

Preliminary Bat & Bird Assessment Site:

The Mowhay, Wood Hill, Penryn, TR10 9AE

Grid Reference: SW 75183 36061

13th November 2023

Version 1



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Project Reference No: P4E3223

Version: 1



Document Control:

Site Name:	The Mowhay, Wood Hill, Penryn, TR10 9AE				
OS Grid Reference:	SW 75183 36061				
Report Author:	Chloe Balmer MSci (Hons) ACIEEM; Bat licence no: 2020-47040-CLS-CLS; Barn Owl licence no. 2022-10943-CL29-OWL.				
Document Approved by:	Dr Kim Jelbert BSc (Hons), MSc, PhD, MCIEEM (Bat licence no: 2015-10444-CLS-CLS; Registered Consultant: RC224; Barn owl licence no. CL29/00037; Dormouse license no: 2016-22394-CLS-CLS)				
Client:	Dan Thompson				
Report Reference Number:	P4E3223				
Version:	01				
Date:	13 th November 2023				

Declaration:

"The information, evidence and advice, which we have prepared and provided is true, and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management's (CIEEM) Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions."



Report Lifespan:

Ecological features can change over time, particularly if site management/ use changes. Typically, preliminary bat and bird assessments are valid for 18 months (until April 2025).

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Summary

Bat evidence?	The northern section of The Mowhay, Wood Hill, Penryn, TR10 9AE was surveyed for evidence of roosting bats on 11 th October 2023. All parts of the building were accessible and could be fully inspected. No evidence of roosting bats was observed within the interior of the building, and no notable external features with potential to support roosting bats were observed within the vicinity of the proposed works. The building was assessed as being of 'negligible suitability' for roosting bats.					
Bat mitigation recommendations?	Precautionary recommendations are provided.					
	There is opportunity to enhance the value of the site for bats post-development.					
	No further surveys for bats are recommended based on the proposed plans in Appendix 1; if the plans deviate from those in Appendix 1 this report should be updated.					
Bird evidence?	No evidence of current nesting birds, including barn owl (Tyto alba), was noted within the building or on the building exterior.					
	A nest box (likely for a Hirundo sp.) beneath the soffit on the eastern elevation has potential to be used by breeding birds during the nesting season (between March and August/ September).					
	The building was assessed as being of negligible suitability for barn owl.					
Bird mitigation recommendations?	If works to the building are required during the bird breeding season (March – Aug/ September), then it is recommended that the pre-existing nest box be temporarily removed during the winter (November – February) and then reinstalled once works are complete. Alternatively, a thorough search of the nest box for nesting birds (to be undertaken by an ecologist/ suitably qualified person) must be undertaken immediately prior to works commencing. If an active bird nest is present, then works within 5m must be delayed until nesting has ceased.					
	There is opportunity to make provision for nesting birds on the exterior of the building and enhance the value of the site for birds post-development.					
	No further surveys for birds are recommended.					

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

Dan Thompson commissioned Plan for Ecology Ltd to undertake a Preliminary Bat and Bird Assessment (sometimes referred to as a Bat and Barn Owl Assessment) of The Mowhay, Wood Hill, Penryn, TR10 9AE (OS Grid Ref: SW 75183 36061) in September 2023. The client proposes to create a dormer window on the eastern part of the northern section of the building (Appendix 1).

1.2 Project Administration

Property Address: The Mowhay, Wood Hill, Penryn, TR10 9AE

OS Grid Reference: SW 75183 36061

Client: Dan Thompson

Planning Authority: Cornwall Council

Planning Reference Number: Unknown

Report Reference Number: P4E3223

Proposed work: Install a dormer window on the eastern elevation of the

northern section of the existing building.

Survey Date: 11th October 2023

Ecologist & Licence Number: Chloe Balmer MSci (Hons) ACIEEM (Bat licence no: 2020-

47040-CLS-CLS; Barn Owl licence no. 2022-10943-CL29-

OWL).

1.3 Legislation & Planning Policy

Planning: The local planning authority has a statutory obligation to consider impacts upon protected species resulting from development. Planning permission will not be granted with outstanding ecological surveys, and if applicable an appropriate mitigation plan.

Bats: In the UK all bat species are listed on Annex IV(a) of the European Communities Habitats Directive and as such are European Protected Species (EPS). In Britain protection of bats is achieved through their inclusion on Schedule 2 of the Conservation and Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (HM Government, 2019)), Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 12 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (HM Government, 1981, 2000 & 2017).

As a result of this statutory legislation it is an offence to:

Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat;

Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat/s in its roost;

Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a bat roost (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time);

Possess or sell or exchange a bat (dead or alive) or part of a bat.

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Works with potential to cause significant disturbance to roosting bats may require a European Protected Species (EPSL) licence or Bat Mitigation Class Licence (CL21) from Natural England before works can legally commence. Works likely to result in less significant disturbance may be carried out under a Bat Mitigation Method Statement. The magnitude of disturbance and, therefore, the requirement for an EPSL, Bat Mitigation Class Licence or method statement is assessed on a case-by-case basis by the bat ecologist. The Bat Mitigation Method Statement or EPSL must be prepared and/or applied for by a suitably experienced and licenced bat ecologist. Where planning permission is required, the appropriate licence cannot be obtained until planning permission has been granted.

Birds: In Britain the nests (whilst in use or being built) and eggs of wild birds are protected against taking, damage and destruction under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (HM Government, 1981). The barn owl (Tyto alba) is listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (HM Government, 1981); this legislation makes it an offence to:

Intentionally capture, injure or kill a barn owl;

Intentionally or recklessly disturb a barn owl whilst nesting;

Intentionally or recklessly disturb a dependent young barn owl.

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2.0 Methodology

The ecologist (Chloe Balmer) assessed the suitability of the building and the surrounding habitat to support bats and birds. A high-power torch was used to illuminate all accessible areas of the building with potential to support roosting bats and roosting/ nesting birds. The ecologist searched for signs of bats and birds including droppings, staining, feeding remains, bird nests, barn owl pellets and liming.

The assessment was carried out in accordance with the 'Bat Survey for Professional Ecologists - Good Practice Guidelines' produced by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2023).

