact.
- 2.11 Whilst it is understood that Manchester City Council do not work to a 45 degree 'rule' it is however a useful reference and it is noted that this would be readily achieved from the patio doors of No. 5. The window that is located closest to the shared boundary is to a WC where there is obscured glazing and views out are not typically possible. In terms of the upper floors it must be emphasised that the window of No. 5 located closest to the shared boundary serves a landing space. This is not a habitable space whilst views from such windows are typically fleeting and passing. In addition the views are directed along the garden rather than towards the proposed extension which it is not considered will have a material impact. From the bedroom window on the rear elevation of No.5 again the 45 degree 'rule' will be met (refer to drawings at Appendix 2 demonstrating 45 degree 'rule' met). It is also noted that the 45 degree 'rule' would be met from the secondary window to the kitchen/dining

room of No. 5. Taking account of the above it is confirmed that visual impact from No.5 will be acceptable, whilst views from No. 1 and 3 will be even more limited and also therefore acceptable.

Overbearing visual appearance due to proximity to the shared boundary of No. 5 Hightrees Drive (Reason for Refusal 2)

- 2.12 This reason for refusal has a degree of cross-over with reason for refusal 1. As has been demonstrated above it is not considered that the proposed extension will have any material amenity impact on No. 5. Whilst the extension will have some visibility from the garden it is not considered that this could amount to an overbearing impact, given the limited size of the extension and also the decent size of garden space that will be completely unaffected by the proposed extension.
- 2.13 Furthermore, and as demonstrated, impact on internal accommodation is also limited and it must be recognised that the windows of No. 5 located closest to the shared boundary are to a ground floor WC and first floor landing. Both rooms are not classed as habitable, whilst principal habitable windows on the rear elevation of No. 5 retain good outlook with it being confirmed that the 45 degree 'rule' is met which is often a good measure when considering the matter of overbearing which can otherwise be more subjective.
- 2.14 Within the Delegated Officer Report the Council have referenced saved UDP policy DC1.3c which resists full width extensions to terraced properties. The subject property is not terraced therefore this policy is not applicable and it should not be referenced by the Council. However it is important to recognise that policies are applied in a manner that is reflective of tangible impacts. In this instance, and as has been demonstrated, the width and scale of the extension do not result in adverse impacts in terms of overbearing and visual impact.
- 2.15 Within the Delegated Officer Report the Council have referenced extensions at No.3 Hightrees Drive and No. 123 Nell Lane. Clearly it is the case that each application has to be assessed on its individual merits and as demonstrated though this document there is no harmful visual or amenity impact associated with the proposal. It is noted for instance that No. 3 is a mid-terraced property and as such saved UDP Policy DC1.3c would apply, whilst

there would be different relationships with habitable / non-habitable room windows compared to that which exists with the appeal scheme and both properties identified.

Summary and Planning Balance

- 2.16 Drawing together the various matters that have been considered within this Statement (including within the Planning Assessment at Appendix 1) it is demonstrated that the proposal is designed in a manner that is sensitive to the property and surroundings. It is of an appropriate scale and location and will not harm the visual amenity or character of the area. On the contrary it will be in keeping with the area's character, where any views possible are either from the streetscenes of Hightrees Drive or Houseman Crescent, or from No. 1, 3 or 5 Hightrees Drive. Similarly, through assessment of the internal layout of No.5 it is confirmed that there is no material impact to habitable room windows and as such the suggestion of an overbearing impact cannot be justified.
- 2.17 Based on the above we find that there is a compelling planning justification for the development which is demonstrated to comply with relevant development plan policy, namely Core Strategy policies SP1 and DM1, Saved UDP Policy DC1, and relevant provisions of the NPPF.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 This statement supports an appeal on behalf of Mr Chris Cooper against the refusal of planning application 133193/FH/2022 by Manchester City Council.
- 3.2 The Statement of Case successfully demonstrates that the proposed development satisfies the policy aims of the relevant development plan policies, and material considerations weigh positively in the determination of the application. We conclude that this Statement of Case has demonstrated the clear case for the approval of planning permission and respectfully request that the appeal be allowed.
- 3.3 It is anticipated that the Inspector may wish to apply conditions to ensure commencement within 3 years; that development is carried out in accordance with a list of approved drawings; and, materials are used to match existing.

Appendix 1: Planning Assessment 09.05.2022 (submitted as part of application)



Paul Butler Associates

Planning, Development & Heritage Consultants

9 May 2022

Mrs Julie Roscoe
Head of Planning
Manchester City Council
Town Hall
Albert Square
Manchester
M60 2LA

Lrt/21.1747

FAO Robert Tyrer

Dear Mrs Roscoe,

Application 133193/FH/2022 - Erection of part single, part three storey rear extension to provide additional living accommodation 7 Hightrees Drive, Manchester, M20 2JF

Paul Butler Associates have been commissioned by Chris Cooper ('the applicant') to provide planning advice in relation to planning application 133193/FH/2022. Application 133193/FH/2022 was validated by Manchester City Council on 16th March 2022 and is currently pending determination.

This letter has been prepared to assess the current application against the relevant national and local planning policy context, taking account of relevant material considerations. Comments from Robert Tyrer (Case Officer) to the architect (Derek Watmough) via email dated 26th April 2022 have been duly reviewed. A visit of the site and surroundings took place on 30th April 2022.

To provide a clear understanding of the proposed scheme and an assessment against the relevant planning policy context, this letter includes:

- A description of the application site and surrounding area;
- An overview of the proposals;
- A review of relevant national and local planning policy; and,
- An appraisal of the proposals in relation to the planning policy context.

This letter should be read alongside the submitted application drawings which are as follows:

- Proposed Block Plan
- Drawing 01 - Existing Plans & Elevations
- Drawing 02 - Proposed Plans & Elevations

1. The Application Site and Surrounding Area

The Application Site

- 1.1 The application site comprises 7 Hightrees Drive, Manchester, M20 2JF and relates to a semi-detached three storey townhouse. The property was constructed within the last 15 years as

part of the development of the Former Withington Hospital (first approved through planning permission 080297/FO/2006/S1 on 20 September 2007 with subsequent amendments).

- 1.2 The subject property is of brick and render construction beneath a pitched tiled roof with projecting gable roof feature to the front roof pitch / second floor level. The rear elevation has a single storey element with mono-pitched roof which projects from part of the main rear elevation and forms part of the kitchen/diner space. The property forms the end property in a row of four townhouses of the same design / layout. The property is set back from the street behind a front garden and driveway which provides space for one car. Hedging marks the front side boundaries. Rear boundary treatments comprise timber fencing (refer to figures 1 and 2 below).



Figure 1: View of front elevation of the terrace block with 7 Hightrees Drive located at the end of the block. Four storey apartment development is visible in the background.



Figure 2: Rear elevation of 7 Hightrees Drive.

The Surrounding Area

- 1.3 Hightrees Drive forms part of the residential development of the Former Withington Hospital as noted above. The development has retained and converted the main former hospital building (which is grade II listed) to apartments, with the entrance lodges, piers and gates (also grade II listed) also being retained. New build residential development has been constructed to the north and east of the former main hospital building and comprises apartment development and housing within a variety of formats, scale and design.
- 1.4 Development shares a consistent palette of red brick with render detailing, with a variation in scale and detailing providing a pleasant residential environment. Pitched roofs with projecting gables are a dominant feature whilst variation in building lines (both front and rear) contributes visual interest within the streetscene (refer to Appendix 1 which provides photographs of the surrounding context).

