

FOX- GROVES

ARCHITECTURE

38 Stile Road
Design Statement

P01

16th October 2023

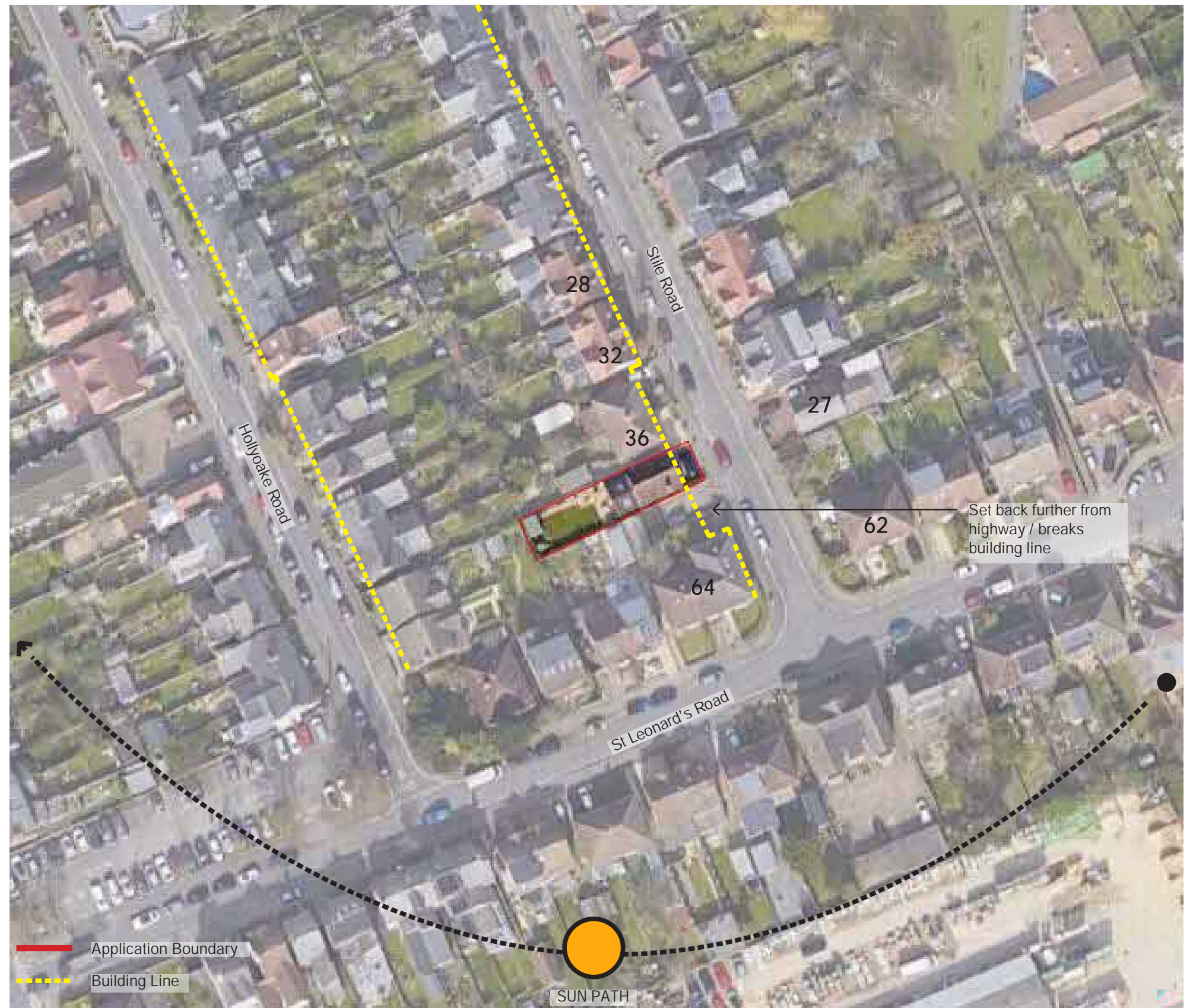
Introduction

The purpose of this application is to provide an additional bedroom, bathroom and storage room so that the applicant's children (7 year old boy & 5 year old girl) can have their own bedrooms, whilst enabling the 'box' room to serve as a home office and occasional guest room for visiting family. The applicants wish to remain in Headington and make the most efficient use of the application site due to the sustainable location of the dwelling; they are currently able to walk their children to school and cycle to their permanent places of work in the centre of Oxford.