2.1 Ecological Evaluation

Potential bat roosts identified during the visual inspection of the building were categorised as to their suitability in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust's (BCT) Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2023) as described below:

Negligible: negligible features with potential to support roosting bats.

<u>Low</u>: one or more features with potential to support individual bats on an occasional basis. Unlikely to support large numbers of bats.

<u>Moderate</u>: one or more features with potential to support roosting bats but unlikely to be of high conservation status.

High: one or more features with potential to support large numbers of bats on a regular basis.

2.2 Limitations

All parts of the building were accessible and could be visually inspected for evidence of bats and birds. The building was viewed from ground level, and it is possible that Potential Roost Features (PRFs) on the building were not visible from the ground; however, roof lights present on the eastern pitch of the roof, provided good visibility of the eastern (impacted) elevation, when viewed from within the vaulted first floor interior room. Weather during the survey was in line with seasonal norms (16°C, light air, dry, sunny and part cloud); there are no limitations associated with weather conditions.



3.0 Assessment Results

3.1 Site Description

The dwelling is located at the end of a no through road 'Wood Hill' on the outskirts of Penryn, approximately 1.7 km south of Ponsanooth, c. 6 km northwest of Falmouth and c. 11 km east of Camborne, Cornwall. The building is located in a rural position enclosed with farm land. Pockets of Deciduous Woodland (Section 41 NERC Act, 2006 Habitat of Principle Importance; UK BAP Priority Habitat) are present c. 250m to the south and c. 730m east of the site. The site lies c. 3.6 km northwest of the coast (at its nearest point). Habitats in the wider area comprise predominantly mixed farmland with pockets of broadleaved woodland, coastal habitats, and small towns and villages. Buildings in the wider area comprise a mixture of period and modern properties with vegetated gardens, outbuildings and barns. In combination, these features provide potential high-quality foraging and roosting habitat for bats, and suitable nest sites, roosts and foraging habitat for birds.

3.2 Bat Assessment

The visual assessment was undertaken on 11th October 2023, of the northern section of the two-storey building found at 'The Mowhay' (red outline in Fig 1); the proposals affect only the eastern pitch of the northern section (yellow outline in Fig 1).

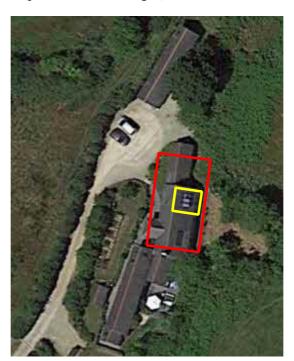


Figure 1: Aerial view of the extent of the property at 'The Mowhay', red outline shows the area surveyed; the yellow outline shows the approximate location of the proposals, which comprise of a new dormer window on the eastern elevation.

The part of the building surveyed is a two-storey former barn conversion (c. 2010) now in use as a residential dwelling. The property is of concrete block and stone construction with no render (Figs 2-3). The building supports a pitched roof of traditional slate tiles and concrete ridge tiles (Figs 4-5). Wooden fascia boards were present on the east and west elevations of the dwelling with plastic guttering and downpipes on the exterior of the building. On both sides of the pitched roof were roof lights, which were well sealed with no obvious gaps to the slate tile roof. Hanging slate tiles

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were present on the north-western end of the building. One small gap (a PRF) was observed between the slates and the wall top, but the gap does not extend beyond the timber fascia board (Fig 6). Whilst this gap provides a PRF for crevice dwelling bats, it does not extend beyond the fascia board, and the proposals which impact the eastern elevation only, will not impact the northwest elevation of the building on which the PRF is located (Appendix 1). Internally, the space is vaulted and, therefore, the PRF does not extend or provide access into an impacted roof space. With the exception of the PRF described above, the building had no notable features that could support roosting bats.

As outlined above, internally, the section of the property to be impacted is vaulted with no roof void (Fig 7). No evidence of bats was found within the interior of the dwelling.

No evidence of roosting bats was found within the building and no notable features were observed within the vicinity of the proposed works that have potential to support roosting bats. Overall, the northern section of 'The Mowhay', was assessed as being of negligible suitability for roosting bats.



Figure 2: View of the northern and western elevations of the wider building at 'The Mowhay'; the yellow arrow indicates the approximate location of the proposals on the eastern pitch.

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Figure 3: View of the eastern elevation at 'The Mowhay'; the yellow outline indicates the approximate location of the proposals.



Figure 4: View north from within the first-floor room (vaulted with no roof space) of part of the east pitched roof at 'The Mowhay'.





Figure 5: View south from within the first-floor room (vaulted with no roof space) of part of the east pitched roof at 'The Mowhay'.



Figure 6: View of a small gap beneath the hanging slate tile and the wall top on the north-western corner of the building at 'The Mowhay, located on the opposite side of the property from where new dormer windows are proposed'.





Figure 7: Interior view of the room to be impacted by the proposals within 'The Mowhay'.



3.3 Bird Assessment

No evidence of current nesting birds was observed within the interior or on the exterior of 'The Mowhay'. A nest box (likely for a Hirundo sp.) was observed beneath the soffit on the eastern elevation (Fig 8). This habitat has potential to support nesting birds between March and August/September.

No evidence of barn owls using the dwelling was noted, and no suitable access points were present. The Mowhay was assessed as being of negligible suitability for nesting, breeding or resting barn owls.



Figure 8: View of the nest box (likely for a Hirundo sp.) beneath the soffit on the eastern elevation of the 'The Mowhay'.

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4.0 Mitigation Recommendations

4.1 Bat Mitigation

Although no current evidence of roosting bats was found, absence cannot be assumed. A precautionary approach should be adopted. The building contractors should be made aware that bats can roost unseen within the building structure. In the unlikely event that a bat is uncovered during works, the bat must not be handled, and works must stop immediately (as soon as it is safe to do so). Advice must be sought from an experienced and licensed bat ecologist (Plan for Ecology Ltd: 01326 218839) or the Bat Conservation Trust (Tel: 0345 1300 228). In this scenario, it may be necessary to obtain a bat licence from Natural England before works are permitted to resume. See Section 1.3 for relevant legislation.