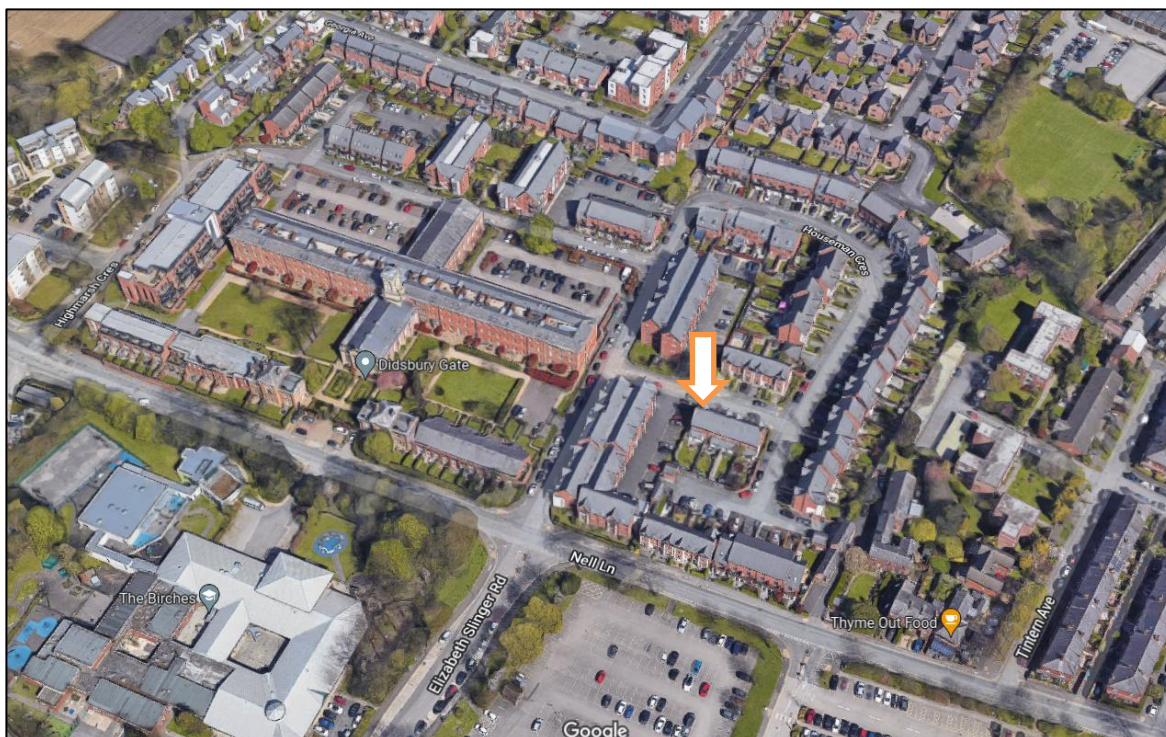


Figure 3: Aerial view showing the Former Withington Hospital development and identifying 7 Hightrees Drive.

2. The Proposed Scheme

- 2.1 Planning application 133193/FH/2022 seeks householder planning permission for 'Erection of part single, part three storey rear extension to provide additional living accommodation'. The extension is required to meet the needs of the applicant and his family.
- 2.2 At ground floor level the scheme involves a rear extension 2.53m beyond the existing rear elevation. The rear extension will span the width of the property (save for the retention of a 200mm gap to the eaves and drainage) infilling the existing recessed area located adjacent to the boundary with No.5 Hightrees Drive. Measured at this point the extension will be 4.29m from the original rear elevation. The ground floor extension will allow for the provision of a larger kitchen / dining room and provide a WC to allow the conversion of the existing WC to a utility room. French patio doors will provide access to the garden with two rooflights on the extension providing additional light to the space.
- 2.3 At first and second floor levels the extension will again span the width of the property (save for the retention of a 200mm gap to the eaves and drainage), but will be set back from the proposed ground floor extension with a projection of 2.88m from the existing rear elevation at these levels. The proposal will facilitate the creation of a new bedroom and a larger bedroom at first floor level, and an additional bedroom with ensuite at second floor level.
- 2.4 The extension will have a gabled roof which picks up on a dominant architectural feature within the estate. Similarly, the extension will be finished with white render which is one of the

main building materials with the estate, with roof tiles to match existing. Full details are provided by the submitted application drawings referenced earlier.

3. Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Guidance

The Development Plan

- 3.1 Section 38 (6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 2004 states that applications for development should be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In the case of Manchester City Council, the adopted development plan consists of the Core Strategy (adopted 2012) and the saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan. Due consideration in the determination of the application will also need to be afforded to national policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Design Guide (NDG) which represent significant material considerations. The provisions of these documents are discussed in detail below.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3.2 Detailed guidance about the legislation and the Government's planning policies is given in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was published on 27 March 2012, with the most recent update being in July 2021. The NPPF continues to be a key part of reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible; to protect the environment; and to promote sustainable growth. It replaces all previous Planning Policy Guidance and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 3.3 The NPPF advises that development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Development Plan should be approved without delay. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, permission should be granted unless:
- The application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the proposed development; or
 - Any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
- 3.4 Paragraph 8 confirms that there are three dimensions to sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. To achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be pursued in mutually supportive ways through the planning system.

Delivering Sustainable Development

- 3.5 The NPPF explains that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take

local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area. These sustainable objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in the framework. The NPPF is split into 17 chapters, the chapters of relevance to this development are discussed below.

- 3.6 Building a strong, competitive economy (Chapter 6) - emphasises that the government is committed to ensuring that the planning system should help to support economic growth. It recognises that a poor environment and a lack of housing can act as a potential barrier to investment.
- 3.7 Promoting healthy communities (Chapter 8) - the planning system should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe communities. Planning decisions should aim to achieve places which promote, amongst other things, safe and accessible developments, where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion.
- 3.8 Making effective use of land (Chapter 11) – the NPPF recognises the need for the planning system to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land.
- 3.9 Achieving well-designed places (Chapter 12) - this chapter sets out at paragraph 130 that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:
 - a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
 - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
 - d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
 - e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
 - f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

- 3.10 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment (Chapter 15) – advises that, amongst other things, planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development.
- 3.11 Decision making – guidance in paragraph 38 states that local planning authorities should approach decisions in a positive and creative way, making use of the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants. Decision - makers at all levels should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

National Design Guide (NDG)

- 3.12 The National Design Guide was first published in 2019 and updated in January 2021. It sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It forms part of the government's collection of planning practice guidance and should be read alongside the separate planning practice guidance on design process and tools.

Local Planning Policy Guidance

Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan

- 3.13 Manchester's Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document was adopted on 11th July 2012. Relevant policies are set out below:
- 3.14 Policy SP 1 'Spatial Principles' sets out the key strategic principles to guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027. Amongst other things this confirms that the emphasis is on the creation of neighbourhoods of choice. To achieve this aim will include creating well designed places that enhance or create character, and protecting and enhancing the built and natural environment amongst other things.
- 3.15 Policy DM 1 'Development Management' sets out various issues that development should have regard to. Amongst other things, these include: appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail; impact on the surrounding areas; and effects on amenity.

Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Saved Policies

- 3.16 The Manchester Unitary Plan is part of the adopted development plan for the area and is one of the key decision making documents regarding the site. The Plan was produced under a now-superseded system of development planning and adopted in 1995. Its extant policies are 'saved', which means they will continue to be used for development control purposes. Policy DC1 relates to 'Residential Extensions' and relevant provisions are noted below:

- 3.17 *DC1.1 In determining planning applications for extensions to residential properties, the Council will have regard to: a. the general character of the property; b. the effect upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers; c. the desirability of enabling people to adapt their houses in appropriate ways to meet changing household needs; d. the overall appearance of the proposal in the street-scene; e. the effect of the loss of any on-site carparking.*
- 3.18 *DC1.2 Extensions to residential properties will be allowed subject to compliance with other relevant policies of the Plan and the following criteria: a. they are not excessively large or bulky (for example, resulting in structures which are not subservient to original houses or project out too far in front of the original buildings); b. they do not create an undue loss of sunlight, daylight or privacy; c. they are not out of character with the style of development in the area or the surrounding street scene by virtue of design, use of materials or constructional details; d. they would not result in the loss of off-street car-parking, in a situation where there is so severe an existing on-street parking problem that unacceptable additional pressures would be created.*
- 3.19 *DC1.3 Notwithstanding the generality of the above policies, the Council will not normally approve: a. rearward extensions greater than 3.65m (12 ft) in length; b. 2-storey extensions with a flat roof, particularly those which would be visible from the public highway; c. 2-storey extensions to terraced properties which occupy the full width of the house; d. flat roofed extensions to bungalows; e. extensions which conflict with the Council's guidelines on privacy distances (which are published as supplementary guidance).*
- 3.20 *DC1.6 For the avoidance of doubt, policies DC1.1 to DC1.4 apply to domestic houses, flats, houses in multiple occupation, nursing homes, rest homes and hotels.*
- 3.21 *Reasons: Many people prefer to extend their existing homes rather than move, and the planning system needs to accommodate this demand for more living space, while at the same time ensuring that the amenities of neighbours are protected, and that the overall character of the surrounding area is not harmed. The Council is not generally in favour of dealing with this issue by laying down firm rules about home extensions; the policy therefore allows each case to be looked at on its individual merits, having regard to a range of criteria.*

The Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document

- 3.22 The Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (SPD) was officially adopted on 11 April 2007. The Guide seeks to promote the importance of attractive, well designed, well maintained, neighbourhoods, in supporting sustainable development and 'neighbourliness'.