Due to the highly constrained nature of Oxford, there is an acute housing shortage making the existing housing stock within the City, and Oxfordshire, largely unaffordable. Therefore, in order for the applicants to retain their existing, sustainable lifestyle within Headington, they need to extend rather than buy a larger home as the latter is simply not feasible.

Site Description

The site is located in Headington, to the east of central Oxford, with the application site located at the southern end of Stile Road. Stile Road is characterised by its varied age of properties, built form, roof pitches and ridge heights. Facing materials are a mix of red brickwork, white render, pebble-dash and hung-tile, with pitched, tiled roofs of varying types. The application site, no. 36 and no. 34 are set further back from the highway than the dwellings to the north by approximately 1.8m, as illustrated opposite.



Aerial View (Image Source: Google)

Site Description & Surrounding Built Context

38 Stile Road is a two-storey, gable-fronted dwelling constructed in 1958. It is clad in red brick with pebbledash features, with concrete tiled roof. The house has been extended at ground floor (utilising PD rights) to provide additional living space, which was originally limited. At first floor, the house has two well-sized bedrooms and a very small 'box' room.

For a two-storey dwelling, the property is constrained by relatively low floor to ceiling heights, shallow roof pitch and low ridge height: approximately 7.3m from external ground levels, which is significantly lower than the majority of properties on Stile Road.

Surrounding Built Context

This page includes images of the surrounding built-form, highlighting the variance between properties described on page 2.

Surrounding built form comprises a mix of 2, 2.5 and 3 storey dwellings located on Stile Road and St Leonard's Road as illustrated by the photos opposite. The photos also highlight a significant number of gable-fronted properties with steeply pitched roofs with greater overall building heights; this is particularly apparent at numbers 26-32 and 25-25a.

The photos illustrate that the application site and any proposals should be read in the context of this varied streetscape.



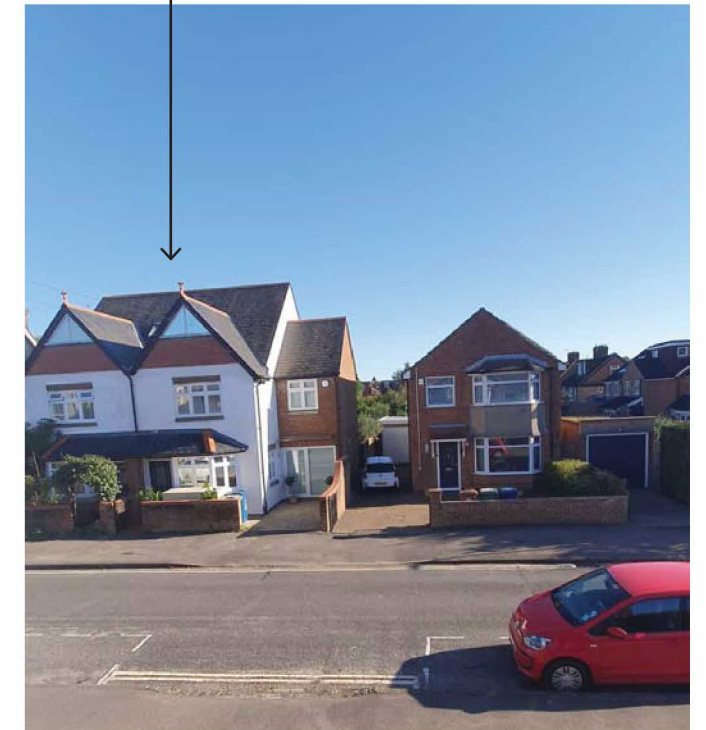
Surrounding Built Context

This page includes further images of the surrounding built-form, highlighting the variance between properties described on page 2.