Further surveys for bats are not recommended as part of this assessment.

4.2 Bird Mitigation

No evidence of nesting birds, including barn owl, was found within the interior of the building. However, a nest box (likely for a Hirundo sp.) beneath the soffit on the eastern elevation on the building exterior has potential to support nesting birds between March – August/September. The building was assessed as being of negligible suitability for barn owl.

If works are proposed during the breeding bird season (March – August/ September), then it is recommended that the bird box be temporarily removed between October and February, when birds will not be nesting. The bird box must be reinstalled falling completion of works. If it is not possible to temporarily remove the box in advance of the nesting season, and works cannot be timed to avoid the bird breeding season then it is recommended that the box be thoroughly searched for nesting birds (to be undertaken by a suitably qualified person) prior to commencement of works. If, immediately prior to or during construction works, an active bird nest is uncovered, works within at least 5m of the nest must stop immediately (as soon as it is safe to do so) and delayed until nesting activity has ceased. Works are most likely to be delayed between April and July.

Further surveys for birds are not recommended as part of this assessment.

4.3 Opportunities for Biodiversity Enhancement

Net gain is described as a measurable target(s) for development projects where impacts on biodiversity are outweighed by the mitigation hierarchy approach to first avoid, and then minimise, impact including through restoration and/ or compensation (Baker et al., 2019). Biodiversity net gain is an approach to development, and/or land management, that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand.

The biodiversity value of the site for roosting bats and nesting birds post-development could be enhanced by installing bat and bird boxes on the building exterior (on north and east elevations for bird boxes and south and west elevations for bat boxes). The value of the site for invertebrates could be enhanced by installing bee posts within grounds of the site. Plan for Ecology Ltd can provide detailed recommendations upon request. These recommendations are in accordance with the Cornwall Planning for Biodiversity Guide (Cornwall Council, 2018).

NB: suitable products are available from www.wildcareshop.com and www.wildcareshop.com and www.qreenandblue.co.uk.

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5.0 References

Baker et al., (2019) Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development.

British Standard Institution (2013) BS42020: 2013 Biodiversity – A Code of Practice for Planning and Development. BSI Standards Limited 2013. ISBN 978 0 580 77917 6.

Collins (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th Edition, Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Cornwall Council (2018) Cornwall Planning for Biodiversity Guide. Cornwall Council. Truro.

HM Government (1981) The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). HMSO, London.

HM Government (2000) The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. HMSO, London.

HM Government (2006) The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. HMSO, London.

HM Government (2017) The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended). HMSO, London.

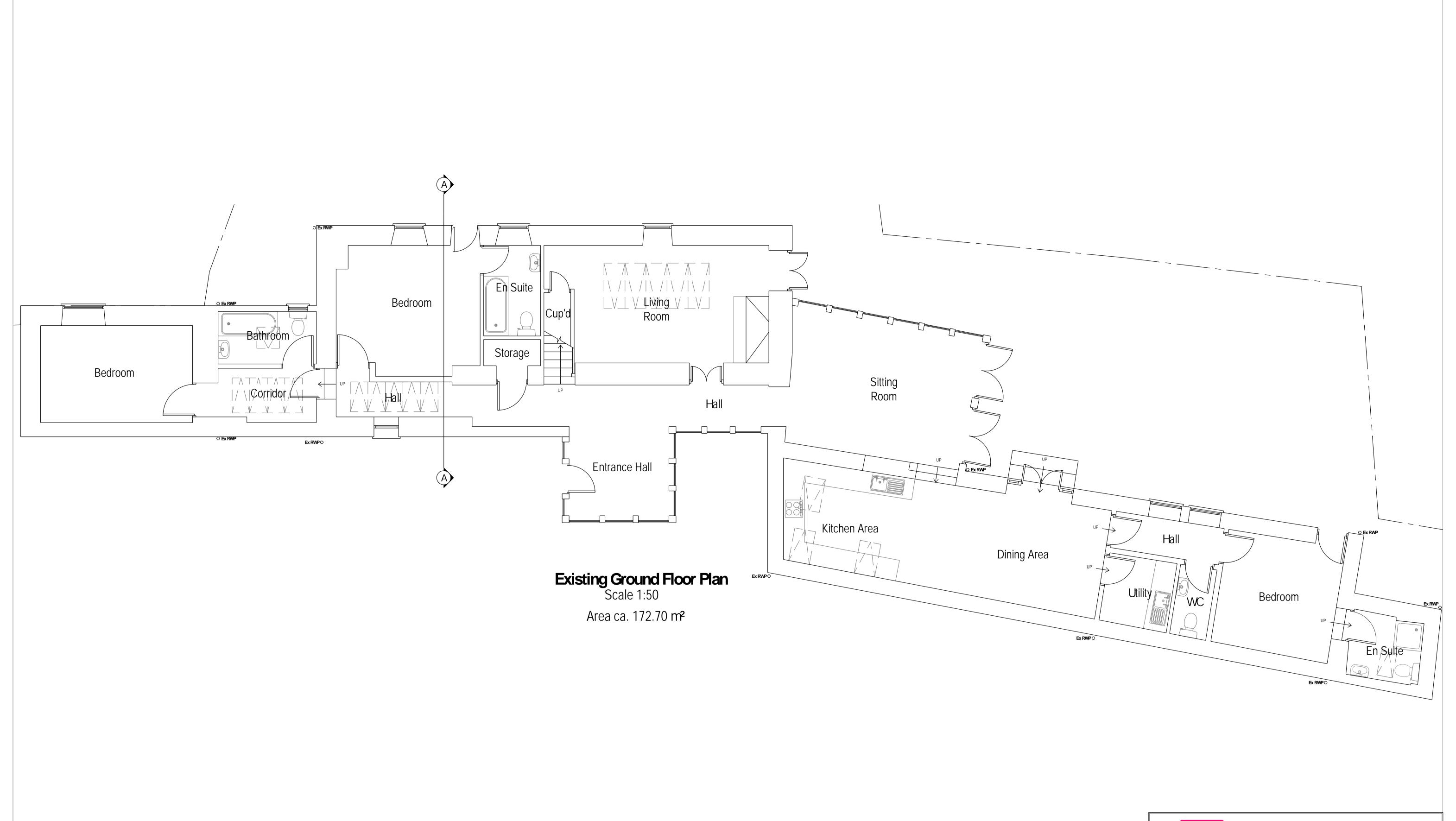
HM Government (2019) The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. HMSO, London.