Manchester Residential Quality Design Guidance

- 3.23 Published in 2017 the purpose of this document is to outline the considerations, qualities, and opportunities that will help to deliver high quality residential development as part of successful and sustainable neighbourhoods across Manchester. It is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

4. Planning Appraisal

- 4.1 Having regard to the planning policy context detailed in Section 3 and email comments provided by the Council to date, the application proposal is assessed below.
- 4.2 In general terms the principle of allowing homeowners to extend and adapt their homes is well-established, and recent changes to permitted development rights have further emphasised this. The application proposal seeks to extend the property to provide additional living accommodation at ground floor level and additional bedroom space and an ensuite at first and second floor levels, as well as providing space for a home office given the increased prevalence of homeworking. In assessing an extension proposal, the key issues relate to design and amenity which are considered in turn below:

Design

- 4.3 National and local planning policy emphasises that achieving high quality buildings and places is fundamental to the purpose of planning. Core Strategy policy DM1 sets out specific aspects to which regard should be had in considering development proposals including appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail. In addition regard must also be given to impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- 4.4 At three storeys the extension reflects the size of the existing dwelling and adjacent properties. The extension will be across the width of the rear of the property (save for a 200mm gap to No.5 Hightrees to allow for eaves and drainage). As a townhouse the property is not particularly wide therefore the extension across the rear is necessary in order to achieve the required level of accommodation.
- 4.5 The extension will have a gabled roof form with the second floor being partly integrated within the roof space. The ridge of the extension roof sits well below the ridge of the main roof and achieves subservience. The gabled form reflects a dominant architectural detail that is found throughout the estate (including on other rear extensions) and is a feature of the subject property on its front elevation (refer to Appendix 1 for further examples).
- 4.6 The footprint of the extension is modest, involving a rear projection of 2.53m beyond the current rear wall at ground floor level (4.29m when measured from the recessed part of the rear elevation) and 2.88m beyond the existing rear wall at first and second floor levels. These distances are clearly modest when assessed by review of the existing and proposed plans. This is also confirmed when considered in the context of permitted development rights which allow for 3m single storey extensions to attached properties (subject to meeting other criteria). Similarly, 3m two storey rear extensions are permissible under permitted development rights subject to meeting certain criteria). Whilst permitted development rights are not applicable for the subject extension they nevertheless provide a useful reference to illustrate the modest scale of the extension.
- 4.7 As noted previously the extension will effectively span the width of the rear of the property. This approach is considered to give a cleaner and simpler appearance to the rear elevation of the property than would otherwise be achieved through an extension across only part of the width which could create a more awkward appearance to the rear elevation.

- 4.8 It is recognised that the estate's layout means that the rear elevation of the property has greater visibility than might typically be the case due to the car parking located at the rear. Although the proposed extension will be visible from this area it is considered that the appropriate and sensitive design of the extension will ensure that there is no adverse impact on the streetscene or character of the wider area. Similarly, the extension will have some visibility from Hightrees Drive and the junction with Houseman Crescent, although for reasons previously discussed it is considered that the high quality design of the extension ensures there will be no adverse visual impact.
- 4.9 The extension will be faced with render and have matching roof tiles. These materials are already found on the subject property and within the surrounding area, thus confirming their appropriateness and suitability. They have also been used on other rear extensions as illustrated by figures 4 and 5 below.



Figure 4: Example of render to rear extension.



Figure 5: Example of render to rear extension.

- 4.10 Based on the above assessment it is confirmed that the extension is of a high quality design and will have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Amenity

- 4.11 In relation to amenity Core Strategy policy DM 1 identifies a range of factors to be considered including effects on privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odour etc. The policy also confirms the importance of achieving adequacy of internal accommodation

and external amenity space. In terms of assessing amenity there are two main issues to consider: amenity impact on adjacent/neighbouring properties; and, the amenity of occupants of the subject property. These are considered in turn.

- 4.12 In terms of neighbouring amenity it is considered that any assessment is limited to the adjoining property to the west – No.5 Hightrees Drive, with other properties being located further away and not materially affected by the extension.
- 4.13 The amenity issues requiring consideration relate to the provision of light, outlook, overbearing, and impact on the garden of No. 5 Hightrees Drive.
- 4.14 With regards to potential impact of the extension on No.5 Hightrees Drive it is vital to recognise the use of the rooms served by windows on the rear elevation. Floorplans have been reviewed and have identified that the ground and first floor windows located closest to the shared boundary with No.7 are to a WC and landing (refer to figure 6 below). Both these rooms are not considered 'habitable' in planning terms and therefore do not benefit from the same level of protection. Were these windows serving habitable rooms then it is accepted that there could be a degree of overbearing impact associated with the proposed rear extension, however since they are not habitable windows it is concluded that no such overbearing impact will be created.

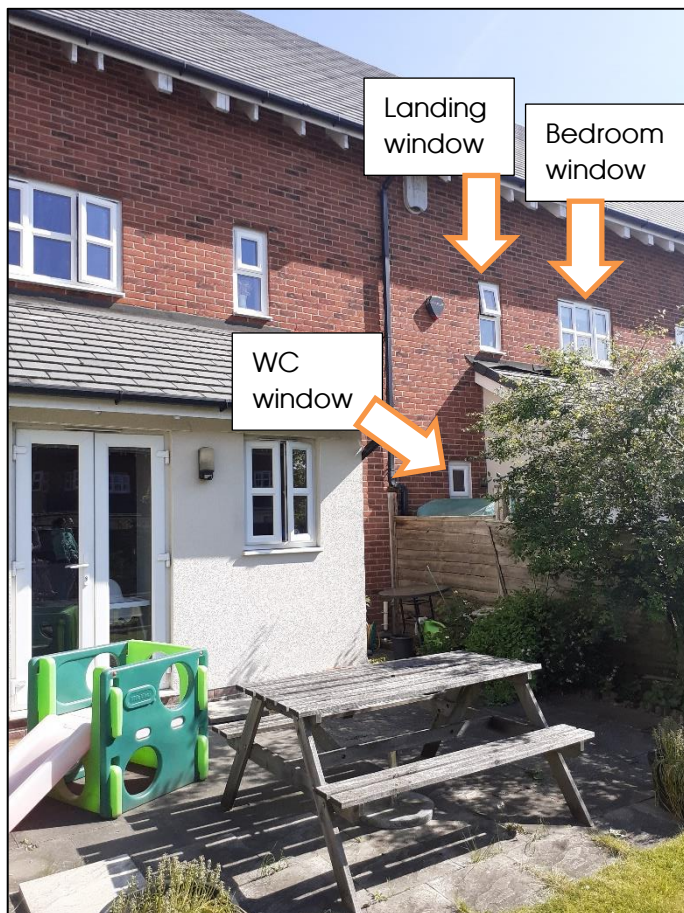


Figure 6: View of rear elevation of No.5 Hightrees Drive identifying rooms served by windows.

- 4.15 With regards to the first floor window of No.5 Hightrees Drive which serves a bedroom, this is located away from the shared boundary and will not be adversely impact by the proposed extension. A '45 degree rule' is often referenced in considering possible overbearing impact, and this is not breached through the application proposal.
- 4.16 It is noted that an extension to No.3 Hightrees Drive has previously been approved under application 130859/FH/2021 in August 2021. Approved drawings identify a three storey extension that was built up to the shared boundary with No.1 Hightrees Drive of 2.77m. This is effectively the same relationship that would be created with the subject application, which was previously deemed acceptable and granted planning permission.
- 4.17 When considering the relationship that will be created with No.5 Hightrees Drive it is recognised that similar relationships already exist throughout the estate where there is variation in front and rear building lines (see figures 7-10 below). This provides visual interest and can be viewed as a positive visual characteristic.



Figure 7: Example of variation in building lines adjacent to habitable room window.



Figure 8: Example of variation in rear building lines adjacent to habitable room windows.



Figure 9: Example of variation in rear building lines adjacent to habitable room windows.



Figure 10: Example of variation in building lines.