25-25a Stile Road - steeply pitched roofs with high ridges and occupied loft rooms



25-25a Stile Road - steeply pitched roofs with high ridges and occupied loft rooms



Application site, concealed by tree

26-32 Stile Road - steeply pitched roofs with high ridges and occupied loft room



Application site (38 Stile Road) Note that nos. 34-36 are not visible (concealed by no. 32)



25-25a Stile Road - steeply pitched roofs with high ridges and occupied loft rooms

Application site (38 Stile Road)



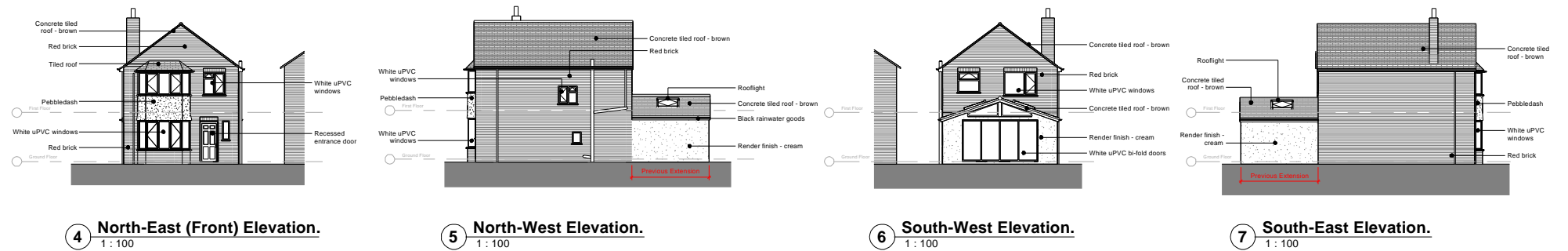
Planning Context & Design Approach

As mentioned previously, the applicants would like to maintain their sustainable lifestyle within Headington.

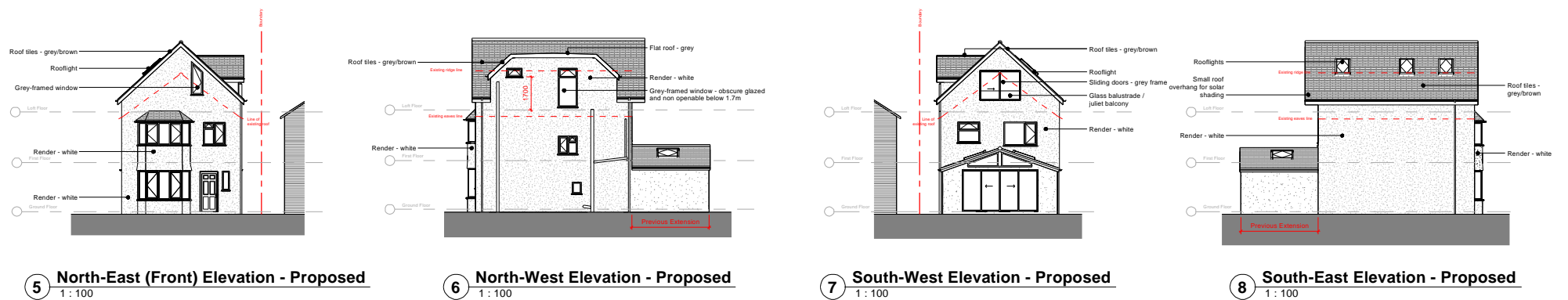
The **NPPF** sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development and the **Core Principles** encourage the efficient use of previously developed land. **Policies S1** and **RE2** of the **Oxford Local Plan 2036** are consistent with this approach. Policy RE2 requires that development proposals must make best use of site capacity, in a manner compatible with the site itself, the surrounding area and broader consideration of the needs of Oxford.

The development proposal must have a density appropriate for the proposed use, with an appropriate scale and massing, maximise the appropriate density with a built form and site layout appropriate to the capacity of the site.

This application is a resubmission which seeks to address all officer concerns in relation to the original application (23/01834/FUL) and, in doing so, adhere to the policies within the NPPF and the Oxford Local Plan 2036 as a whole. Our design response will be detailed on the following pages.



Existing Elevations (from previous application) - NTS



Elevations proposed from previous application - Withdrawn - NTS

Permitted Development Options

Prior to developing proposals for full planning permission, we explored options for development utilising Permitted Development rights.