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6.0 Appendix 1: Site Proposals

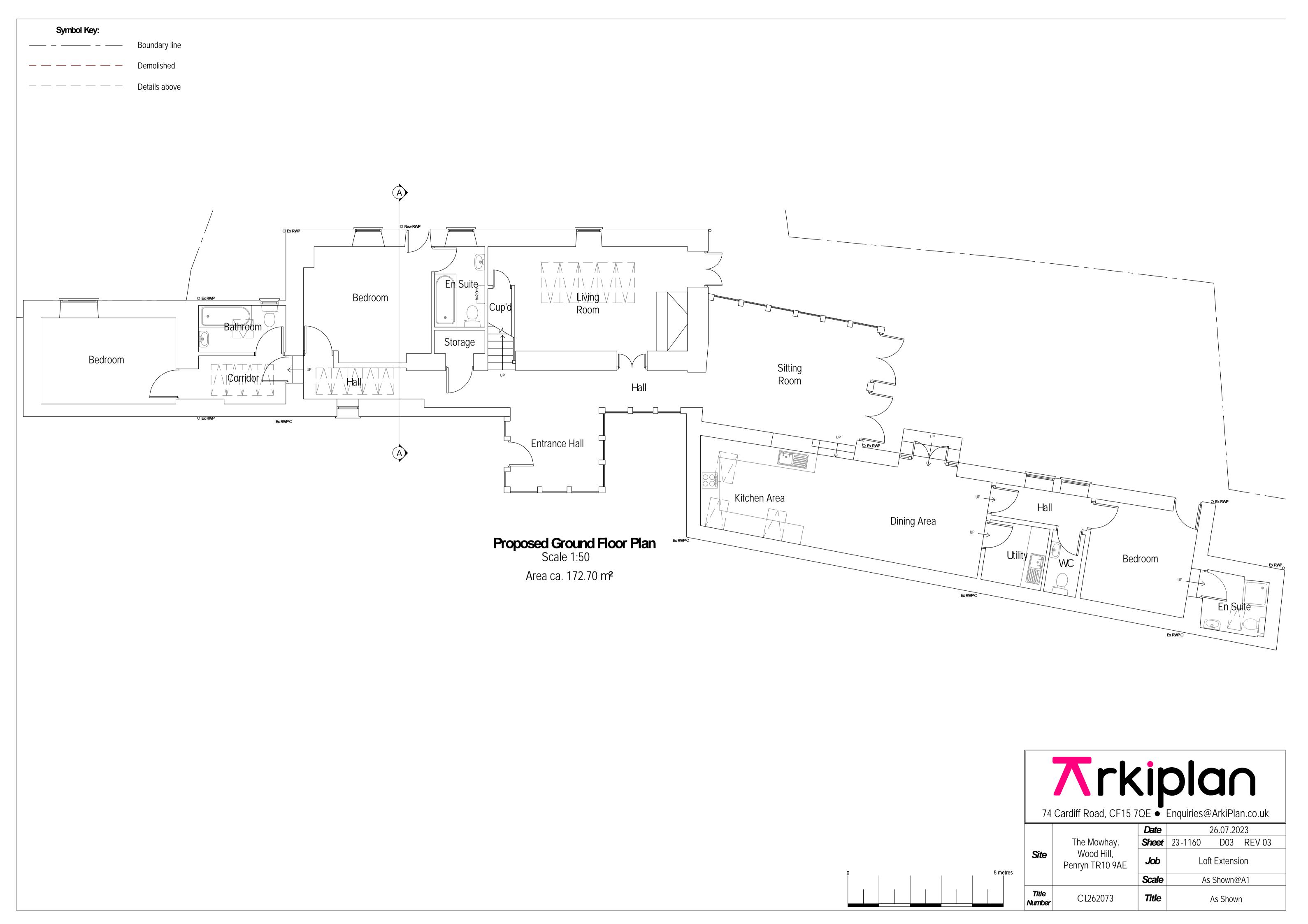