- 4.18 On the basis of the above analysis in relation to possible overbearing impact, it is equally confirmed that there is no material loss of light or outlook that can be associated with the proposed extension.
- 4.19 In terms of possible impact on the garden of No.5 Hightrees Drive, it is noted that the subject property is located to the west of No.5. The rear elevations of the properties and their gardens enjoy a southerly aspect with good levels of natural light throughout the day. The position of the extension in respect of No.5 Hightrees Drive means that in theory there could be some possible overshadowing of the garden in the evening. However, this is not the case as the existing four storey apartment building (with steep pitched) roof located to the west of the subject property already screens the sun during the evening period. As such it is not considered that there will be any material overshadowing impact to the garden of No.5 Hightrees Drive.
- 4.20 Notwithstanding this, were there to be any impact it would be very limited due to the modest footprint of the extension (particularly at first and second floor levels) and the decent size of the garden to No.5 Hightrees Drive, the majority of which will be completely unaffected. Any parts of the garden that could in theory be affected are located adjacent to the house and already have limited amenity value being somewhat enclosed by the projecting ground floor rear elements of No.7 and No.5. Further to this it is worth noting that the resident of No.5 Hightrees Drive has raised no objection in relation to any aspect of the proposed extension. On the contrary she has responded positively to the applicant, noting that the extension could help to improve privacy from the apartment block located to the west. The

current overlooking by the apartment block is shown by figure 11 below. In addition to the above it is confirmed that the application proposal would not prevent the occupants of neighbouring properties from undertaking a similar form of development.



Figure 11: Current level of overlooking of rear gardens of properties on Hightrees Drive from apartment block.

- 4.21 With regards to the subject property, the proposed extension will improve the amenity of residents by providing additional living accommodation. Rooms will be provided with sufficient outlook and natural light, whilst the rear garden will remain a decent size and in proportion with the size of the house.
- 4.22 Based on the above assessment, it is established that the application proposal will not have an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents whilst residents of the subject property will be provided with a high level of amenity.
- 4.23 It is noted that initial comments were provided that suggested that rear extensions to the full-width of terraced properties are not generally supported. It is suggested that this approach is usually likely taken to protect amenity of occupiers of traditional residential properties which are characterised by a tighter/denser form of development than exists here. Additionally, the subject property is effectively a semi-detached so the above provision is not applicable. Finally, it is recognised that the reasons text to Saved UDP policy DC1 states 'The Council is not generally in favour of dealing with this issue by laying down firm rules about home extensions; the policy therefore allows each case to be looked at on its individual merits, having regard to a range of criteria'. Relevant planning criteria have been reviewed in this letter and it is confirmed that there is no basis for refusing planning permission.

4.24 Having regard to the above assessment the application proposal is deemed to be in accordance with Core Strategy policies SP1 and DM1; Saved UPD policy DC1, local guidance provided by the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD and the Manchester Residential Quality Guidance; and national policy guidance provided by the NPPF and NDG.

5. Conclusion

5.1 This letter has appraised the proposed development under planning application 133193/FH/2022 having regard the planning policy context. It is our professional opinion following assessment of the proposal and its context that the application proposal is consistent with relevant national and local planning policy and should be supported by Manchester City Council officers. There are no policy grounds or other material considerations which would justify refusal of the application which represents sustainable development and should therefore be approved without delay.

We trust that this letter assists in the determination of the application. If you require any clarification or have any queries please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Ralph Taylor BSc. MPLAN MRTPI
Associate Director

Appendix 1: Photographs of the Subject Property and Surrounding Context



View of terrace block with 7 Hightrees Drive to the right.



View of terrace block with 7 Hightrees Drive to the right.



View of 7 Hightrees Drive.



View of 7 Hightrees Drive.



View of rear of 7 Hightrees Drive.



View of rear of 7 and 5 Hightrees Drive.



View of rear of 7 Hightrees Drive.



View of rear of 7 and 5 Hightrees Drive.



View of part of rear of 7 Hightrees Drive showing apartment blocks.



View of rear of 7 Hightrees Drive.



Streetscene view.



Streetscene view.



Streetscene view.



Streetscene view.



Streetscene view (rear of properties).



Streetscene view.



Streetscene view (rear of properties).



Streetscene view (rear of properties).



Example extension.

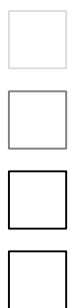


Example of render use.



Extension example.