Class B

Due to the gable-fronted design of the existing property the loft would need to be extended via side dormers, resulting in a disproportioned dwelling which we felt did not positively contribute to the surrounding context.

Additionally, due to the restricted ceiling heights of the existing property, it would involve lowering floors which would result in cramped, poor-quality accommodation and substantial disruption.

Class A

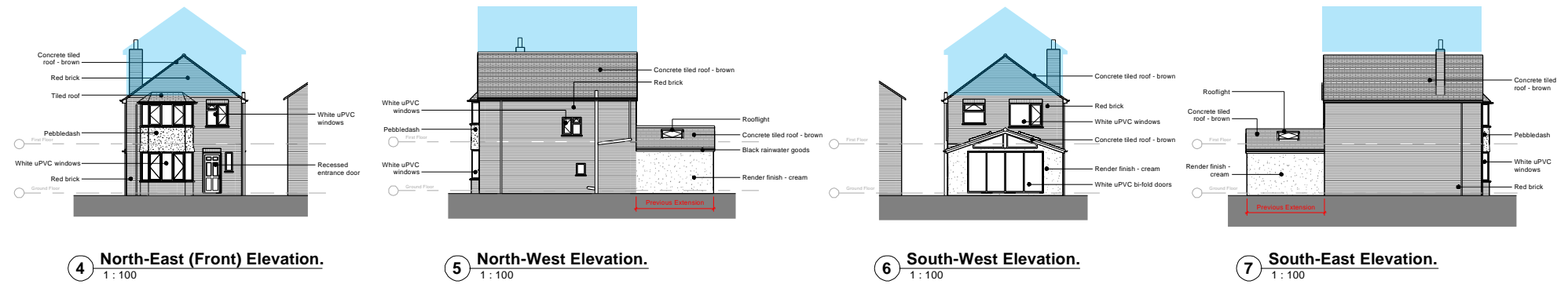
A rear two-storey extension would also result in an impractical layout with poor daylighting, whilst having a more significant impact on neighbouring properties.

Class AA

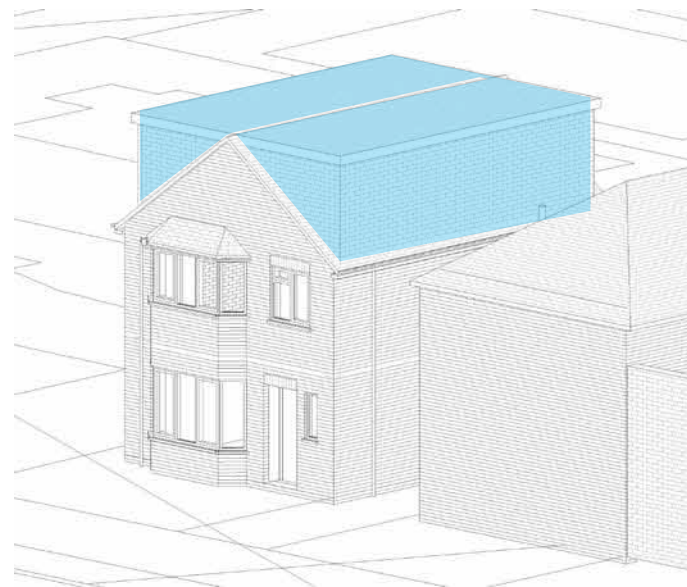
We also considered an application for 'prior approval' for an additional storey under Class AA, however, we considered that a more modest roof extension with altered roof pitch would be more appropriate within its context.