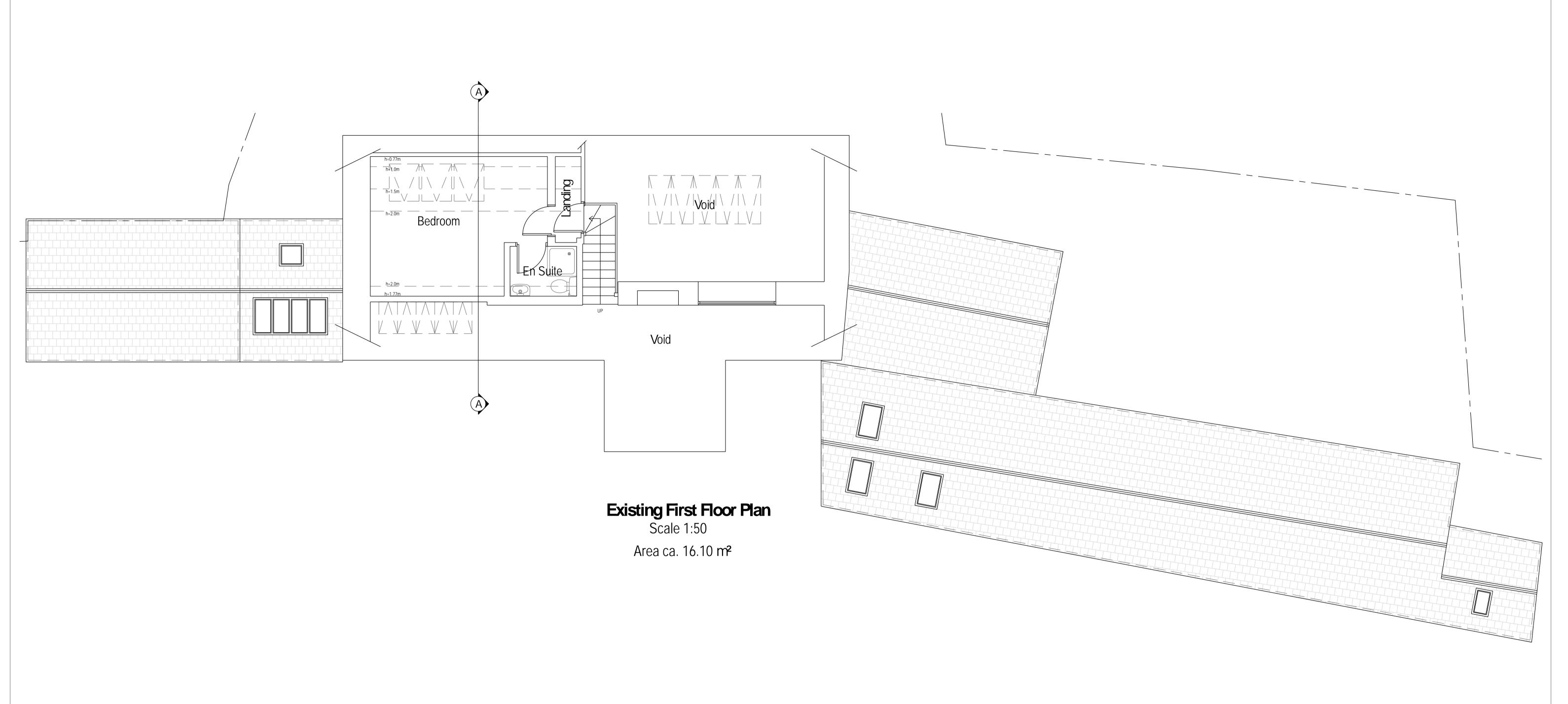


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