Appendix 2: Drawings showing 45 degree 'rule' met



notes

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2. read in conjunction with all other consultancy/specialists drawings. report any discrepancies before affected work commences
3. all setting out dimensions to be checked on site by contractor before work commences
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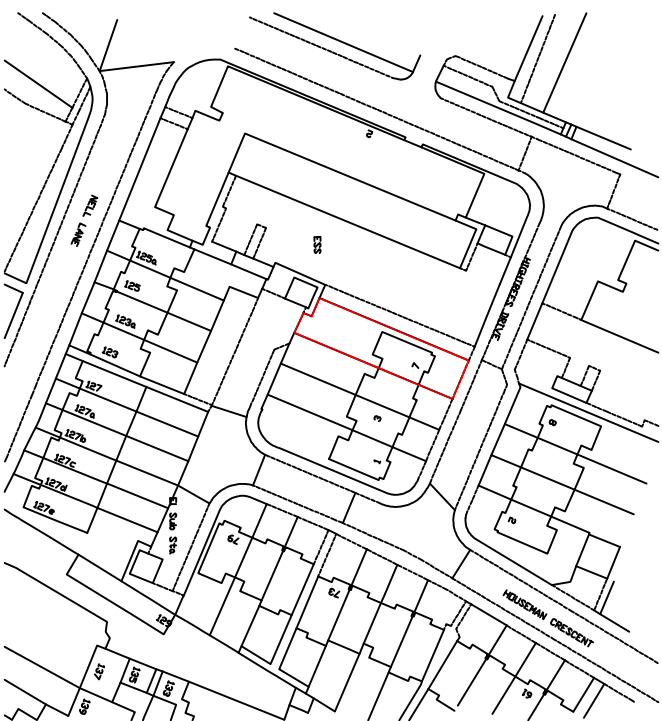
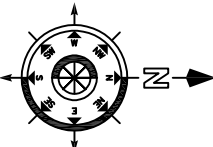
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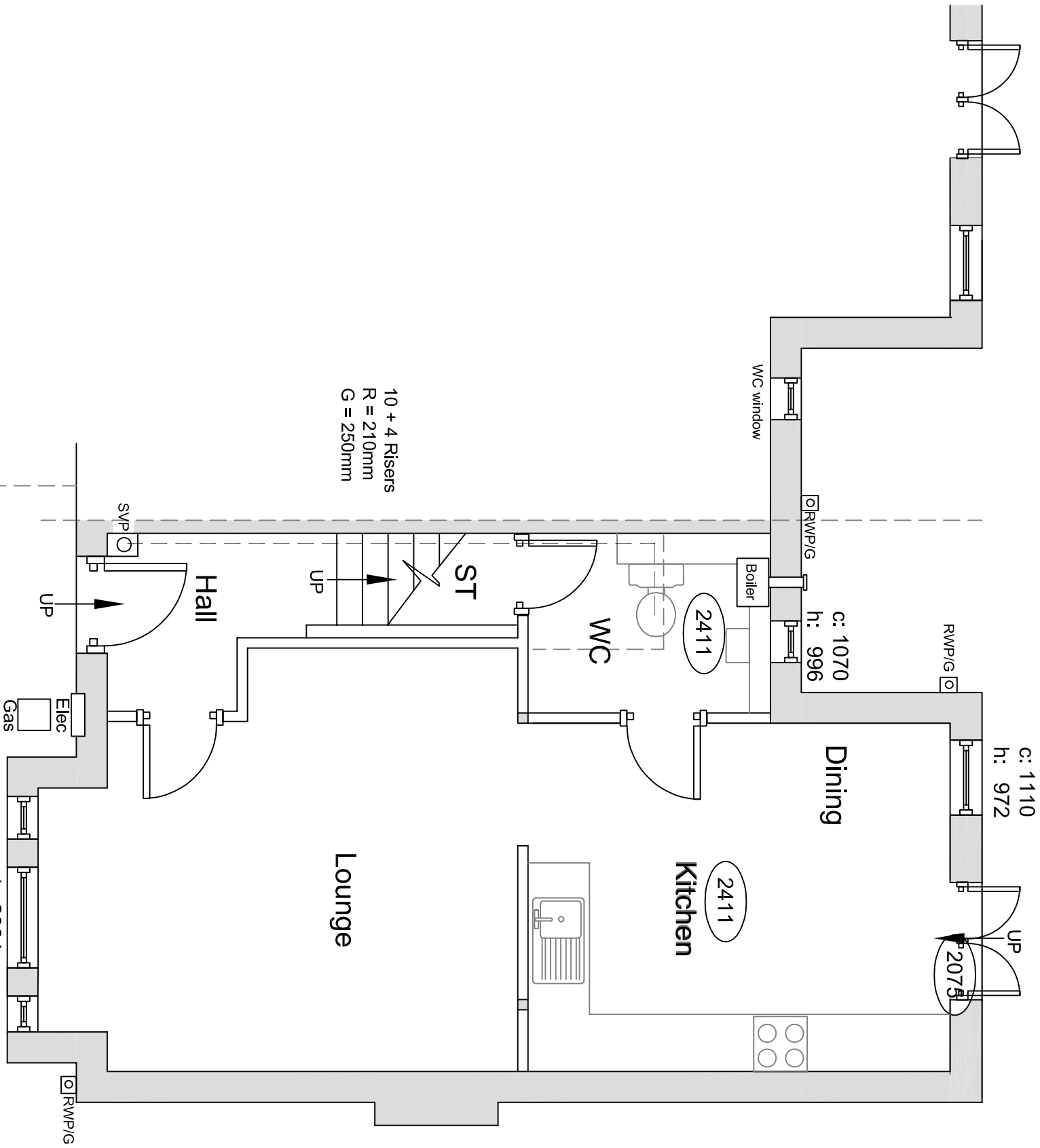
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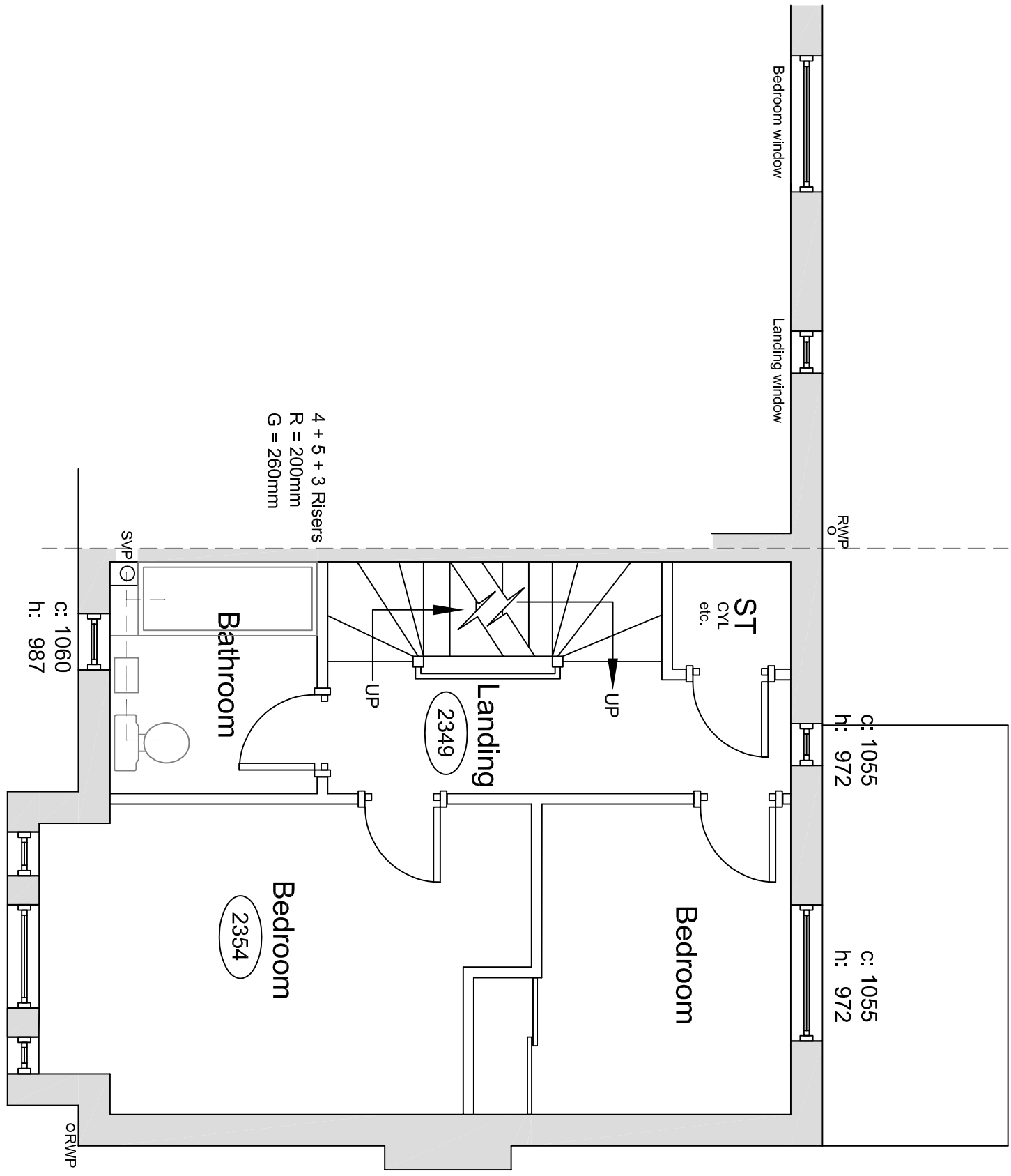
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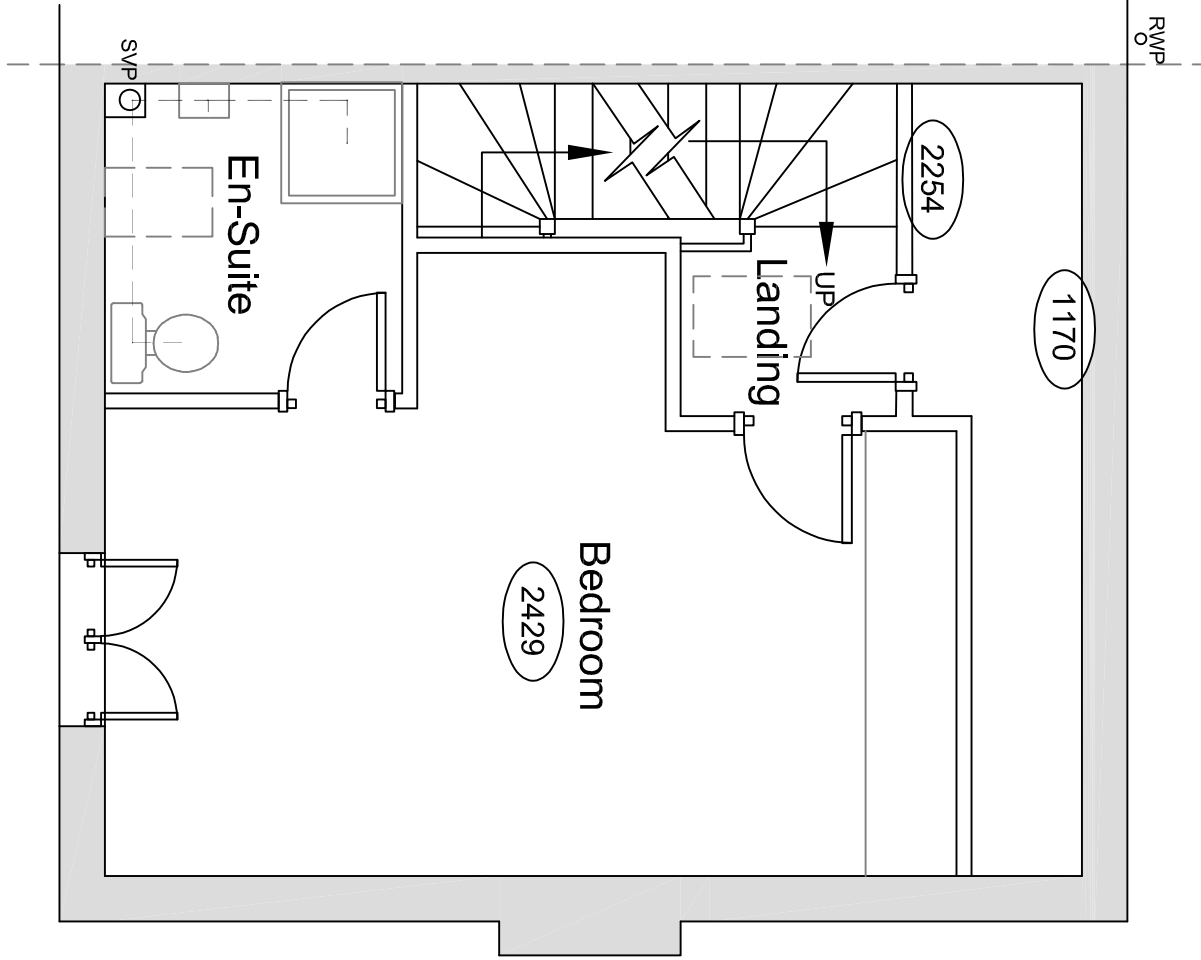
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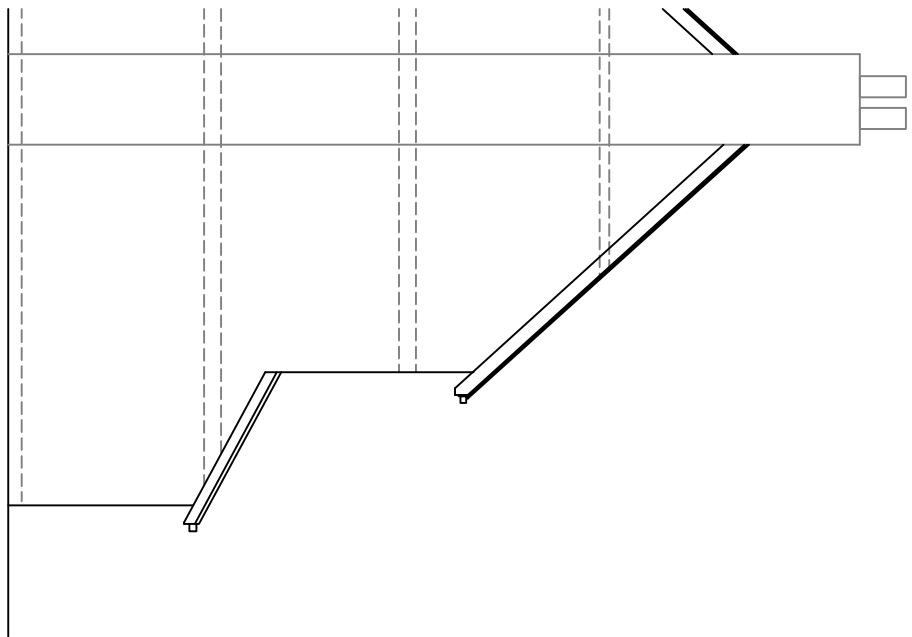
Existing Ground Floor Plan