Summary

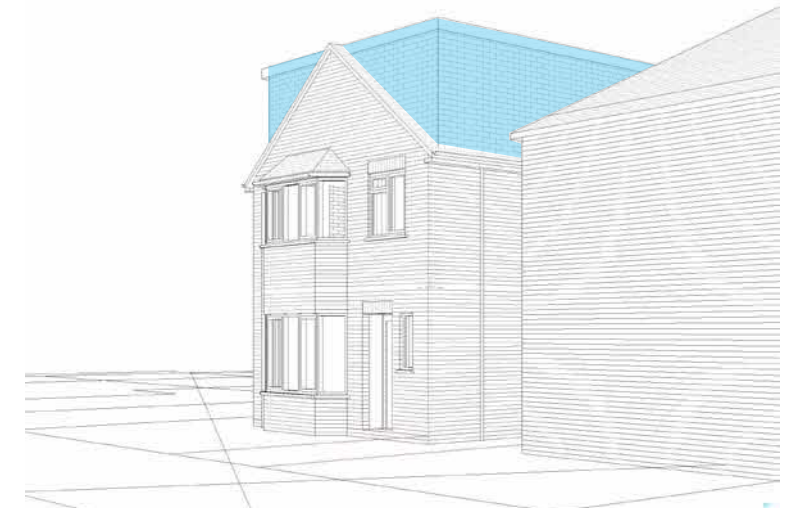
For the reasons noted above, these PD options were discounted in favour of a well-considered and high-quality loft conversion requiring full planning permission.



Indicative extension diagram under Class AA



*Class B
Illustrative 3D Overview - PD Loft Conversion (50 m³)*



*Class B
Illustrative Streetview - PD Loft Conversion (50 m³)*

Design Proposals

Form and Massing

As mentioned on the previous page, to ensure sufficient space and head-height is provided, the proposal involves raising the eaves approximately 1m and the ridge by approximately 1.3m, along with the construction of a modest side dormer to provide sufficient head-height to accommodate a staircase. The changes slightly increase the pitch of the roof which has the benefit of balancing the proportions of the house and responds to the streetscape described previously.

Layout

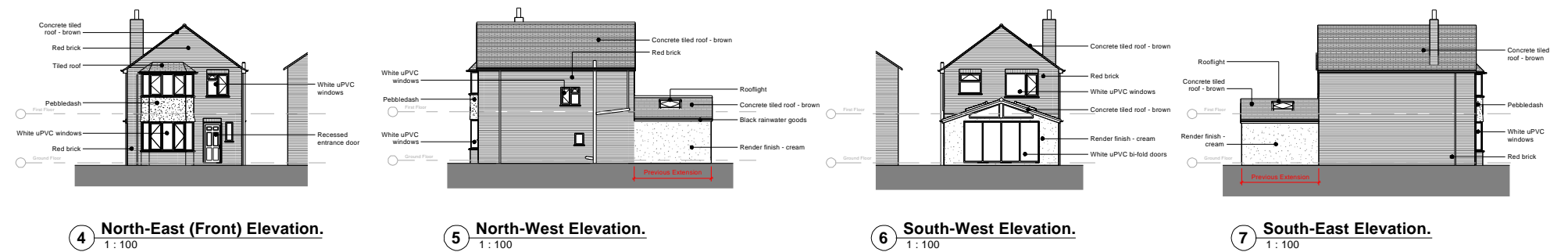
The new loft space would accommodate a new double bedroom, bathroom and storage room (existing storage is limited). The principal window would be located to the rear elevation with daylight supplemented by rooflights. Any windows located on side elevations are to be obscure-glazed and non-openable below 1.7m. The proposed roof is extended slightly to the rear to provide solar shading to the principal bedroom window whilst also mitigating any perceived overlooking.

Materials and Appearance

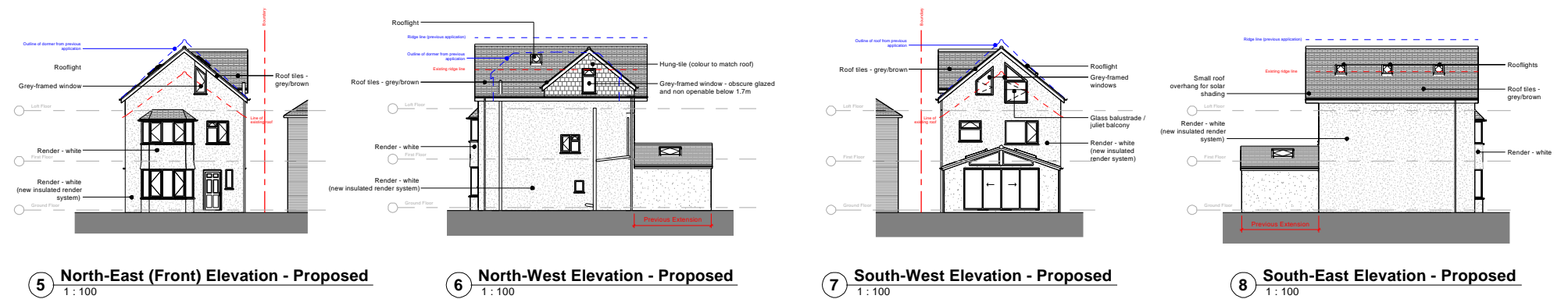
To improve energy efficiency, rendered external wall insulation is proposed to all elevations giving the dwelling a high-quality, uniform appearance - this also addresses the issue of mismatching brickwork commonly found on extensions. As mentioned previously, external finishes along Stile Road and St Leonard's Road vary (and include white render) and therefore the proposals would not appear incongruous in this context. The dormer would be clad in hung tile to match the colour of the roof.