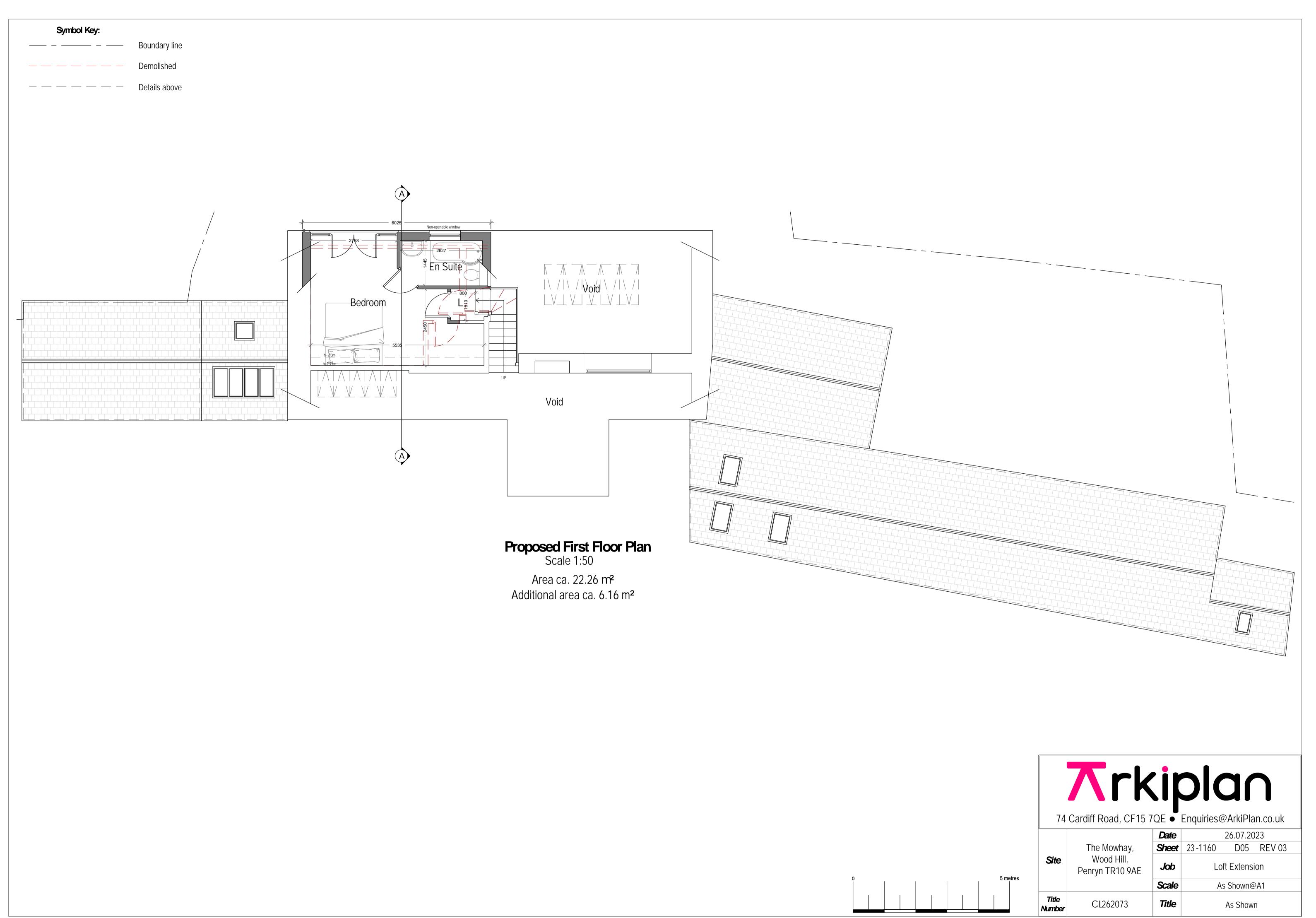
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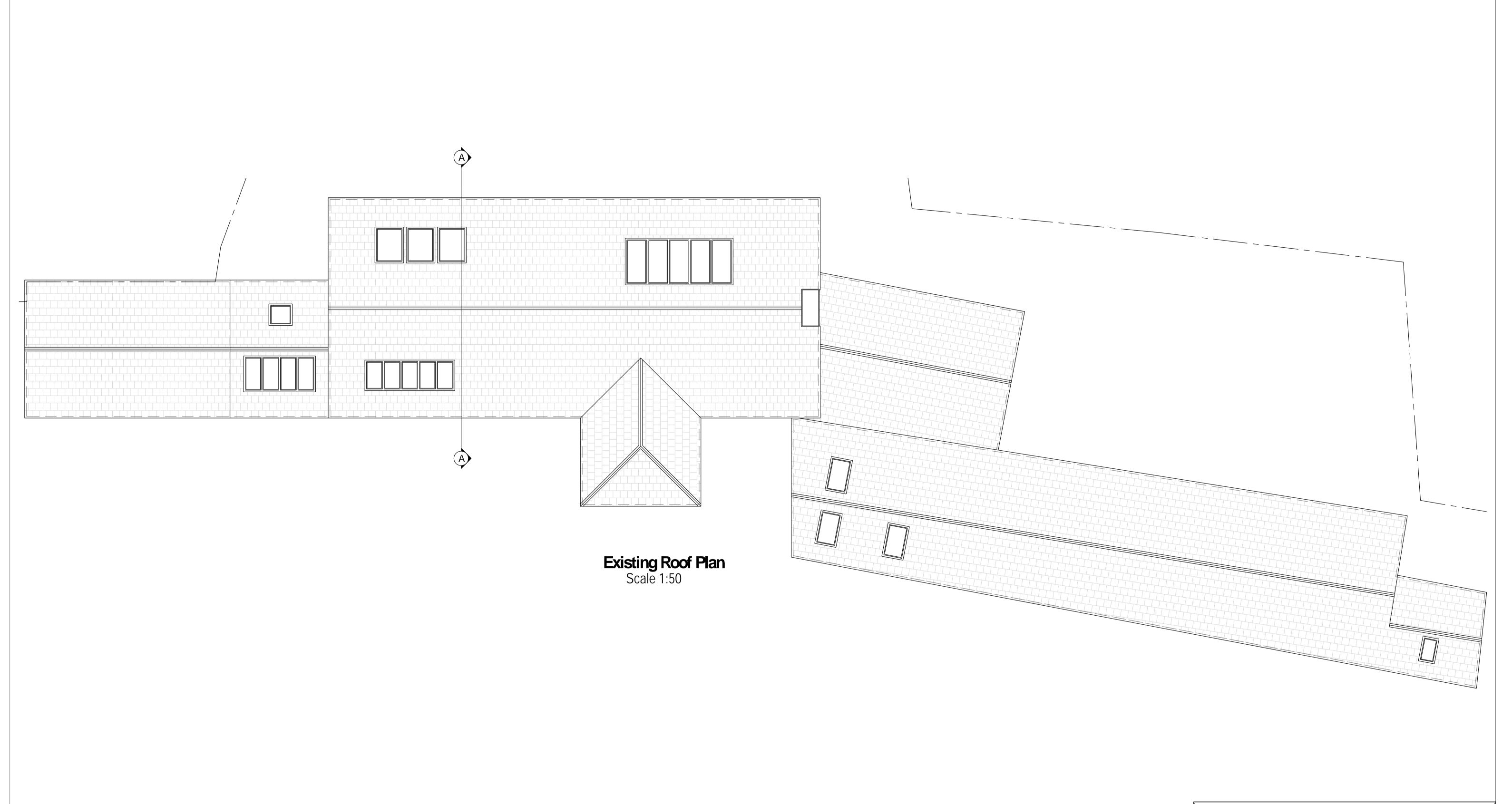