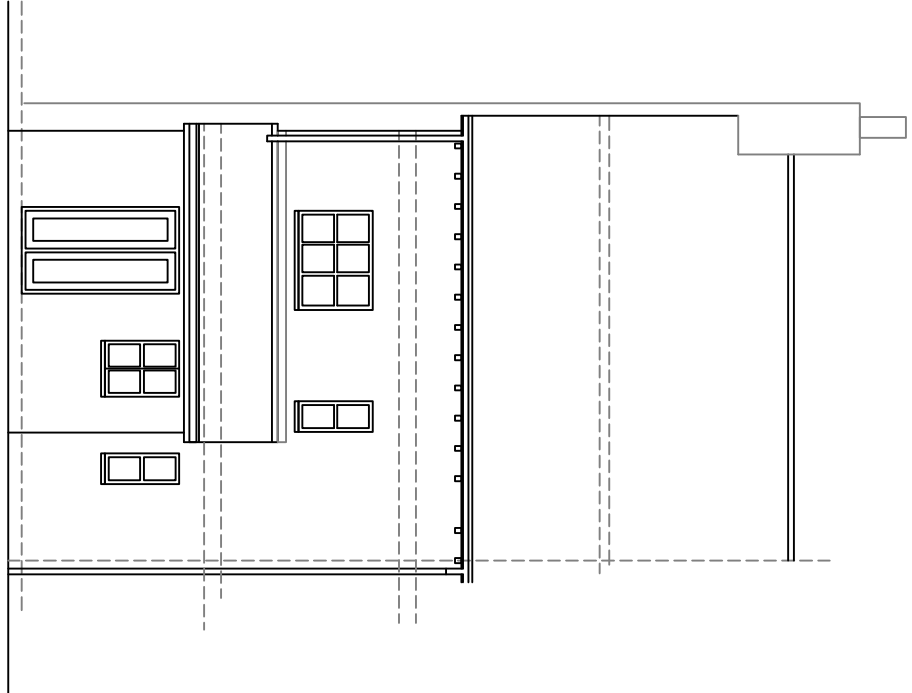
Existing First Floor Plan



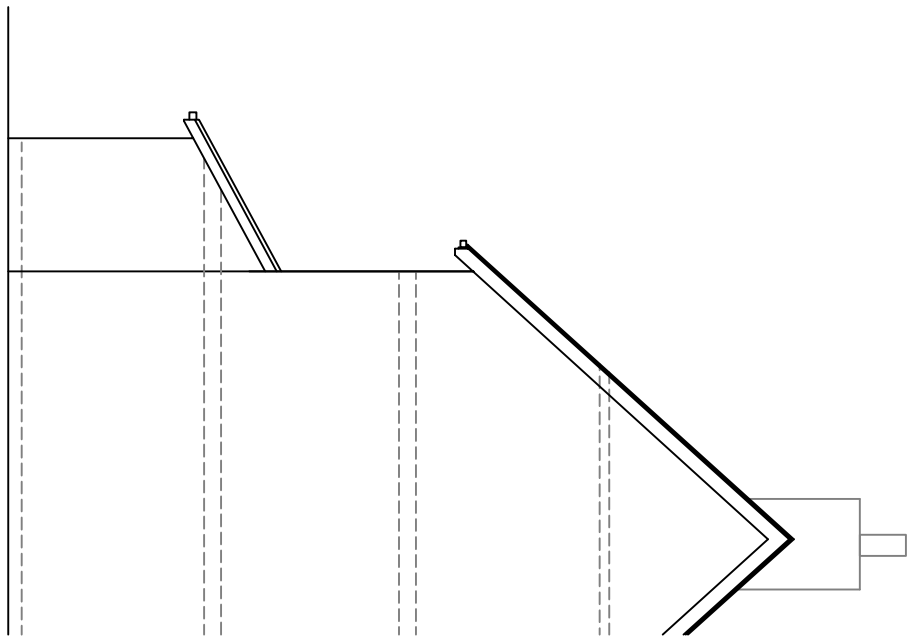
Existing Second Floor Plan



Existing Side Elevation



Existing Rear Elevation



Existing Side Elevation

project:
7 Hightrees Drive
Manchester
M20 2JF

client:
Mr C Cooper

dwg:
Existing Plans &
Elevations

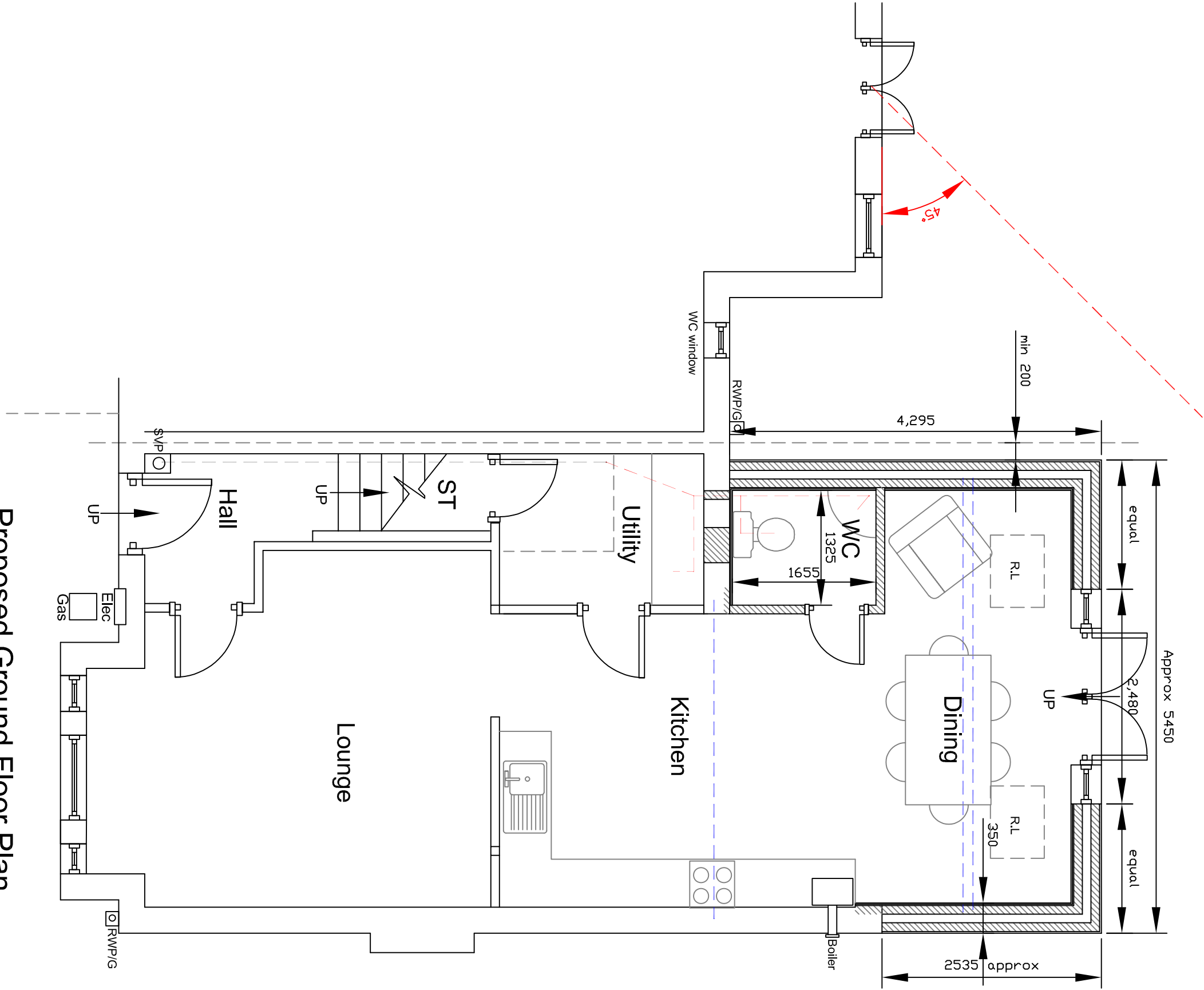
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dwg no: 01