Summary

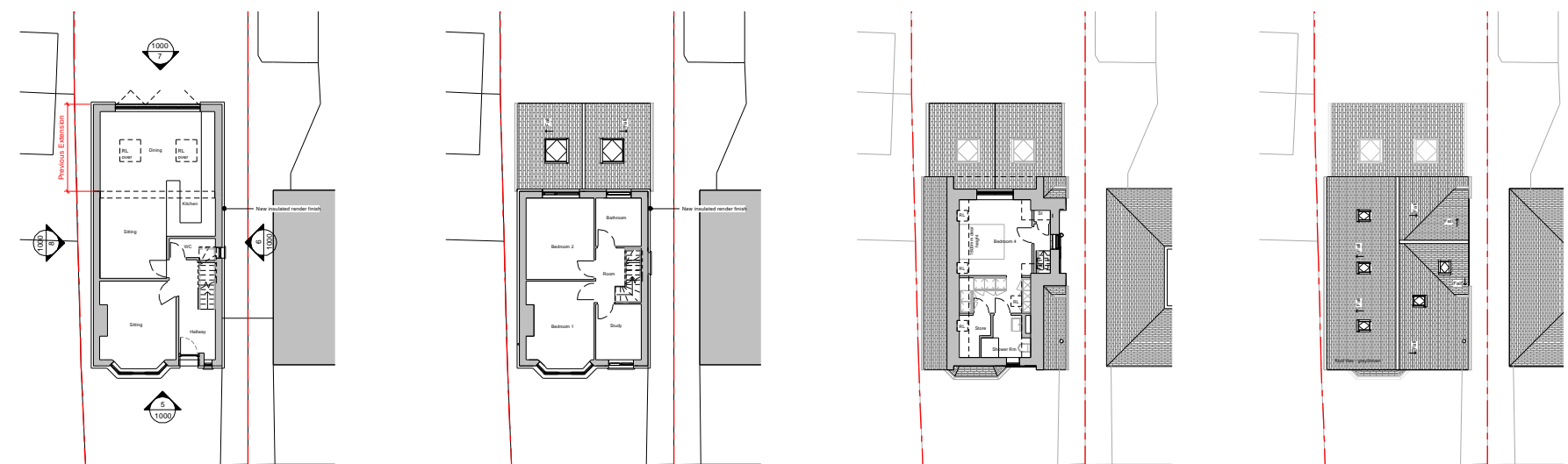
It is considered that the proposal would accord with the requirements of Local Plan policy DH1 in that it would provide a high quality design that would enhance the local distinctiveness of the immediate surrounding area.



Existing Elevations (from previous application) - NTS



Proposed Elevations - NTS



Proposed Plans - NTS

Officer's Comments on Previous Application & Design Response

Ordnance Survey, (c) Crown Copyright 2023. All rights reserved. Licence number 100022432

In relation to the previous application (23/01834/FUL - Withdrawn) the officer raised concerns in relation to the following:

1. The scale and design of the development and its impact on the streetscene
2. Amenity Impact on a neighbouring site (64 St Leonard's Road)

We have revised the proposals in response to the officer's comments, which are summarised below.

The scale and design of the development and its impact on the streetscene

The side dormer has been significantly reduced in size (to enable stair access only) and the ridge height of the proposals has also been reduced by approximately 350mm compared to the previous application. The dormer would be clad in hung tile to match the colour of the roof to visually reduce prominence. We believe that this mitigates any potential 'visual harm' to the streetscene.