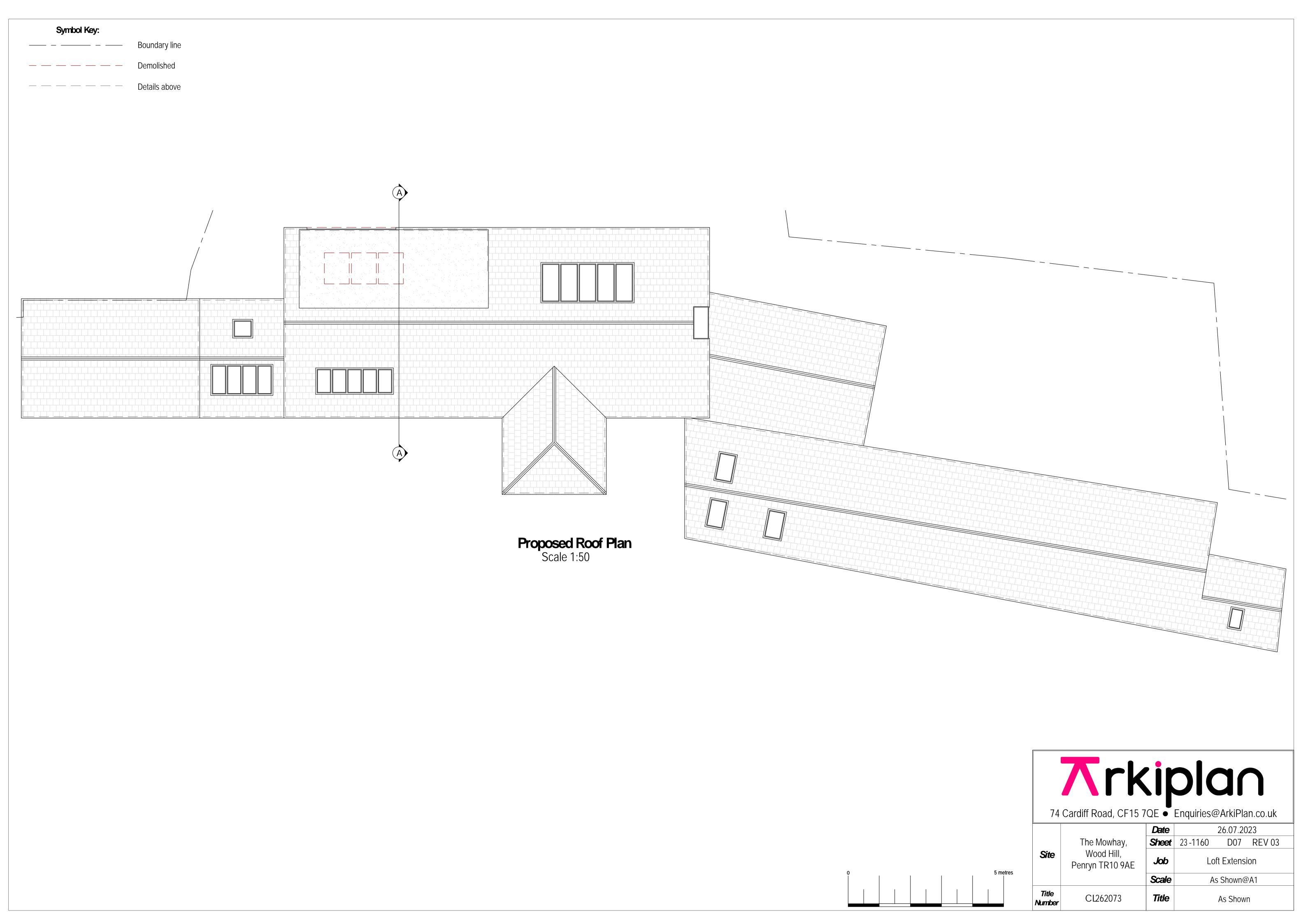
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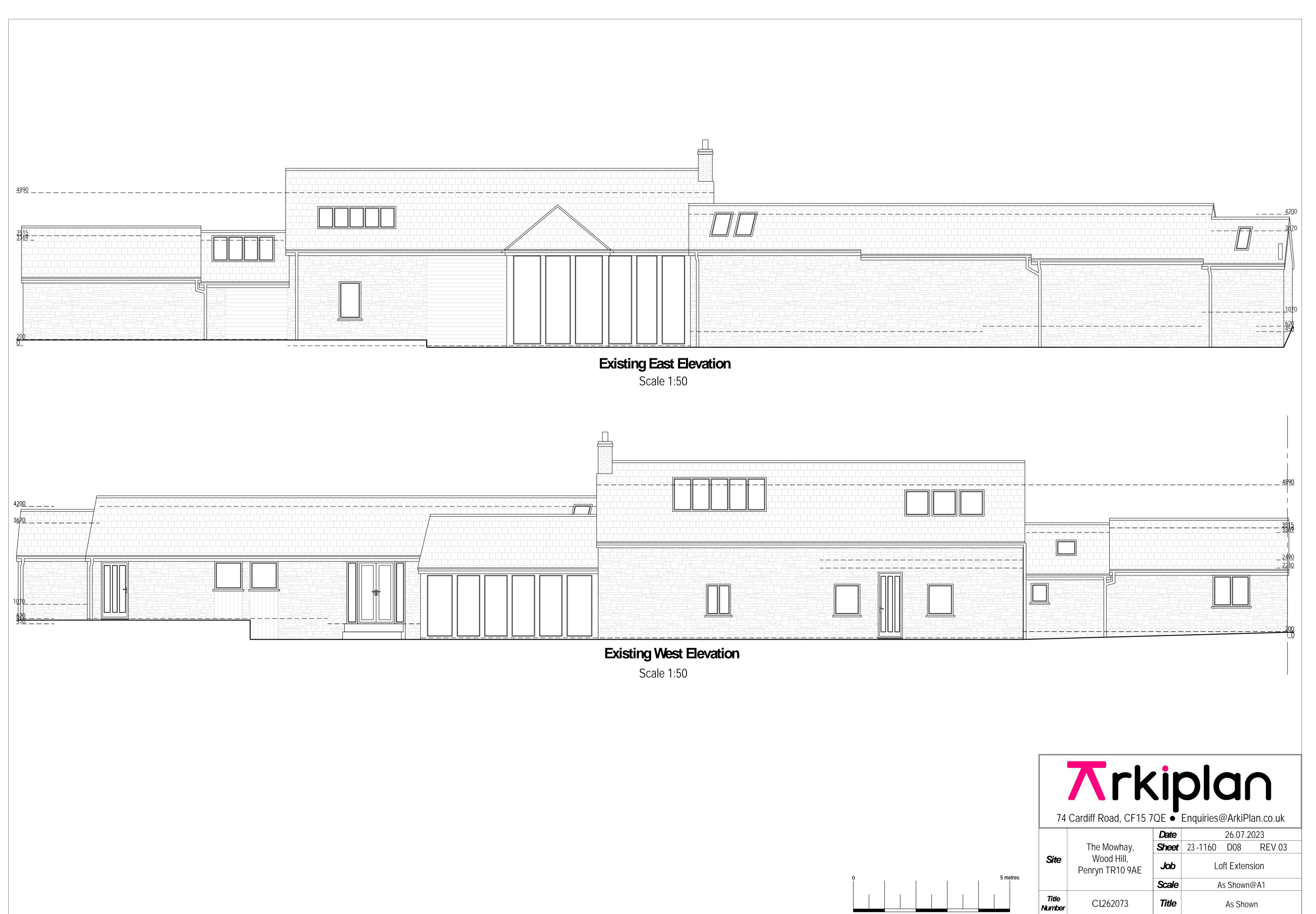