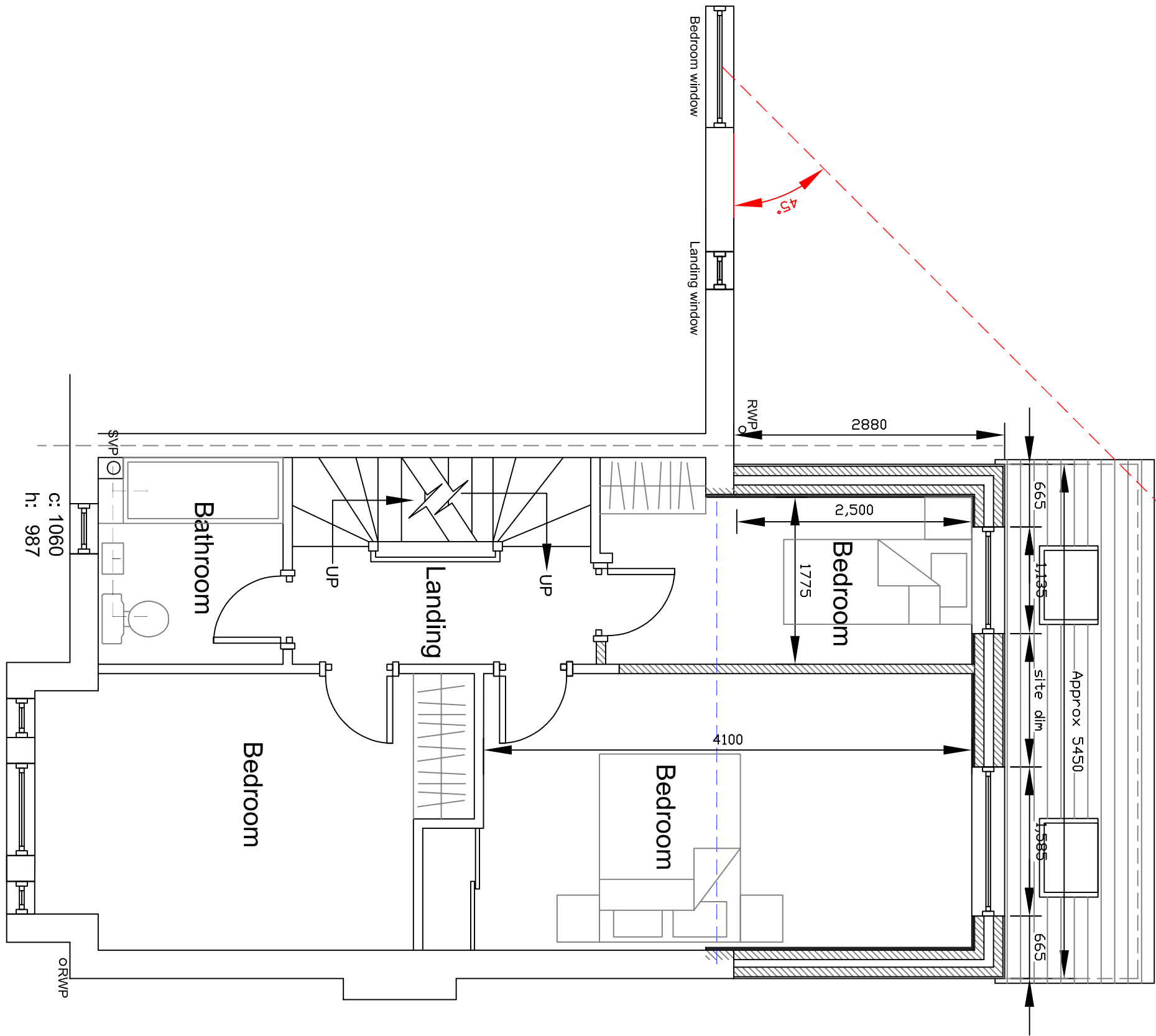
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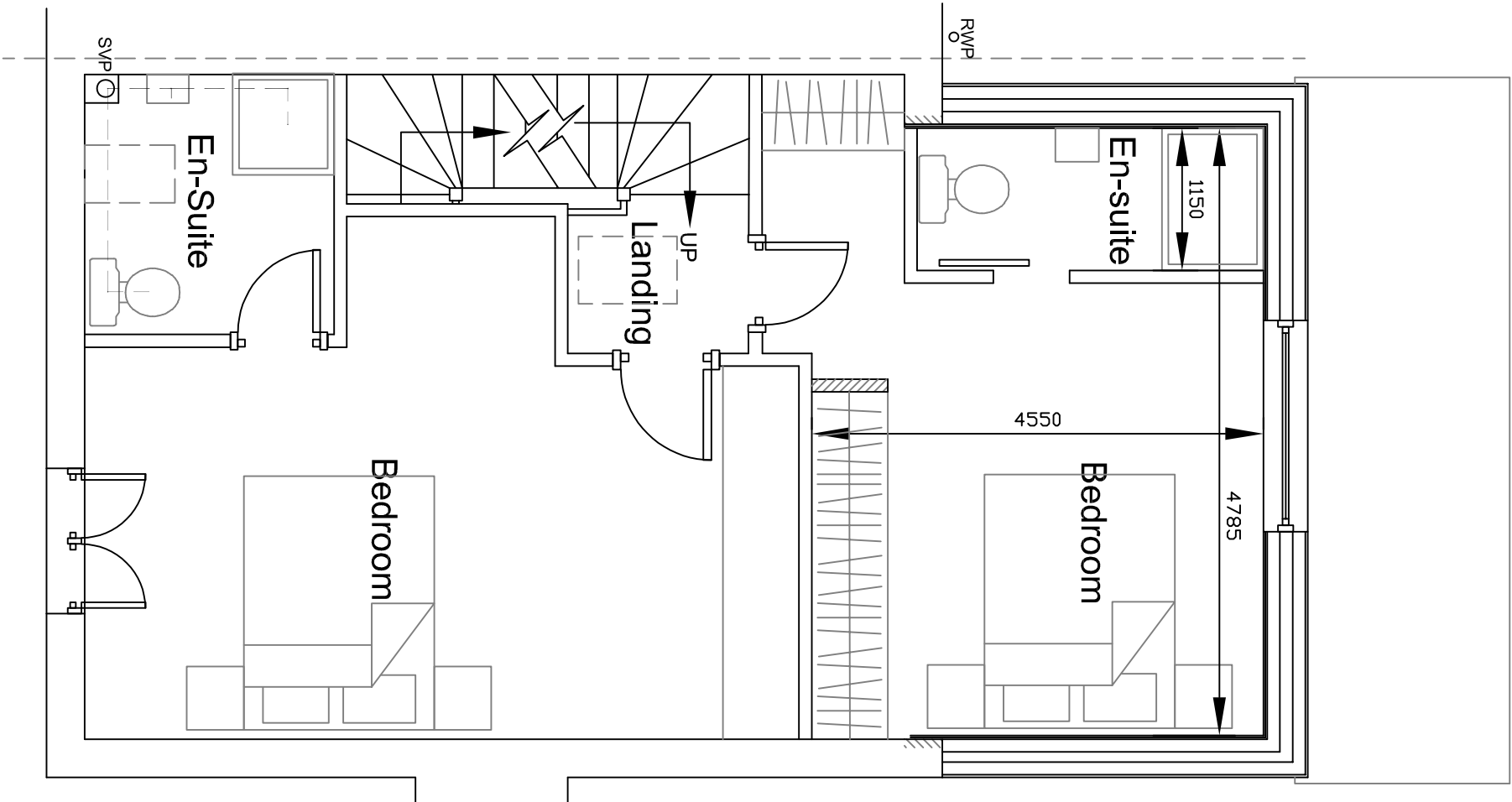
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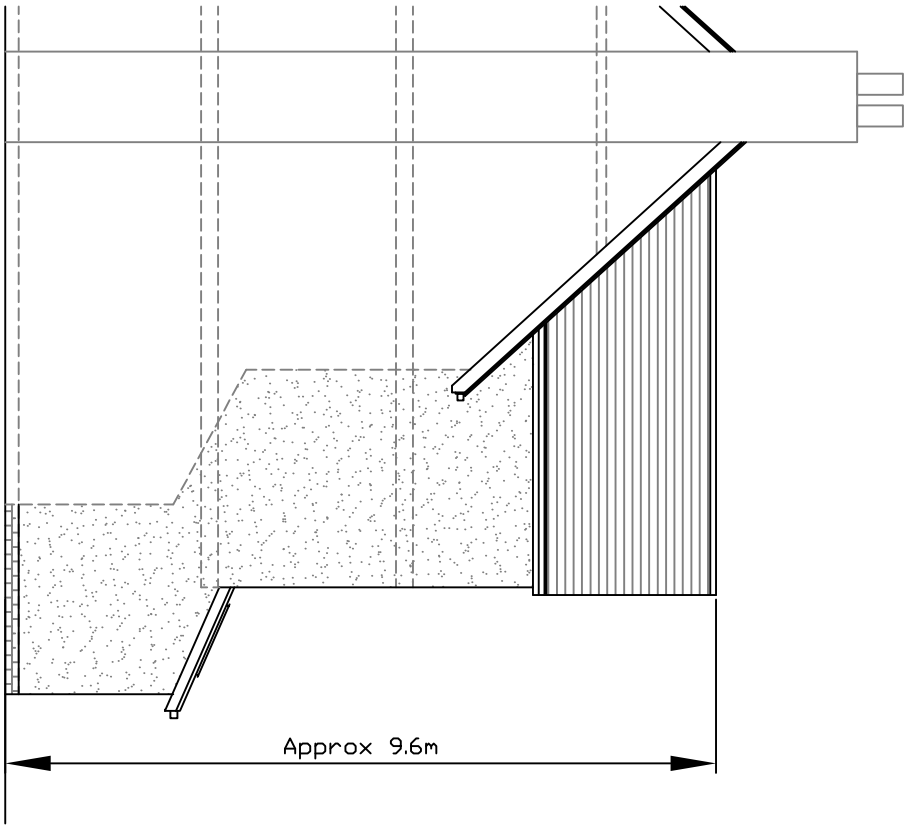
Proposed Ground Floor Plan