Additionally, as illustrated on earlier pages, the streetscape and roofscape varies significantly and we believe that the modest increase to the ridge 'balances' the proportions of the house following the modest roof extension and sits well in the streetscape. Streetscape sketch views, illustrating the proposals in context, are included as an Appendix.

Amenity Impact on a neighbouring site (64 St Leonard's Road)

The officer had concerns regarding the amenity impact of 64 St Leonards Road, highlighting a specific ground floor window/door.

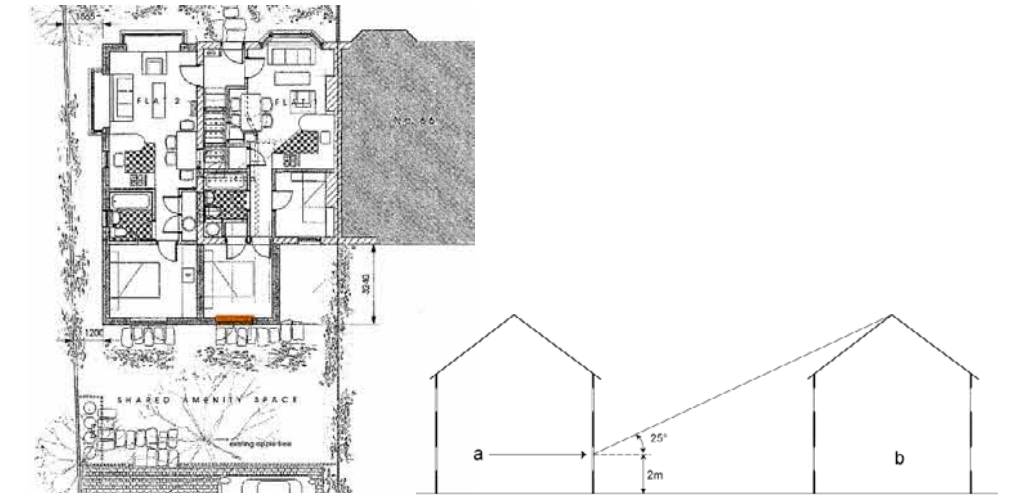


Due to the orientation of the properties, the relation between the application site and 64 St Leonard's Road means that there is no chance of any direct overshadowing of no. 64 due to it's position to the south-east of the application site.

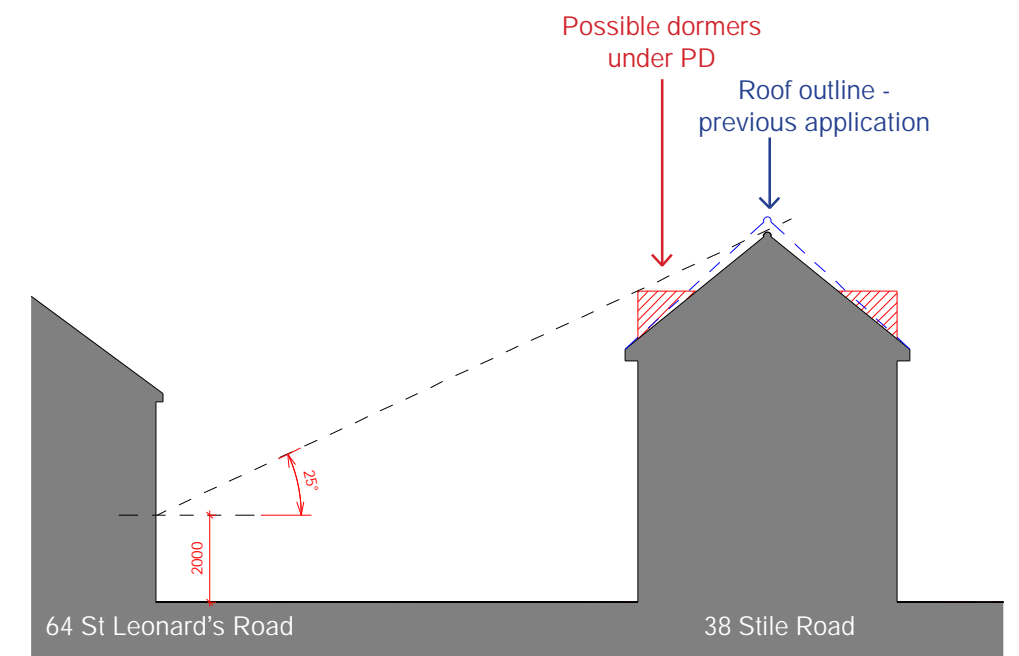
Nevertheless, we have also reduced the ridge height of the revised proposals to ensure that, as well as not causing direct overshadowing, the proposals also consider the recommendations in BRE's "Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A guide to good practice" - specifically in relation to the spacing of houses.