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Scale 1:50



Proposed Materials:
Walls: Oak cladding (to march existing)
Flat roof: EPDM
Windows: Double glazed (to match existing)



Proposed South Elevation

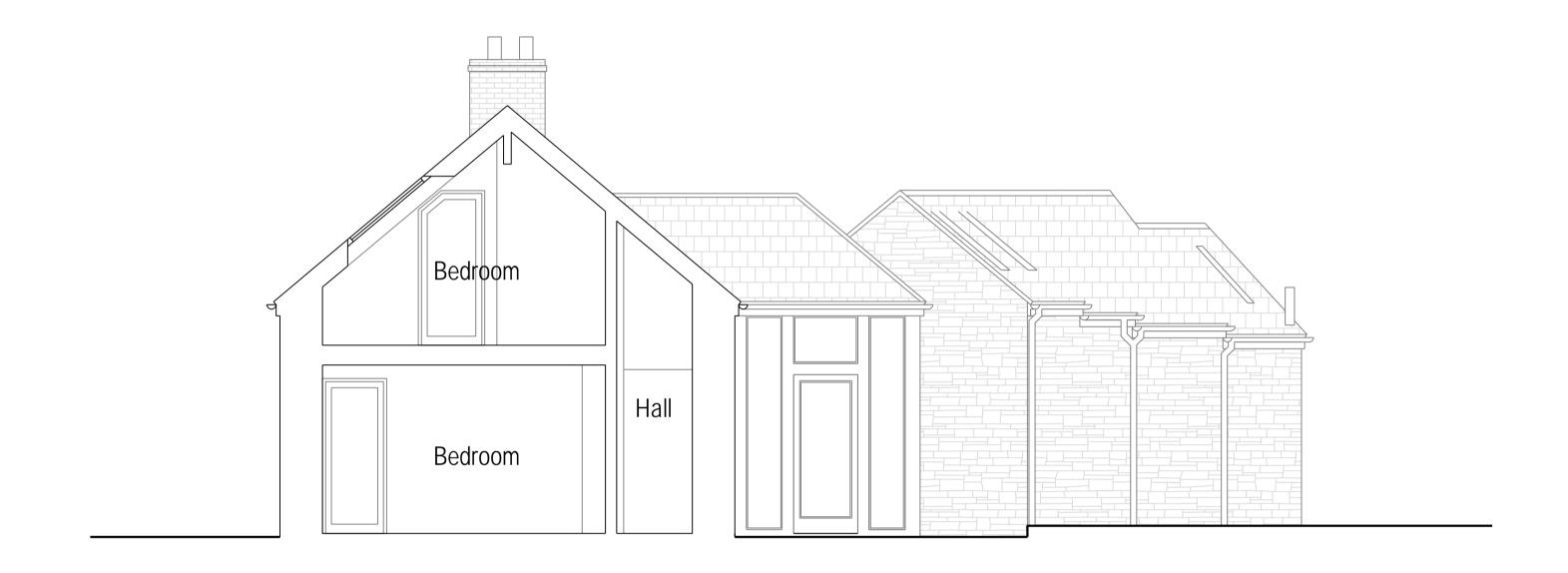
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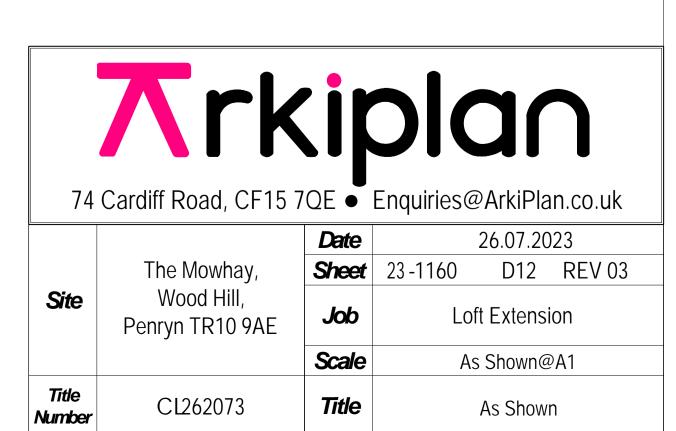
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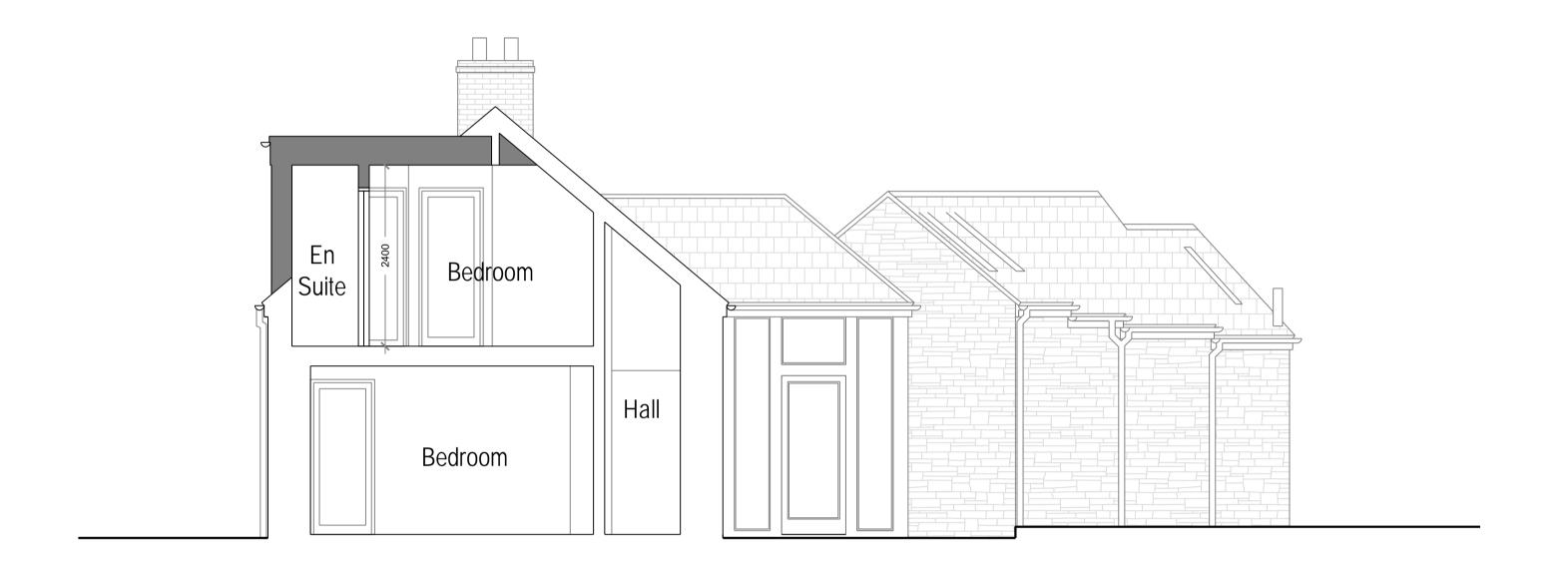
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Proposed Section A-A Scale 1:50