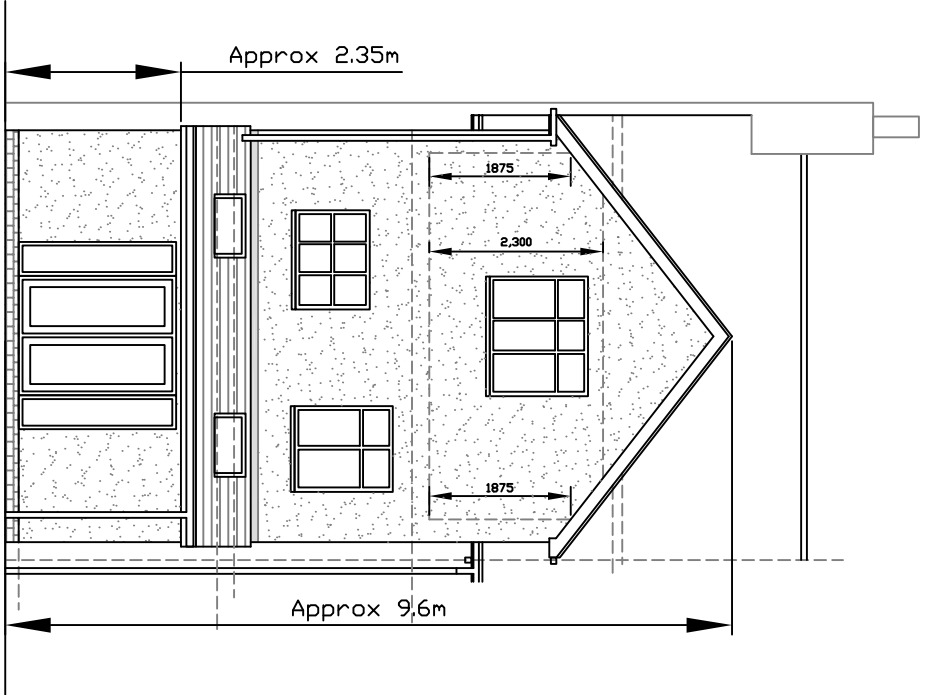
Proposed First Floor Plan



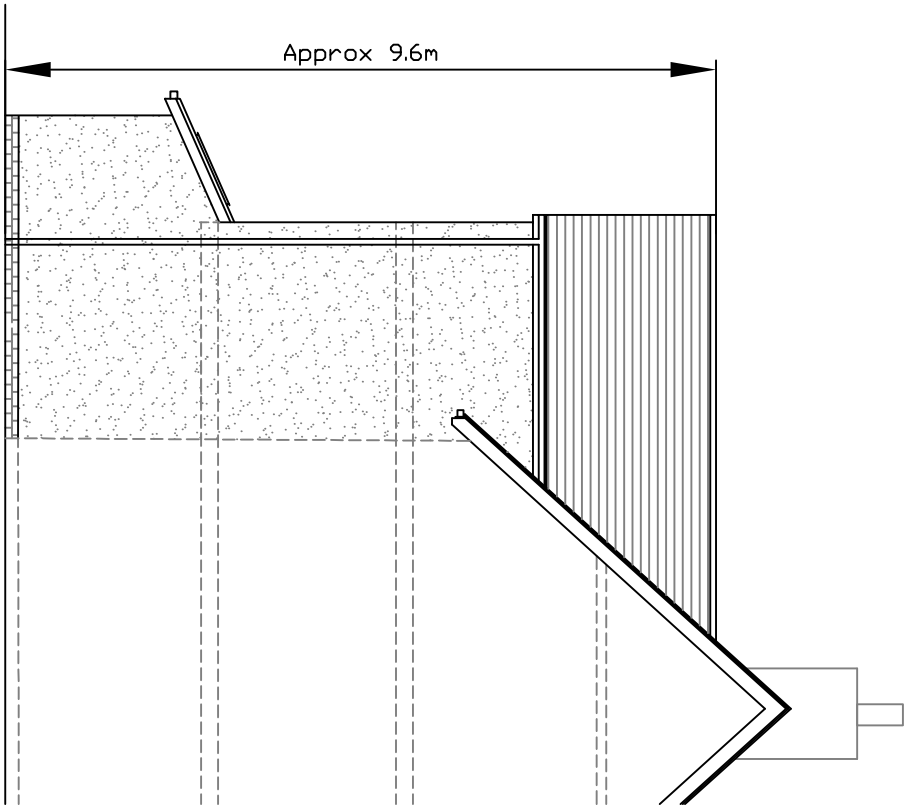
Proposed Second Floor Plan



Proposed Side Elevation



Proposed Rear Elevation



Proposed Side Elevation

notes

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M20 2JF

client:
Mr C Cooper

dwg:
Proposed Plans &
Elevations

project no: 922

dwg no: 02

dwg date: 15/06/22

dwg scale: 1:50/100

dwg revision: **D**