This document suggests that adequate daylight in interiors is achieved at an unobstructed 25 degree angle from a point 2m above floor level at the facade. Note that this doesn't consider orientation in relation to sunlight, so the fact that 64 St Leonard's is located to the south-east, and no. 38 Stile Road is only partially opposite, means that any amenity impact of the revised proposals would not have a material impact.

Furthermore, as illustrated by the section diagram below, the revised proposals would have no worse an impact than what could be achieved under PD.



Ground Floor Layout of 64 St Leonard's Road (from Planning Portal) and extract from BRE Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A guide to good practice



Section through 64 St Leonard's Road and Proposals at 38 Stile Road

Impact on Neighbours & Conclusion

The previous page specifically addresses any potential impact on 64 St Leonard's Road, however, we have considered the impact of all neighbours whilst developing the proposals, as detailed below.

The application site sits approximately 11m to the north of no. 64 St Leonard's Road, 14m to the north of no. 66 St Leonard's Road and 2.2m to the south of 36 Stile Road. Dwellings to the west, fronting Holyoake Road, sit approximately 31m from the rear wall of the application property.

Privacy

The proposal would involve the installation of rooflights that would not overlook neighbours fronting St Leonards Road and any clear glazing is located 1.7m or greater above floor finished floor level. The side dormer window to the north elevation would be obscure glazed to avoid overlooking into no. 36. In any event, the side windows at no. 36 serve a non-habitable landing and secondary kitchen window and therefore it is considered that this proposed window would not materially impact on privacy. The proposed rear window would be sited approximately 31m from the nearest facing neighbouring windows fronting Holyoake Road, a sufficient distance to avoid overlooking / perceived overlooking and is similarly located to what could be achieved under Permitted Development.

Daylight/Sunlight

As above, the application site sits to the north of the nearest dwellings on St Leonard's Road and therefore the proposed loft conversion would not cast a shadow on these neighbours, as described in relation to specific comments in relation to no. 64 (see previous page). Notwithstanding this, in

response to the original officer concerns, the ridge height has been reduced by approximately 350mm in order to ensure that the amenity of these near neighbours is not impacted. As above, the nearest windows at no. 36 either serve a non-habitable room or form a secondary window to the kitchen and, therefore, it is not considered that the proposal would materially impact on these rooms. The distance from dwellings on Holyoake Road and the scale of developed proposed would rule out the potential for overshadowing.

Overbearing

Given the modest alterations proposed - particularly in light of amendments that have been made, distance from neighbours and orientation of the site in relation to neighbouring dwellings, it is not considered that the proposal would appear unduly overbearing on neighbours.

Taking all of the above into account, it is considered that the proposal would not materially impact neighbouring amenity and would accord with the requirements of Local Plan policies RE7 and H14.

Conclusion

This proposal seeks to make the best and most efficient use of a sustainable site by providing additional family living accommodation without having a negative impact on neighbouring amenity or the wider street scene, given the variety of built form along Stile Road. The proposal is considered to accord with local and national planning policy and it is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission is granted without delay.

Appendix A: Illustrative Streetscape Views



Existing Streetscape View looking south along Stile Road



*Proposed Streetscape View looking south along Stile Road
(Note that streetscape is partially concealed by trees)*

Appendix A: Illustrative Streetscape Views



Existing Streetscape View looking north along Stile Road



Proposed Streetscape View looking north along Stile Road

Appendix A: Illustrative Streetscape Views



Existing Streetscape View from Junction with London Road



Proposed Streetscape View from Junction with London Road